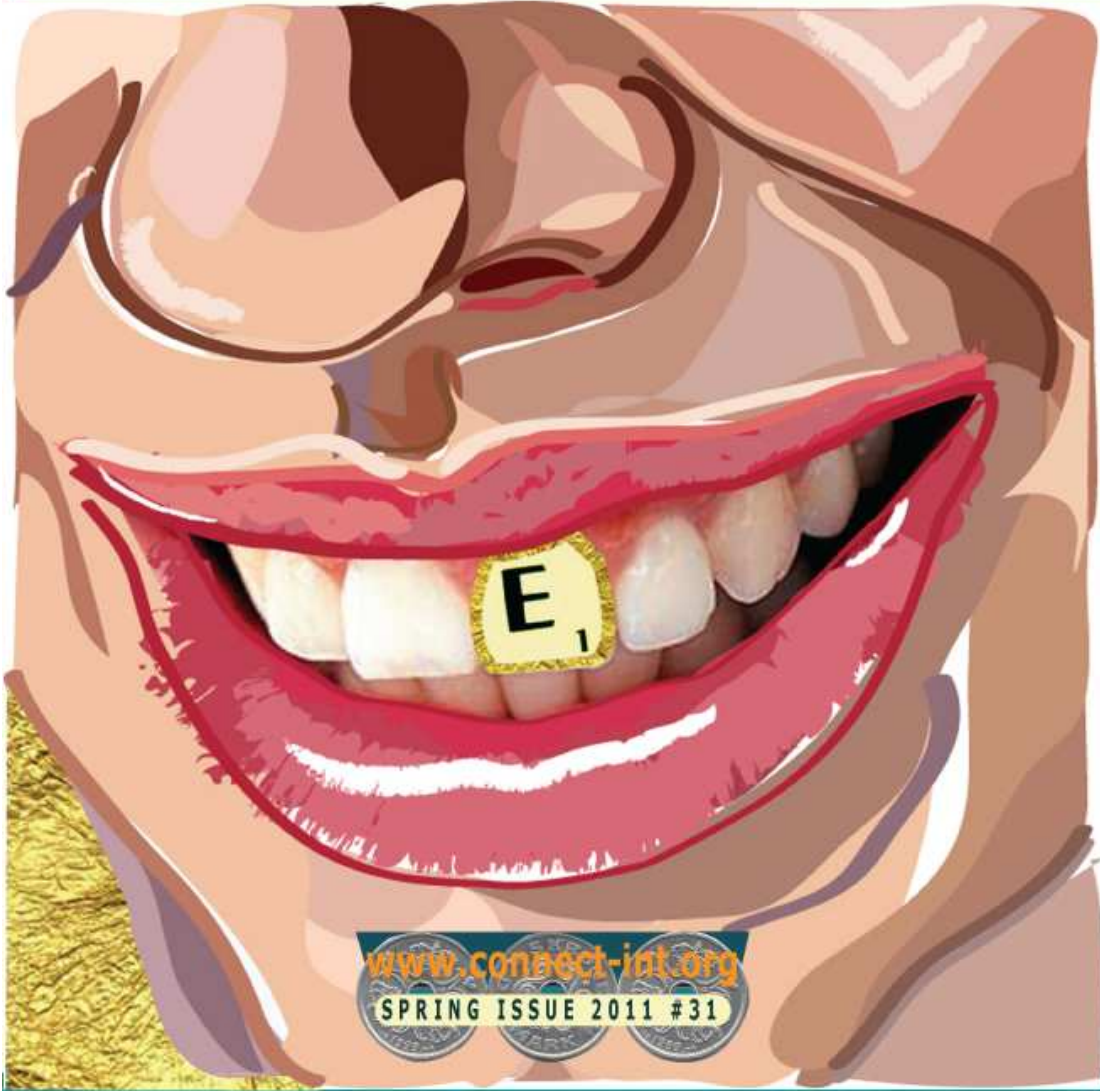




CONNECTIONS

Connecting Your World With The World Of The Northern Netherlands



www.connect-int.org

SPRING ISSUE 2011 #31

Editorial

Life and the choices we make are reminiscent of a game of Scrabble. One is dealt a hand with the choice of either making a cohesive whole out of it, or throwing it back into the bag and seeing if the options of the new one are an improvement.

It is with this in mind, that we look at why some people choose the entrepreneurial route. Opting out of the previously 'safe' employer-employee relationship as the norm, has increased considerably in the last few years. To be one's own boss may mean total freedom as you rake in the rewards, but it also means total responsibility for the end result, whatever the outcome.

A variety of articles on this theme can be found on pages: 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17.

If you are looking for a few tips on how to write your life story, don't forget to join us for the LINKS seminar on 13 April, with Jo Parfitt, details on page 5.

Culturally, if you haven't yet visited The Hermitage in Amsterdam and are interested in the classics, have a read about

what's on offer on page 14.

On page 16 Margaret Metsala has put together a comprehensive list of how to find out what's happening where you are in The Netherlands and even as far as New York or Singapore!

Spring is upon us, add that to Harma Hingstman's interesting account about Jordan and the Nabataean city of Petra, on page 18, and it should help to remind us that yes, Summer is on the way.

On page 19, we have a review about the very popular, "Bollywood": The show, which recently appeared at one of the venues in Groningen. Also, Jude Jarvis covers the yo-yo-ing success of the British Film industry to date.

Featured artist this issue is Wopke Grobber, of Wopke Shoes. If you are looking for a unique pair of handmade shoes, his shop is the place to be.

Allison Day

WELCOME:

Joanne Colling, Mehmet Yazgonul, Marijké Brandsma
Danuta Hoek, Robin Matthew Varghese, Salin Varghese
Panthrendil, Ashley Thomas, Tshering Lhamu Bhutia,
Ronit Nikolsky, Alexandra Bellamy, Annie Ralph, Haibo
Zhou, Tarek Harchaoui, Jessica Cadwallader, Audrey
Tsyganov, Laurentine Costecalde,



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Connect offers information to help familiarize international residents with the practical and commercial aspects of living in the Northern Netherlands, and organizes events and activities to provide social, cultural, and educational support.



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What's Hot



What's Not

A business has to be involving, it has to be fun, and it has to exercise your creative instincts. - Richard Branson, founder of Virgin

ENTREPRENEURS

The word "entrepreneur" is believed to have come from the French economist Jean-Baptiste Say, in the 19th century. His definition was: "one who undertakes an enterprise, especially a contractor, acting as intermediary between capital and labour."

Entrepreneurs are often gifted individuals who, seeing a new idea or recognizing a gap in the market have the talent to turn it, more often than not, into a viable business. From the onset they are willingly accountable for all the risks, as well as the final outcome, when it comes to making their idea or dream a reality.

Those who possess real entrepreneurial spirit will enjoy the successes and be undeterred by the failures; oftentimes, the latter only serves to fuel the drive to succeed and be independent, in what is an increasingly competitive world. In the immortal words of Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five (1980's): *'It's like a jungle sometimes, it makes me wonder how I keep from goin' under...'* In their heyday they were entrepreneurs too; they

pioneered the start of a musical revolution known as 'hip-hop', and were the first popular music band to use a line up of one DJ and five rapping MCs (Master of Ceremonies). The latter idea, they took from the Jamaican dance halls, where the different musical acts were introduced by toasting in rhyme, which was directed at both the audience and the performers.

So, are entrepreneurs born or can you learn to become one? Opinions differ; some say that people are born entrepreneurs, whilst others believe that the qualities can be learnt and all you need is the sheer determination to succeed. Interestingly enough, psychological tests show, when it comes to gender, that both sexes are equally matched and equipped when it comes to entrepreneurial qualities. Any thoughts to the contrary are generally a result of stereotyping. That said, more economically secure countries have a higher proportion of opportunity-driven, as opposed to necessity-driven, women entrepreneurs.

Should you want to test the waters and see if you've got what it takes character-wise, before launching head long into the world of the

entrepreneur, why not take the assessment test on this website: www.theentrepreneurnextdoor.com.

Then there is the question as to why people become entrepreneurs? Certainly it's a less secure lifestyle and a lot more work, but what could be more satisfying than seeing an idea grow, being one's own boss and reaping the rewards? Plus the fact that after recent world affairs, a job for life is no longer assured.

An entrepreneur of note and my personal favourite has to be Sir Richard Branson. From the humble beginnings of a music mail order to the multi-national Virgin company. I admire his ceaseless energy, the-get-up-and-go spirit, yet all the while remaining himself. Also, the amusing story he told in an interview of how at the end of the month he and his then partners invariably had to hide (on their premises) from those they owed money to, in order to buy for time. These days he has the financial freedom to be able to pick and choose his entrepreneurial enterprises.

A little closer to home and we come across the ever-increasing availability of groups of like-minded entrepreneurs to join. Seeing as these days most self-employed work from home, which although great can prove to be isolating, it is useful to be part of a network. With a network you have the possibility to meet people, make contacts, exchange ideas, and use others as sounding boards for support and any problems encountered.

One such group, which I am connected to, is Crave; entrepreneur Melody Biringer started it in the United States and it is now taking The Netherlands by storm; this is a network of entrepreneurial women. The Urban Girl's Manifesto for Amsterdam came out in 2010, and features over 150 women in the Amsterdam area alone that you really should know. They offer a

diversity of products and services via their businesses. There will soon be one for the Den Haag ladies, as this is still in the making. Crave is proving to be a very interesting but also invaluable network.

For more information: <http://thecravecompany.com/amsterdam>. Should you wish to purchase a copy of the book, please contact me.

Other interesting and informal ZZP groups of note in Groningen, in Dutch: Zelfstandig Zonder Pensioen (Self-employed Without Pension) include, The Groningen Open Coffee Club: <http://groningenopencoffeeclub.blog-spot.com> and The Societe de Puddingfabrique www.depudding.nl. Both websites are in Dutch.

And finally, should the entrepreneurial assessment test turn out positive and you decide to dive into business, don't forget to heed the laws of Karma whilst doing business: 'What goes around comes around.' Unlike the famous American entrepreneur, P. T. Barnum who posted signs in his museum, which said "This Way to the Egress!" Excited visitors followed the signs and ended up outside the museum. In order to re-enter and continue their tour they had to pay another entrance fee. He may well have had a sense of humour, but someone else had the last laugh, as the museum burned to the ground in 1865!

If you would like to learn more about the rules and regulations with regard to starting a business, why not read the article on page 13 of this issue?

SOURCES:
Wikipedia
<http://sbinfoCanada.about.com>
<http://www.entrepreneur.com>
<http://www.answerbag.com>

Alison Day



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EVENTS REVIEW

Some of the fun events
Connect has organized
in the past few months.

In October we had a Pumpkin-carving event planned. A group of us set off with our families to a Pumpkin farm situated in the middle of Drenthe. It turned out to be a very nice afternoon, where we all received a hands-on experience on how to cut these pumpkins into the spookiest faces. Later a warm and tasty pumpkin soup was served in the barn. I am sure that all those who joined this event had nicely decorated doorsteps and window sills, with their personalized and beautifully carved pumpkins for Halloween.

In November a small group of ladies went for "beading and a glass of wine" at Juliet's in Haren. After a very cozy, entertaining and somewhat late evening, all the ladies went home with a beautifully crocheted necklace. This was a real hit; a big thankyou to you Juliet,

(from Stijl) if you are reading this!

Thanksgiving was held this year in "De Wijert", which is a suburb of Groningen. There was a nice crowd of people and everyone showed up with the most scrumptious side dishes to accompany the turkey. So much so that even if we had stayed until Christmas there would have still been food left over.

On the first Sunday in January 2011, we organized a family outing to go to the cinema. Pathe Cinema, Groningen had agreed to keep Rapunzel, the English language & 3D on the program for us, if only we could come up with an audience of at least 20 people! With a bit of scrambling around for people, we succeeded. Since that time Pathe Cinema has written to us expressing their admiration at Connect's success at getting together nearly 80 people to come and see Rapunzel on that day.

With plenty of new events being organized every quarter, by both Connect and Connect Noord Holland, why not take a look at the calendar and come and join us? Please be sure to check details online about your chosen event for availability and updates.

Berit Coombs



www.connect-int.org



Groningse Schoolvereniging
International Primary School Groningen

The International Primary School Groningen is a department (about 90 pupils) with a Dutch primary school and a Leonardo school. We aim to fulfil the educational needs of multicultural English and non-English speaking pupils between the ages of 4 and 11. The curriculum is British based with an International bias (IBC). Lessons are given by qualified English speaking teachers. For further contact you can send an e-mail or call Mr. T. Wiegman, headmaster.

GSV International Primary School
Groningen
Sweelincklaan 4
9722 JV Groningen
www.g-s-v.nl
T: 050-5279818, E: info@g-s-v.nl

Don't Miss!



LADIES-INTERNATIONAL-NETWORKING-KNOWLEDGE-SUPPORT
Invites YOU to Join a Seminar with Jo Parlett



Wednesday 13 April 2011
17.00 - 19.00 hrs

WANT TO WRITE YOUR LIFE STORY?
Whether you want to keep an effective diary, leave a legacy for your grandchildren, write a compelling blog or pen a full length memoir, this practical, inspiring and fun workshop will teach you the tricks of the trade.

Find out how to write stories based on your own experiences that live again for the reader and discover how you can add SPICE to your writing.














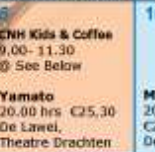
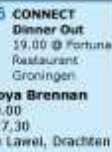









CONNECT
INTERNATIONAL

Connecting People, Businesses & Knowledge

Palmerstonweg 810, Groningen Info: www.connect-int.org



April 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 Josh Ritter		 Trad.it		 Noite do Fado	 1 April Fools Day CNH Kids & Coffee 9.00 - 11.30 @ Thora Thorgeirsdottir Oudorp	 2 Trad.It! 20.00 € 27.50 Oosterpoort, Gron.
 3 Mother's Day (GB) CONNECT Easter Market 11.00 Reception Hotel Oeder de Linden, Roden Groningen, Alkmaar, Enschede, Utrecht, Zwolle	 4 New Year (Hindu) CONNECT Conversational Dutch 09.00-11.00 @Connect	 5 CONNECT Survival Dutch 09.00-11.00 @ Connect Dance Works Rotterdam 20.00 €17,30 De Lawel, Drachten			 8 CONNECT Coffee Morning 10.30 - 12.30 @ Het Feithuis Groningen CNH For Coffee 20.00 @Anna Parker, Alkmaar	
 10 CONNECT Dog Club 13.00 @Stadspark Groningen Josh Ritter 20.30 € 18.50 City Theatre, Gron.	 11		 13 CONNECT LINKS 17.00-19.00 @Connect CNH Story Time 10.00-11.00 @ Narelle Hoogendijk-Kelsey, Noord Scharwoude	 14	 15 CNH Kids & Coffee 9.00- 11.30 @ See Below Yamato 20.00 hrs €25,30 De Lawel, Theatre Drachten	 16 CONNECT Dinner Out 19.00 @ Fortuna Restaurant Groningen Moya Brennan 20.00 €27,30 De Lawel, Drachten
 17 Palm Sunday	 18 Laura Jansen 20.30 € 20.00 Oosterpoort, Gron	 19 CONNECT Coffee Morning 10.30-12.30 @ News Cafe Groningen CONNECT Book Club 20.00 @ Noordlaren	 20 Scapino Ballet Songs for Dreila 20.00 €17,30 De Lawel, Drachten		 22 Good Friday CNH EASTER See Calendar Earth Day	 23 St George's Day
 24	 25 Laura Jansen		 27 CNH Play Afternoon 9.00- 11.30 @ Julie Nordmann Heiloo Noite do Fado 20.15 € 20,50 Oosterpoort, Gron.			 30 QUEEN'S DAY (NL) School Vacation (in 4 May)

HIGHLIGHTS: PLEASE CHECK → WWW.CONNECT-INTL.ORG → Not all Events Can be Listed at the Time of Printing

CONNECT (Groningen, Friesland, Drenthe)

CONNECT COFFEE MORNING

Date: 8, 19 April
Time: 10.30 - 12.30 hrs
Place: @ Het Feithuis (8) News Cafe (19) Groningen
Cost: Whatever you choose to eat or drink. Come join us for a cup of your favourite warm beverage and a chance to meet up with other internationals!

CONNECT EASTER MARKET

Date: 3 April
Time: 11.00 hrs
Place: Meet up: Reception - Hotel Oeder de Linden
www.kunst-op-eieren.nl

CONNECT CONVERSATIONAL DUTCH

Date: 4 April (Mondays)
Time: 09.00-11.00 hrs
Price: € 12.00 per session or € 40.00 per month

CONNECT SURVIVAL DUTCH

Date: 5 April (Tuesdays/Thursdays)
Time: 09.00-11.00 hrs
Price: € 100.00 p. month (8x)

CONNECT LINKS

Date: 13 April
Time: 17.00-19.00 hrs
Place: Connect
Seminar with Jo Parfitt

CONNECT BOOK CLUB

Date: 19 April
Time: 20.00 hrs
Place: @ Louise Nellen
Book: 'Water for Elephants' by Sara Gruen

CNH (Noord Holland)

CNH KIDS & COFFEE

Date: 1, 15 April
Time: 09.00-11.30 hrs
Place: Thora Thorgeirsdottir, (1), Oudorp. Coby Geertsma van Tilburg

(15), Alkmaar

CNH STORY TIME

Date: 13 April
Time: 10.00-11.00 hrs
Place: @ Narelle
Hoogendijk-Kelsey, Noord
Scharwoude

CNH PLAY AFTERNOON (pre-school kids welcome)

Date: 27 April
Time: 14.00-16.30 hrs
Place: @ Julie Nordmann, Heiloo

CNH FOR COFFEE

Date: 8 April
Time: 20.00 hrs
Place: @ Anna Parker, Alkmaar

CNH EASTER

Date: 22 April
Time: See website
Place: TBA





May 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 May Day Alkmaar, Enschede, Leeuwarden	2 Hooverphonic 20.30 € 20.00 Oosterpoort, Groningen	3 Santa Cruzen Day (Philippines)	4	5 Freedom Day (NL)	6 CNH Kids & Coffee 9.00 - 11.30 @ Martine Laagland Winder, Alkmaar	7
8 CONNECT Dog Club 13.00 Groningen Mother's Day (USA)	9 School Bells	10 CONNECT Understanding Dutch Social Behaviour 09.00 - 11.00 @ Connect	11 CNH Story Time 20.00 @ Anna Parker, Alkmaar	12	13 CONNECT Coffee Morning 10.30 - 12.30 @ Het Feithuis Groningen CNH For Coffee 20.00 @ Erika Nentwich, Noord Scharwoude	14 CONNECT Culinary Meeting Int. Pot-Luck 19.00 @ Haren
15 	16 www.derevolutie.nl/blogpost.com	17 	18 CNH Book Club 20.00 @ Rachel Dix, Grootshermer	19 CONNECT Cinema Night Movie & a Drink See website OnWings! 19 - 21 May 20.30 € 20.00 Oosterpoort, Gron.	20 CNH Kids & Coffee 9.00 - 11.30 @ Sarah Dekker Hynn, Ultgeest	21 CONNECT Excursion & Lunch 13.00 @ Groningen CS CNH Workshop 14.00 - 17.00 @ Suzy Wright, Heloo
22 on wings	23 Victoria Day (Canada)	24 CONNECT Coffee Morning 10.30 - 12.30 @ Cafe Koster Groningen	25 CNH Play Afternoon 14.00 - 16.30 @ Narelle Hoogendijk-Kelsey, Noord Scharwoude Dance Group Ams. LE(E)F 20.15 Cost from € 7.75 City Theatre, Gron.	26 	27 	
29 CONNECT Dinner Out 17.00 @ Ribhouse Texas, Zeegse Leeuwarden	30 Memorial Day (USA)	31 				

HIGHLIGHTS: PLEASE CHECK ~ www.connect-int.org ~ Not all Events Can be Listed at the Time of Printing

CONNECT (Groningen, Friesland, Drenthe)

CONNECT COFFEE MORNING
Date: 13, 24 May
Time: 10.30 - 12.30 hrs
Place: @ Het Feithuis (13), Cafe Koster (24), Groningen
Cost: Whatever you choose to eat or drink. Come join us for a cup of your favourite warm beverage and a chance to meet up with other internationals!

CONNECT UNDERSTANDING DUTCH SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR
Date: 10 May
Time: 17.00-19.00
Place: Connect
Cost: € 5,00

CONNECT CINEMA NIGHT
Date: 19 May
Time: TBA
Place: See website

CONNECT EXCURSION & LUNCH
Date: 21 May
Time: 13.00
Place: @Groningen CS
Excursion to the windmill museum "De Wachter" (by bike) + coffee

CNH (Noord Holland)

CNH KIDS & COFFEE
Date: 6, 20 May
Time: 09.00-11.30 hrs
Place: See calendar

CNH STORY TIME
Date: 11 May
Time: 10.00-11.00 hrs
Place: @ Anna Parker, Alkmaar

CNH PLAY AFTERNOON (pre-school kids welcome)
Date: 25 May
Time: 14.00-16.30 hrs
Place: @ Narelle

Hoogendijk-Kelsey, Noord Scharwoude

CNH FOR COFFEE
Date: 13 May
Time: 20.00 hrs
Place: @ Erika Nentwich, Noord Scharwoude

CNH BOOK CLUB
Date: 18 May
Time: 20.00 hrs
Place: Rachel Dix, Grootshermer
Book: Tandia by Bryce Courtenay. The sequel to The Power of One

CNH WORKSHOP
Date: 21 May
Time: 14.00-17.00 hrs
Place: Suzy Wright, Heloo
See website for more details





June 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 <p>Band of Horses</p>		 <p>Nationale Reisopera La Bohème 20.15 hrs Cost from € 14.50 City Theatre, Gron</p>	<p>1</p> <p>Ascension (Christian)</p>	<p>2</p> <p>CNH Kids & Coffee 9.00- 11.30 hrs @ Coby Geertsma-van Tilburg, Alkmaar</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Haydn Youth String Orchestra 20.15 hrs € 12.50 Oosterpoort, Gron.</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>5</p> <p>CONNECT Walking Bocce /Jeu de Boules 14.00 Drenthe</p> <p>Alkmaar, Eschede, Utrecht</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Shavuot (8-9 Jewish)</p>	<p>9</p> <p>CNH The Antiques Diva 19.00 hrs. @ TBA</p>	<p>10</p> <p>CONNECT Coffee Morning 10.30-12.30 @ Het Feithuis Groningen</p> <p>CNH For Coffee 20.00 hrs @ Julie Nordmann, Helloo</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Band of Horses 20.30 hrs € 23.50 Oosterpoort, Gron</p>
<p>12</p> <p>CONNECT Dog Club 13.00 Groningen</p> <p>Pentecost (Christian)</p>	 <p>13</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Flag Day (USA)</p>	 <p>15</p> <p>CNH Story Time 20.00 hrs @ Thora Thorgerisdottir, Oudorp</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Dragon Boat Festival (China)</p> <p>Ratha Yatra (Hindu)</p>	<p>17</p> <p>CONNECT Dinner Out 19.00 @ Fujiyama Groningen</p> <p>CNH Kids & Coffee 9.00- 11.30 hrs @ Narelle Hoogendijk, Kelsey, Noord Schanwoude</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>19</p> <p>Timkat (Ethiopian Orthodox Christian)</p> <p>Father's Day (USA, Canada, GB)</p>	<p>20</p>	 <p>21</p> <p>CONNECT Coffee Morning 10.30-12.30 @ Goud Kantoor Groningen</p> <p>SUMMER SOLSTICE</p>	<p>22</p> <p>CONNECT Asser Nacht 19.00 hrs @ Meet Groningen Station</p> <p>CNH Play Afternoon 14.00 - 16.30 @ See Calendar</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p> 	<p>25</p>
<p>26</p> <p>Alkmaar, Leeuwarden</p>	 <p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	 <p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>	<p>1</p>

HIGHLIGHTS: PLEASE CHECK ~ www.connect-int.org ~ Not all Events Can be Listed at the Time of Printing

CONNECT
(Groningen, Friesland, Drenthe)

CONNECT COFFEE MORNING
Date: 10, 21 June
Time: 10.30 - 12.30 hrs
Place: @ Het Feithuis (10) Goud Kantoor (21) Groningen
Cost: Whatever you choose to eat or drink. Come join us for a cup of your favourite warm beverage and a chance to meet up with other internationals!

CONNECT ASSER NACHT
Date: 22 June
Time: 19.00 hrs
Place: Meet up Groningen Station
For more details see website

**CONNECT WALKING BOCCÉ/
JEU DE BOULES**
Date: 5 June
Time: 14.00
Place: Drenthe (See website)

An outdoor active game whilst walking in the countryside

CONNECT DINNER OUT
Date: 17 June
Time: 19.00
Place: Fujiyama, Groningen (Japanese Restaurant)

CONNECT DOG CLUB
Date: 12 June
Time: 13.00
Place: Groningen
Meet up with other dog owners for a walk and a chat.

CNH
(Noord Holland)

CNH KIDS & COFFEE
Date: 3,17 June
Time: 09.00-11.30 hrs
Place: See calendar

CNH STORY TIME

Date: 15 June
Time: 10.00-11.00 hrs
Place: @ Thora Thorgerisdottir, Oudorp

CNH PLAY AFTERNOON
(pre-school kids welcome)
Date: 22 June
Time: 14.00-16.30 hrs
Place: @ Jo Wolfert at the 'Hoorne Vaart' Swimming Pool in Alkmaar

CNH FOR COFFEE
Date: 10 June
Time: 20.00 hrs
Place: @ Julie Nordmann, Helloo

CNH - THE ANTIQUES DIVA
Date: 9 June
Time: 19.00 hrs
Place: TBA





I'm sitting at my desk on a cold Winter's night trying to think of an idea for the Spring issue. All that comes to my mind is the lovely holiday we just took in the tropics. Oh how I miss the warmth and sunshine. The holiday was fabulous but uneventful, so I did not want to bore you with that tale. Plus this issue is about entrepreneurs. While running errands, an idea popped into my mind. I will write about my favorite neighborhood shops. What better examples of entrepreneurial spirit could you find than shop owners? I chose three, which was difficult because there are so many great shops where I live.

Fay Abali – Sterrenstof
Eerste Goudsbloemdwasstraat 10
M: 06 49 10 76 22

Fay Abali is the owner of a wonderful designer outlet with a boutique feel in the Jordaan. She has a great eye for picking unusual pieces in colors and designs that most shops do not carry. There is always quite an eclectic assortment. I really enjoy shopping at this little gem and Fay always takes the time to provide personal service, tea and a chat. Each time I go, I manage to find something I like; I probably have half her shop in my closet by now!

Carol: How many years have you been in business?

Fay: I started in the retail industry about 10 years ago. I was working for Trix and Trees, a Dutch clothing line, while studying to become a teacher. I noticed there was always a surplus of clothes that were not sold and offered to sell it at the Noordermarkt. This went very well, so I decided to start a boutique with Sasja van Gorkum. She sold clothes at the market whilst I managed the store.

During this time Fay attained her teaching degree and taught Dutch as a second language, as well as a teacher teacher. She was also involved in making documentary films for schools. Eventually, she chose to leave teaching and became sole owner of the boutique.

Carol: What was your motivation to own the shop?

Fay: I enjoy being independent and the freedom to make my own decisions.

Carol: What are your future plans?

Fay: I would like to look for a new location and introduce new brands.

Firma Labes en Zonen
Korte Prinsengracht 97
1013 GR Amsterdam
(Run by Edwin, Richard & Irma Labes)

One of the first stores I went looking for when I moved to our new apartment in Amsterdam was the supermarket. Unfortunately, I found one of the worst Albert Heijns that I have ever encountered and thought there must be some alternative to this, and there was. There they were, the local green grocer with an inviting display of

fruits and vegetables that calls you into the store. Along with the everyday carrots and potatoes, there is quite an assortment of gourmet items that can only be found in this store. They have a vast product knowledge, and are always very friendly. Every time I am cooking something new or special, they always steer me in the right direction for ingredients. It also seems to be a place where people come for a chat. It is fun to listen to stories in the local Amsterdam accent and as a result I always learn something new.

thought the best way to earn a living was to become your own boss.

Edwin, one of the sons, has been working in the store for 33 years, his brother Richard for 24 years and his wife, for 12. The brothers now run the store.

Carol: Is there something you can tell me about your family?

Edwin: My father, Toon, gave advice on television and radio about fruits and vegetables and shared recipes with his audience. For example, do you know how you can tell if a chestnut is good?

when I moved to Amsterdam was Jordino. The chocolate shoes and handbags in the window immediately caught my attention, so of course I had to go in and check things out. They make the loveliest handmade chocolates on the premises with the best of ingredients; the aroma alone is just heavenly. They constantly have new flavors and shapes for every occasion, which of course I have to try. Jordino's is not only a treat for the taste buds; it is also visually pleasing.

Carol: How many years have you been in business?

Willy: My husband, Job Klebach, started selling ice cream about 18 years ago after he was made redundant from his former job. We discovered that ice cream was not enough to pay the bills. Seeing as he had trained in patisserie, he decided to introduce chocolates into the mix and has not looked back since. Eventually, his son Jordi joined him, which is about 10 years ago now.

Willy told me that her son met his wife, Danielle whilst she was working in the shop. The whole family is still involved in some form or another in the business. Their other son, Ramon, does the marketing.

Carol: How did you come up with the name Jordino?

Willy: The name is made up using the name Jordi, who will eventually take over the business.

Carol: Where does your husband get his inspiration from?

Willy: My husband is inspired by the tradeshow he attends in Paris and from books.

Carol: What are Jordino's specialties?

Willy: Apart from the handmade chocolates and ice cream, we also make a custom-made honey, date with rose liquor and marzipan, a fig with ganache and a grand dessert bonbon.

I have to say this is one of my favorites, it is a good-sized chocolate cup filled with different fillings like chocolate mixed with limoncello liquor. Jordino's were once commissioned by the bank of the Netherlands to make chocolates in the form of the 50-euro bill.

After spending a lovely time at the shop, I was sent off with some complimentary grand dessert bonbons and their speciality dates. I really appreciate the time that each of the shop owners took out of their busy days to talk to me. It was such a pleasure to get to know their stories and there are still so many more shop owners that I would be interested in interviewing.



Fay Abali – Sterrenstof



Firma Labes en Zonen



Jordino

Carol: How long have you been in business?

Edwin: The business was started in 1962, by my father and mother, Toon and Greet Labes. My father had been working for a grocer and

Carol: No.

Edwin: Put the chestnuts in water and those that float are not good.

Carol: Is there anything else you would like to share with me?

Edwin: Yes, on March 28th there will be an exhibition at the Amsterdam Museum, where photos from the past of small shop owners and their stories will be exhibited. Firma Labes en Zonen will be participating in the exhibition.

Jordino
Chocolateria Desseteria
Haarlemmerdijk 25a
1013 KA Amsterdam
020 420 32 25
www.jordino.nl

(Run by: Job, Willy, Jordi, Danielle, Ramon, Klebach)
One of the first places I discovered

Text & Photos: Carol Govaert ■



THREE GREEN Dutch Entrepreneurs



Mario Sabel - Making Green Miles

Green gas created from roadside waste and livestock manure: Utopia? The three northern provinces of The Netherlands want to reduce their CO2 emission by having 10% of their entire vehicle fleet run on non fossil fuels and electricity. Together they initiated the "100,000 transportation plan". Mario Sabel and his colleagues try to bridge the gap between government policy and the every day practice of entrepreneurs.

Sabel knows everything about sustainable transportation. He drives a green gas car himself and would not want it any other way. When people ask him about the advantages, he hands them the keys and says: "Find out for yourself!" At the moment there are not enough filling stations, although the province of Drenthe is developing fast. They produce the most green gas made from roadside waste in The Netherlands.

The Clean North

Every entrepreneur, every vehicle fleet is unique and requires a different technology. "They ask me things like: I own a truck with a concrete mixer on top. Can green gas handle that?" A painter with five company

cars, for instance, can reduce costs, get free entry into inner cities and create a sustainable image. Local governments are increasingly interested in the green factor when it comes to tender applications. So, the painter with his green gas cars will benefit from that. In the Northern Netherlands we focus on green gas and electric transportation. In cities with bad air quality, air improvement can be seen the minute you switch over from fossil fuel to green gas or electricity.

Making Miles

Mario Sabel used to be a marketing man. He made a career move to PCN, the importer of VW, Porsche and Audi, to advertise motoring sustainability. "In 2008 the "100,000 transportation plan" was established by the provinces. Sustainable mobility got prioritized. We met at the right moment, with the car being the most suitable candidate. That way you make miles instead of kilometres. Besides a car is emotion and it is a lot sexier than a led light. You make a bigger statement with a green car."

For more on green cars:
www.degroenewebsite.nl

Geert Jan Pastoor - Energy from Waste

We all produce waste, but are not aware of the added value of waste. Geert Jan Pastoor does; it is his speciality. Materials from waste that have enough heating power to replace fossil energy sources like coal. These materials are not recyclable as products, but they can be used as secondary fuel. His knowledge is based on the distribution of the product, not the collection of it. Companies with a lot of waste can ask his advice on handling it.

It all started with Agnifirm, where Pastoor worked as an extension agent for agriculture. Later he went to work for the VAM (Essent Milieu) where he developed the area of distribution on compost. After that he moved to Germany and ended up in fuels. After ten years in the

international distribution of products from waste, he started his own business. He works with a Danish firm that recycles plaster-board, according to the Cradle 2 Cradle principle. The plaster is used in the cement industry.

Cleaner Cement Industry

"I supply fuel from waste to the cement industry. Secondary fuel is made from paper and plastics with a high heating value, and is shaped like pellets, or fluff. Inside the cement oven, a long tube and coarse gravel explode under high temperature and are ground into cement. The high temperature needed is reached by blowing fuel into the tube. Primarily pet coke was used, but nowadays there are plants that already use 70% of alternative fuels. Because a lot of fuel is needed in the cement industry, and secondary fuels are cleaner and cheaper than fossil fuels, using them creates a win win situation."

Involved Member of the Board

Pastoor feels very involved in the development of energy in the Eemshaven and Delfzijl. That is why he is a member of the board of the Collaborating Companies Eems Delta, the SBE (Semenwerkende Bedrijven Eems Delta) He is the chairman of energy and of environment. In his rare spare time he is also on the board of the nationwide branch union of Waste Companies. This union is a sparring partner to the department of VROM and advises on emission criteria.

Read more on fuel from waste on
www.pastoorconsult.nl

Martin Smit - Sustainable Entrepreneurship is Rocking!

Martin Smit calls himself a 'sustainable entrepreneur'. His advising agency is Hunesus, which is also an inspirational platform for sustainable innovation. From watching the 2006 VPRO documentary about Cradle 2 Cradle (C2C) "Food from waste" he felt: "This is exactly what I mean."

His inspiration came from C2C, using totally recyclable or compostable materials. "In the North of Holland I bring parties together in the Cradle Kring Noord, nowadays CODIN. It is a front-runner group of companies who indeed work by the C2C principles."

Business Enhancement

He has always developed innovative business concepts; his inspiration to set up Hunesus came from the river Hunze, which runs in his back yard. "Hunesus is the primal name of the Hunze. The river represents my company philosophy. The road from A to B is never straight; sometimes you have to flood the shores, take some creative space. Entre-



photo: www.pastoorconsult.nl

preneurs look at their business together with Hunesus, to find out how they can enhance it while being sustainable. We also want to inspire, organise events and publish books to create an interesting network for companies."

Sustainability Rocks

With examples at hand to advise companies about sustainability, Hunesus wants to practice what they preach. So they invented the "Kei Werken" (rock working) concept: an ultimate sustainable building, built entirely on C2C principles. All materials are healthy, safe, clean and recyclable or compostable without loss of quality. "We make use of wind- and solar power wherever possible, 100% self sustaining. We purify our own wastewater. The building will have glass strips that breathe like the gills of a fish. This technique is based on biomimicry, the scientific imitation of natural processes. The building, "Kei", will be rock shaped, because of the "hunebedden" (megalithic tombs) in the environment. For insulation we use hemp which is grown right on the spot where the first Kei will be built."

Rock Working

The municipality of Borger Odoorn supports the plan and the first Kei will be built this year in Borger. "It has to become a booster for sustainable innovation in The Netherlands. We want to show that you can build something like this without extra costs, that it is profitable and enriches the environment. Freelancers can rent a workspace, meet other freelancers and be inspired. As a Kei member you have access to all Kei buildings in The Netherlands. The Kei will be a breeding place for sustainable innovation."

For more about this principle
www.keiwerken.nl



Tjitske Zuiderbaan

SUBLET: APARTMENT

FOR RENT: Small, inner-city, one bedroom apartment. Completely furnished. The apartment is on the second floor with a small balcony and bathroom/shower combination. It has a large open plan kitchen-living room. Two minutes from the central market square. No free parking in the area.

For rent during the months of June, July and August. Time period is flexible. July, August, September is also an option. Price: € 600,00 per month. (Total amount for the three month period to be paid up front).

CONTACT: Tjitske Zuiderbaan by e-mail:
tjitztekst@gmail.com or mobile phone: 06-183 625 36.



Empowering Students

Recently I interviewed two self-employed 'English as a Foreign Language' teachers living in the town of Castricum (13 km south of Alkmaar). These teachers, Joanne Silberstein and Caroline Pickard, have used their education and personal experiences to cultivate their own unique niche market of clientele.

**CONNECT
NOORD
HOLLAND**

Joanne Silberstein, a native English speaker and a longtime resident of the Netherlands, returned to school in Holland almost nineteen years ago to obtain a teaching degree in English for Dutch secondary schools. Since that time she has gained a CELTA certificate; taught in secondary schools and adult education; written articles and columns for an arts magazine; assisted expat organizations and raised two children.

Her primary focus now is coaching local students between the ages of 12 to 19. The levels and needs of Joanne's students vary from lower-level learners to Cambridge prep students; however, the method Joanne uses to teach all of her students is equally comprehensive. She goes 'all out' for her students - she finds what the individual's needs are and teaches to those needs. For example, with her secondary level students she does her best to contact the individual schools and the English teacher directly. She works with both the teachers and the curriculum to help her students succeed. Joanne said that she has made excellent contacts in several schools and for the most part the teachers and administrators are very helpful and willing to provide curriculum information and communicate study plans.

Although Joanne does not seek out Business English students, they do on occasion find her. Consequently, she also keeps busy with students from various work environments, especially people who need to brush-up on their English to be able to compete more effectively in competitive business environments.

I asked Joanne if there is anything she dislikes about her job and she replied mildly, 'having no colleagues to bounce ideas off of'. However, when I asked her what she really enjoys about her job, she responded without hesitation 'finding the open door to help her students learn and the personal one-on-one contact with her students.' Additionally, she told me that she also loves the challenge of teaching literature and helping push her students to be the best they can be.

Joanne is a dynamic, dedicated and committed woman and teacher who goes the extra mile to make personal contact, teach to her student's needs and loves what she does at the same time. For more info: Joanne Silberstein-Walton T: (0251) 654716 www.bjles-engels.nl



Caroline Pickard, also a native English speaker, has been living in the Netherlands for thirteen years. Eight years ago Caroline combined her education and business background and built her own business as a business English teacher and translator.

Her education began at the University of Bristol where she obtained her undergraduate degree in Geography, and, in addition, pursued a TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) certification, to help keep her job options open.

Caroline's professional background is extensive. She has worked in a variety of business environments including logistics, recruitment, project management and customer service. However, she has also been responsible for custom designing and teaching development and management training.

building a course for survey-takers for the Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, translating documents and websites and teaching English in small business.

At the moment, as well as teaching, Caroline is pursuing the internationally recognized teaching qualification CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults). Her ultimate professional goal is to train teachers on how to improve teaching their subject in English.

My impression of Caroline is that she is a very positive person who takes the job of teaching very seriously.

I wonder if Caroline, at the time she was pursuing her TEFL training, could have foreseen that her education along with her business experience would eventually help in contributing to her creating her own business, and making a living at what she loves to do: teaching!

I asked her if she had any advice for students and she said, 'stop listening and start talking'. When asked if she had any advice for the rest of us she responded with, 'love the work you do'.

For more information about Caroline please visit to her website: www.betterenglish.nu

Nancy Kolk-Shull

"As teachers we hope to encourage our students - as parents we hope teachers will inspire our children - as students we need teachers who challenge us."

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VLOK

Vereniging van Klusbedrijven



Northern entrepreneurs were honoured at the Flinc Awards ceremony at the Stadsschouwburg (City Theatre) in Groningen on 31 January 2011.

The Flinc Awards began in 2008 as an N.V. NOM initiative. The idea was to help new businesses in the three northern provinces of Drenthe, Friesland, and Groningen to start up by helping them with finance for their operations.

It is a prestigious event, with the awards given out by Max van den Berg, Queen's Commissioner for the Province of Groningen; Siem Jansen, Director of N.V. NOM; Janika Horvath, Director of Syntens Noord-Nederland; Ron van Gent, Director of MKB Noord; Sibrand Poppema, Chair of the Rijksuniversiteit Board; and Pieter Sijperma, Chief Editor of the Dagblad van het Noorden.

There was a happy tension in the gathering crowd in the reception room, before we moved to our seats in the theatre. In these moments before the show began, I sipped a glass of bubbly and chatted with one entrepreneur, Victor, who was part of a company that developed mobile carp shelters, www.henninkcarp.com, with the support of the NOM.

The upbeat music and fast-paced programme was well choreographed and went without a hitch, despite the best efforts of the comedian, whose antics included walking across stage in his under shorts, and joking about the Groningen airport being in Drenthe.

With seven awards and five entrepreneurial businesses competing

for each category, there were 35 hopefuls waiting to hear if they might be a winner.

AND THE WINNERS WERE...

Most Promising:
Stabi Alert, www.stabialert.nl, developed a device to strengthen foundations during excavation which can also warn of any impending collapse.



Most Growth Ambition:
Anome Projects, www.anomeprojects.com, developed a ground consolidation material that can stabilize soils and prevent collapse of dikes and dams with applications that include slope protection, and artificial reefs.

Anome Projects Ground Consolidators



Most Cross-Region:
Thread Projector made a cap to protect pipes, which is easy to install and remove.

Most Innovative:
CC Trailer made an adjustable trailer.

Most Media Attention (& Talent):
www.entalent.nl, received this award. Through 'Het Grote Inspiratie Doeboek' (The Big

Inspiration Do Book') they received lots of attention in the media.



Most Driven:
Darling Delicious, www.darlingdelicious.nl, searches the world for the newest, tastiest, and best foods and cosmetics. Best of all, for us, they have a shop you can visit on the Gedempte Zuiderdiep 21.



Best Student Business:
www.songa.nl makes it easier to listen to music on the internet, and YouTube was mentioned. Check them out!



Congratulations to the winners, and to all the participants for a job well done. Flinc will be re-organizing in April so we can stay tuned for new developments.

Margaret Metsala ■

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THE
ROAD TO
STARTING
CAPITAL





THE NUTS & BOLTS OF



FREELANCING

So, you've finally made the decision to become an entrepreneur and start your own freelance business. Congratulations — you've taken the first step! But now what? How does one turn the dream into a reality in the Netherlands?

Well, a good place to start is by contacting the Dutch Chamber of Commerce (Kamer van Koophandel, KvK). The KvK has an excellent web site in English

(www.kvk.nl/english/startingabusiness/default.asp), which should be your first stop. It explains many important aspects of starting your own business and we have excerpted some of them in the following paragraphs. Dutch advisors from the KvK are also willing to meet and talk with you (for a small fee) as a follow up step or to get answers to any specific questions you may have.

"Setting up your own business means taking risks. You will not have a regular, fixed source of income such as regular income from employment or social security benefits. However, proper preparation can help you eliminate unnecessary risks. When you set up your own business you have to deal with a number of issues which are relevant for every entrepreneur."

Business Plan. "All business owners should write a business plan, even if you do not need any finance or are starting a very small business. Many part-time entrepreneurs do not write a business plan because they do not think of themselves as real entrepreneurs. But they are entrepreneurs, and so are you! Your business plan helps you to chart the future structure of your company. It gets your business off to a professional and efficient start."

Trade Registration. "Even if you only work part-time in your own business, you must register in the trade register of the Chamber of Commerce. Registration of the company should occur within a period of one week preceding and one week following the commencement of business activities. Regis-

tration should take place at the Chamber of Commerce for your area. Find out in advance all the information you will need for the registration. A charge is involved for the registration process."

Working as a Freelancer. "The terms 'freelance' and 'zzp' ('zelfstandige zonder personeel' or self-employed without staff) are used interchangeably with little difference between the two. If you go freelance, you should pay extra attention to your situation, because the term 'freelancer' is not a definition recognized by law. Freelancers operate somewhere in between being self-employed and being in paid employment."

"Your freelance situation is defined on the basis of a number of factors, including Social Security Legislation, Tax Legislation, and Labour Law." **Social Security Legislation.** "Social security agencies such as the UWV evaluate the independence of freelancers on the basis of the actual circumstances: the scope of the work; the number of clients; the level of turnover; the presentation to the outside world. If you work as a freelancer and are considered to be self-employed, the client does not have to deduct social security premiums from your freelance payments. If you are not considered to be self-employed, the client does have to deduct social security premiums."

Tax legislation. "Freelancers have to pay turnover tax and income tax. Anyone who practices a profession independently is considered to be self-employed for the purposes of turnover tax. The Tax authorities use four criteria to determine whether a freelancer is self-employed: independence, sustainability, profit motive and the number of clients. Freelancers are

ch a r g e d income tax on their income and there are t h r e e categories of income tax. **Business profits:** If the tax authorities consider you to be self-employed, you can declare your freelance income as business profits. You are eligible for self-employed persons' tax allowances.

Salary from employment contract: If you have an employment

contract, the client (= employer) deducts income tax from the freelancer's salary and pays this to the Tax authorities.

Freelancing as a secondary activity: Income from work which cannot be considered either as salary or as business profits is known as income from other activities." Labour law. "The freelancer is in paid employment if s/he performs work in person in a certain period; the employer is obliged to pay salary; there is a relationship of authority between the client and the freelancer."

Administration. "You are obliged by law to record anything with financial implications for your business in a systematic administration. It is important for yourself to keep a proper financial administration. It gives you a wealth of business information and insight into how your company is progressing. Books and documents which are important for corporation tax, turnover tax and income tax purposes have to be kept for seven years, as laid down in the Dutch Civil Code (Algemene Wet inzake Rijksbelastingen)."

What to keep? "What documents are important for your business administration? All information which you record on paper or electronically such as: cashbook administration and receipts; sales and purchases book; invoices received and copies of invoices sent; bank statements; contracts, agreements and other such documents; software and databases."

BTW (turnover tax). "Your administration must show how much turnover tax you have to pay to the tax authorities. You need to keep a record of: invoices which you issue; invoices which you have to pay;

expenses; income; private use of goods and services."

Invoices. "Your invoices should be numbered progressively and in a series. The invoices should state the invoice date and number; name and address of the supplier or customer (and the turnover tax identification number when trading with another EU country); description of the goods delivered or service provided; prices exclusive of turnover tax; and the turnover tax amounts, split into turnover tax rates."

Insurances. "Anyone starting up a new business takes risks. To some extent, you can insure against these risks. Think about which risks you wish to run and which insurances you wish to take out. In the case of small risks it may be more cost-efficient to put some money aside than take out an expensive insurance policy." "As an entrepreneur you will be dealing with two kinds of insurance: Personal insurance and Business insurance."

Personal Insurance covers: disability, accident, pension and unemployment whilst Business Insurance covers: business assets Liability and legal assistance.

These are just a few of the important points to consider when starting your own business. By being thoroughly informed and through careful preparation, beginning a new venture can be an exciting and rewarding experience. Is it something for YOU?

Karen Prowse

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The Hermitage is an easy walk through historic Amsterdam if you're not in a real hurry, or you could take Tram 9 or 14 to the Waterlooplein stop. Car parking is available in the vicinity, and taking the Metro is an option. You can also arrive by boat.

HERMITAGE AMSTERDAM

Hermitage Amsterdam is housed in Amstelhof, a former home for aged women. One of the rooms is devoted to a permanent exhibition on the history of the building, which includes the basement kitchen and the regent's room that were restored according to old photographs and documents. The kitchen has enormous cauldrons with no apparent way to heat them, which leaves us with the mystery of how that kitchen worked.

Another permanent exhibition is on the history of the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, the ties to Hermitage Amsterdam, and the Royal family connections between The Netherlands and Russia.

The Hermitage contains two gift shops, one of which is geared towards children. The good quality restaurant, Neva, has table service and a view of the inner garden, plus an outdoor terrace.

Alexander the Great Exhibition
Every six months there are new exhibitions about art, archaeology or history. The one I went to see was about the fascinating life of Alexander the Great, exploring the myths and the reality of this world conqueror who was much admired by Catherine the Great, founder of the Hermitage in St. Petersburg.

Hellenistic Period
The Hellenistic Period refers specifically to the time that follows the death of Alexander the Great.

His conquests brought with them a wave of Greek culture causing lasting influence on the art, architecture, language and way of life in the lands he conquered. The Greek influence after Alexander the Great could be seen as far away as Egypt and India. Even statues of local gods began to show Greek influences. The exhib-

ited artefacts showed this influence in a blending of Greek and local arts. Prominent were cameos, intaglios, coins and sculptures depicting Alexander in life and legend.

Tapestries and etchings, both depicted the same defining moments of Alexander's triumphs, my two favourites being his parade through Babylon, and visiting the tent of Darius after defeating him in battle. In that victory, Alexander treats the women in Darius's family with great respect, telling them he

will not harm them and that they can retain their rank in society.

The Death of Alexander the Great
Alexander died young, at the age of 33. He apparently was interested only in conquering, not ruling and, when persuaded to do the latter to consolidate his power base in Babylon, he spent a year drinking heavily and then died from an unknown cause. The location of his tomb remains a mystery. After this his empire was divided, but his legend lived on and he was often likened to a God.

The most memorable artefact (to me) was one I found in the section on the myths of Alexander's life and death. It was a palm-sized depiction of Alexander's ascent to heaven in a basket carried by a pair of great eagles. The accompanying description said the eagles were attracted to do this job by impaling chunks of horse liver on poles beside the basket. Imagine that!

Exhibitions to come: Guided Tours following Alexander's Footsteps (or those of his horse Bucephalus)

While the Alexander the Great exhibition ended in March, there are two associated trips occurring this year:

Departing on April 10 is a guided 9-day tour following Alexander's path through Troy, Pergamon, Ephesus, Milete, Bodrum, and Ankara with a visit to Cappadocia.

On September 3, there is a 8-day guided trip to Greece, to the "Cradle of Alexander the Great" which include his birthplace, youthful haunts and early triumphs. Delphi, the Acropolis, Corinth, Thessalonika, and Alexander's father's tomb in Vergina are among the highlights.

Open daily 10.00 to 17.00, (Wednesday to 20.00). Closed only 3 days/year. Audio tours are available in Dutch and English, plus a changing third language.

Hermitage Amsterdam
Amstel 51, Amsterdam
www.hermitage.nl


Margaret Metsala ■



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WHAT'S GOING ON?

When you are new in The Netherlands, it becomes an interesting task to find out what's going on in town and elsewhere. When the weekend is coming up and you are looking for something to do, where do you start? Luckily, there are many resources and when you know where to look, you'll find so much on offer that it could be difficult to choose.

MIJN AGENDA

A good all-purpose start to your search can be: www.mijnagenda.nl. This website covers what's going on in the provinces of Groningen, Friesland and Drenthe, with a searchable database. This website is easy to use: you can search by category, by key word, by location, and by date. It has a comprehensive listing of what is on at movie theatres, concert halls, exhibitions, sporting events, and more.

For example, I looked up "Lawei" in the "Trefwoorden" (reference words) and found the programme for events at De Lawei in Drachten. I narrowed the search down to April 16 and found that The Voice of Clannad will be doing Irish ballads by Moya Brennan. Great! City Theatre, De Lawei also has its own website and agenda: www.lawei.nl.

Then, you can check on "Zoekopdracht wissen" (erase search), and start all over again to find what's going on somewhere else. I decided to look for "Warffum", and found the international folk dancing festival, Op Roakeldais, is taking place from 29 June to 03 July this year. That's something to put on my calendar - this event is big! You can see dancers from all over the world competing on stage. Where there is international dancing, there's international food, and international crafts for sale... and lots to do. This year, there is an exciting line-up of groups from as far away as Tahiti, Guam, Argentina, Brazil, Indonesia, Taiwan and Senegal and from many other lands nearer to The Netherlands, like Turkey and Russia.

Once you find an event listing that interests you, you can click on the name and learn more about it. Mijn Agenda offers quite an adventure: I found out here that Golden Earring is going to be playing in Leeuwarden on 22 October. For only 25 Euros!

A MULTITUDE OF RESOURCES

Bars, restaurants and hotels are a good place to look for entertainment listings, which can usually be located on reading tables or on racks, in these establishments.

In Groningen and Leeuwarden, look for the *Uitloper*. It is a weekly listing covering music, theatre, films, parties, quiz nights, art, literary, and other events. In Dutch 'diversen' (diverse). It is online also at: www.uitloper.eu.

In Groningen, De Agenda is published monthly for Stadschouwburg (City Theatre) and the Oosterpoort. The latter is also available online at:

www.de-oosterpoort.nl

A sampling of agenda's I found at Het Opstapje included Vooruit, an agenda for events in Emmen. This is published ten times per year and is available online at: www.vooruit.nl. A concert at Heineken Music Hall in Amsterdam was advertised by: www.ticketmaster.nl. The Pop



Agenda, also available at: www.eventim.nl, advertised a Taylor Swift concert at the Ahoy in Rotterdam, plus other pop events around the country. There was a flyer from www.goplanetevents.nl about an event in Enschede and on their "Events TV" they interviewed two Finnish women from Tampere who had travelled a very long way just to see their favourite band here, The Baseballs. This site was very interesting and I enjoyed their Events TV for close to an hour.

HALF PRICE TICKETS

On Fridays after 12:00, the Groninger Uitburo located at the VVV (the Tourist Information office) on the Grote Markt sells last-minute tickets to events at De Oosterpoort, Grand Theatre, Kruidhuis, Martiniplaza, Noord Nederlands Orchestra (NNO), Noord Nederlands Toneel (NNT), Pathé, and

Stadsschouwburg. Tickets have to be picked up by hand at the VVV, after 12:00 on Fridays. The website is: www.groningeruitburo.nl.

CITY WEBSITES

Official city websites can be good sources of information about local events. For one: www.leeuwarden.nl has a calendar of events that includes everything from a street festival to council meetings. Just keep scrolling to find what interests you!

COUNTRY WIDE

Maybe you've had enough of music and theatre and you're looking for some relaxing down time.

Want to take a trip in a hot air balloon? Or discover a zoo? Or just find something nice to do with the kids on a rainy day? These sites offering a wealth of suggestions will be a good start to your search: www.eropuit.nl, www.loukeultjes.nl, www.lekkerweg.nl

Going to Amsterdam? Try www.iamsterdam.com - It's in English.

Going to New York? Or Singapore? Or Groningen? Take a look at: www.eventful.com, which has the added feature of "Demand Events In Your Town". They advertise, "Over 100,000 performers decide where to appear using Demand It!"

With so much going on all year round, it's no wonder The Netherlands has a reputation for partying!

Margaret Metsala ■

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The Shoe is Art – Wopke Grobben



As old, if not older than the ark, shoes have been around in many forms throughout the ages, the oldest known pair of shoes being sandals and dating from 8000 to 7000 BC. With the rise of wealth in Europe in the Middle Ages, shoes left the realms of being made solely as a protection for the foot and became status symbols, often with over-exaggerated features. By 1800, a sew-on-sole had appeared and shoes consisted of a left and right foot, as opposed to "straights" where both shoes were identical.

Since the mid-20th Century, with modern day techniques, machinery and the added use of synthetic materials, most people nowadays possess at least one pair of shoes. Mass production has led to the time honoured craft of the shoemaker, like so many things, becoming a dying art.

It is with this in mind, and a curiosity as to how a good quality pair of shoes are made that I decided to pay Wopke Grobben's studio a visit.

The shop is one that I have passed many times, so it was a treat to finally set foot inside. Tools lined the walls, machines both antiquated (his favourite a German Pfaff) and modern, were waiting for action, whilst a portfolio of finished shoes lined the walls, each waiting for the appropriate wearer to come and claim them. As I entered, Wopke, sporting a Dali-esque mustache, greeted me and we sat down at the enormous central wooden worktable with steaming cups of tea.

the Grimm Brothers.

Wopke says he has no shortage of ideas of what to make, it's a question of which he would like to make next! For inspiration, he looks to the era of Louis XV, the 1940's, books and films. Colour, he said, he has had to learn. Materials and leathers, he acquires from a supplier who brings him sample pieces from Italy. One by one the shoes and boots are brought to the table and shown to me to illustrate points of style and how the same

'A shoe has something sensual – you're selling a piece of temptation' – Wopke Grobben

I asked him what made him become a shoe designer. It seems that ten years ago, unable to find a particular style of pointed boots he decided to take matters into his own hands and learn how to make his own. There followed a period of study where he learnt not only the trade, but the business side too. A stint as a trainee with a court supplier meant that he learnt his trade literally from the basics up. This included the mundane sharpening of tools and sewing of paper patterns. This, he says, was an invaluable lesson, and has enabled him to produce a perfect end product.

To make a shoe, a 'last' (wooden shoe form) has to be made from a casting of the wearer's feet. This is carved and shaped until it is a perfect blueprint and can be used time and time again. Combine this

shoe can look in different materials. Shoes where he has used the horns of a cow for the heels, a radical pair of red and black boots (perfect for a party), a shoe whose design consists of one continuous line and (my personal favourite), a beautiful pair of purple high-heeled court shoes with Marie Antoinette heels, where every gold-coloured tack is visible on the soles. The latter I held, and can only say that not only is the workmanship perfect, but these shoes have a real weight to them, unlike their commercially produced counterparts.

With at least a hundred man hours in the making, it's no wonder that you may pay a little more for these, but the advantage of handmade shoes is that they fit the foot perfectly, improve with age, last considerably longer and have been made for no one else but you!



with details about the wearer and the success of the shoes is assured. 'Shoes compliment the person' says Wopke. He explains that everyone has their own tone colour and personal palette, which when combined with lifestyle details, and not forgetting the time honoured principle of the golden ratio, results in the creation of the perfect pair of shoes. This sounds like a magical formula reminiscent of a fairytale, 'The Elves and the Shoemaker' by

Wopke's Shoes, Boterdiep 44, Groningen
T: 050 318 8366
W: <http://www.wopkeshoes.nl>
Photos: Jan Kruijze www.jankruijze.nl
Sources:
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shoe>

Alison Day



After two holidays in Jordan, I liked it so much that last year I went back and stayed for three months in the country's Capital. Experiencing first-hand the experience of "culture shock", I've survived. By the time this article appears, I hope to be back in the Middle East. In my first article about Jordan I would like to tell you a little about the history and highlights of Jordan's world famous attraction: the Nabataean city Petra.

History

The founders of Petra, a nomadic tribe from western Arabia, settled in the area around the 6th century BC. First the Nabataeans gathered their fortune through plundering. Later, the city flourished through its control of the incense trade caravan routes crossing the area.

Instead of a real empire, from about 200 BC, the Nabataeans established a 'zone of influence' stretching out from the Arabian Peninsula to southern Syria. During Petra's glory days the city had over 30,000 inhabitants, ingenious water systems, and grand buildings of Hellenistic, Roman and some local influences blended together. As a nomadic desert people, having no architectural heritage of their own, the Nabataeans had to "import" their construction design from a major surrounding civilization.

From 63 BC the Romans' influence became stronger, and the first attempt by the Roman general Pompey to acquire the Nabataean wealth failed, as he could be bought off. The second time the Nabataean were less lucky, when their influence was dramatically reduced by the Roman/Parthian (Persian) war. Finally, in 106 AD Petra was absorbed into the Roman Empire as the Provincia Arabia Petrea, which also marks the end of the Nabataean dominance of the area.

Natural forces were eventually responsible for the decline of Petra. Two earthquakes in 363 and 551 AD ruined most of the buildings, leaving a lost city behind. It was not until 1912 when the Swiss Explorer J. L. Burckhardt finally rediscovered

Petra. Excavations started in 1929 and continue to this day.

Highlights of Petra – A quick tour through the ancient city.

The Siq

A visit to Petra starts with a 1.2 km walk through the Siq, a narrow curved corridor in-between towering rock formations. At the end of the gorge, like a miracle, the first glimpse of Petra's magic appears: the Treasury.

The Treasury

It's here, with the imposing giant measurements (43 x 40 m) and the magnificent Hellenistic façade, that visitors fall in love with Petra. A little closer and another tomb complex is revealed, discovered in 2003 underneath the treasury. The Royal tomb is named after a myth in which an Egyptian pharaoh hides his wealth in the urn in the middle of the treasury's façade. While no gold ever was found, pockmarks of rifle shots are the silent witnesses of locals believing otherwise.



Street of Facades

Walking from the Treasury towards the Theatre, visitors pass the Street of Facades; 40 houses and tombs meant for the average Nabataean. Even though Petra is full of tombs like this, these ones are surely worth a visit, since they are the most accessible.

Theatre

The Roman style theatre, originally used for Nabataean performances, could seat 3000 visitors. Later, it was remodeled so that as an open-air playhouse it could hold up to 8000 people (in those days, 1/3 of the local inhabitants). Earthquakes have meant that unlike other ancient theatres in the region, this stage is not in use nowadays.

Royal Tombs

Continuing the walk, higher up in the rocks there are five royal tombs: the Uneisha, Silk, Corinthian, Palace and Sextius Floren-

tius Tomb. These impressive burial places were meant for the rich and famous of Petra: Nabataean kings and ministers and Roman emperors.



Colonnaded Street

The Temos Gateway, original bumpy Roman pavement, impressive columns and remains of the Nymphaeum fountain as well as the market area and the Royal Palace all go to make up this Roman-style Colonnaded Street.

Great Temple, Petra Church and Monastery

After Roman Emperor Constantine's conversion to Christianity, and the cleavage of the Roman territory in 395, Petra became part of the eastern half of the Byzantine Empire. Most religious buildings were not demolished, but simply modified to the emperor's new religion, a common phenomenon in history. In Petra, the Great Temple, Petra Church and the Monastery are three examples of this.

The great Temple was originally built and used for religious purposes by the Nabataeans, despite being badly damaged by different earthquakes; it has been in use for Christian purposes up until Byzantine times.

The structure of the Petra Church was originally built by the Nabataeans, later expanded and redesigned into a church by the Byzantines. Today the remains of the church are covered by a futuristic roof construction for the protection of its beautiful, exquisite Byzantine floor mosaics.

Monastery

To reach the Monastery an 800 step ancient rock-cut path has to be climbed. Similar in design to the Treasury, but far bigger (50 x 45 m), although similar, this burial place is just as astonishing and impressive. The Monastery gets its name from the crosses carved on the inside wall, which also

indicates that this place was used as a Byzantine church.

Tips from a frequent Petra visitor:

There is no need to carry a whole day's food supply with you; food and drink are available inside the ancient city and even at the Monastery. Also, don't worry about "open air" toilets; normal bathrooms are available all around Petra.

Most travel guides advise to visit Petra very early in the day (city opens at sunrise) because of the crowds and heat. Also good times are late afternoons or early evenings in the summer time, when a cool breeze blows into the ancient city and the hordes of tourists head home. Off-season or during Ramadan, the ancient city is all yours.

If you visit Petra between November and March, you may find it rather cold and wet. There is occasional snow and in winter, when days are short, it's dark around five in the afternoon.

From the entrance at the Siq until high up at the Monastery, local Bedouin people will try to sell you jewellery, scarves and other baubles. Also, "taxi rides" will be constantly offered on the back of camel or donkey. It may be annoying, but bear in mind that these locals are only trying to make a living. So, why not buy the beautiful necklaces, take a donkey ride up to higher places or view Petra from the back of a camel?

My favorite places in Petra are up the hill by the Monastery, where there are two magnificent viewing points of the Wadi Arabia. Even more striking is the absolute silence of this outside corner of Petra.

For more information:
www.visitjordan.com

Text & Photos: ■



FILM INDUSTRY

In 1981 the film *Chariots of Fire* was released. The following year it won four Academy Awards including best picture. During his thank you speech its writer, Colin Welland, declared "the British are coming". When in 1983 *Ghandi* won eight awards including best picture, best director and best actor it seemed as if Welland's prediction was right. The British film industry was back, and bigger and better than ever.

In fact the 80s began with the worst recession the British film industry has ever seen with only 24 films being made in 1981. Despite this, Oscar success led to lavish period films being made, such as David Lean's *A Passage to India* and Merchant Ivory's *A Room with a View*. While these films were

successful further attempts to win over the U.S. market failed and resulted in new talent moving to Hollywood, instead of staying in Britain.

The 80s also saw moderate success for Handmade Films. Part owned by George Harrison, the company was originally set up to take over production of *Monty Python's Life of Brian* after EMI, the original backers, were scared off by the subject matter. Many of their productions, such as *Time Bandits* and *Withnail and I*, were internationally successful and have since achieved cult status.

During the early 90s few British films enjoyed significant commercial success, even at home. British films that did do well both within the UK and America tended to be costume dramas such as *The Remains of the Day*, *The Madness of King George* and *Shakespeare in Love*. In 1994 a film was released that led to increased interest and investment in British films. *Four Weddings and a Funeral* made over \$245.7 million from a budget of \$4.4 million and became the highest-grossing British film. Its popularity led to more British comedies, such as *The Full Monty*, being made but more importantly it revived interest in the industry with

many speculating that British films would again become internationally renowned.

The 90s saw the introduction of public funding for films through the National Lottery, unfortunately few of these films were financially successful and many went unreleased. Other positive events included the return of James Bond, the return of American productions to British studios and the emergence of Danny Boyle (*Trainspotting*).

The 21st century has so far proved successful for the British film industry. Funding from BBC Film, Film 4 and the UK Film Council have helped to find international audiences for British films and some independent production companies have secured financial and distribution deals with major US studios. British films and directors have seen much success at international award ceremonies with *Slumdog Millionaire* winning 8 Oscars in 2008. By the time you read this *The King's Speech* could have won up to 12 Academy Awards including Best Actor; Best Director and Best Picture.

Britain has a thriving film industry that is both connected to, and separate from Hollywood. Directors

such as Shane Meadows (*Dead Man's Shoes*), Ken Loach (*Looking For Eric*) and Mike Leigh (*Vera Drake*) are known for making quality productions using British money, locations and casts. While across the Atlantic Paul Greengrass (*The Bourne Ultimatum*), Ridley Scott (*Gladiator*) and Christopher Nolan (*The Dark Knight*) have proved that British talent is important to the continuing success of the American film industry. Several established names are British and many of the new faces are too. British talent is an important factor in Hollywood and that clout has meant a revived interest in the British film industry. It is true that the British cinema market is smaller and this does mean that the industry is not able to successfully produce large-scale blockbusters to compete with Hollywood, but that does not mean that Britain has nothing to offer, film wise. 2012 is due to see the return of the 3 major superheroes: Batman, Spiderman and Superman. Three cultural American icons and they are all to be played by Englishmen: Christian Bale, Andrew Garfield and Henry Cavill respectively. "The British are coming"? Not only are they already here, but come next year they will be saving the world.

Judith Jarvis



The Martiniplaza is Groningen's largest cultural events venue, hosting concerts, sporting events and expositions. The stage on February 12, was decked out for the one-night extravaganza of *Bollywood - The Show*, which was touring The Netherlands during February this year.

Bollywood - The Show takes us on a dance and musical exploration of the Indian film industry from its roots to what it has become today, a phenomenon that has burst out of India and surpassed Hollywood in size.

The Bollywood film industry, which is based in Mumbai, has gone international: the International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Awards is one of the prestigious Indian film awards that is hosted in different countries around the world and which will be held in Toronto in 2011.

Slumdog Millionaire - Bollywood movie or not - made Indian films known to the masses, and *Bollywood - The Show* came at the right time to satisfy our interest

and curiosity. And there is interest! It's a "must see".

Groningen was anticipating a good performance, and the theatre lobby buzzed with excitement before the show started. Some members of the audience were wholly in the spirit glamorously dressed in glittering Bollywood style.

The cast enjoyed themselves just as much as the audience enjoyed the show. They let themselves go and had loads of fun. Their enthusiasm caught and held the audience from the first to the last moments. We didn't want to say goodnight or goodbye.

There were as many costume changes as musical numbers so the cast was just as busy backstage as in front of the audience! The costumes were a treat, ranging all the way from traditional dress to disco style.

If you saw *Slumdog Millionaire*, you'd remember the infectious Jai Ho song and dance at the railway station at the end of the movie. It is this mood, excitement, and pace

that dominated *Bollywood - The Show*. We all wanted to dance. Some did dance, and several cast members began dancing with the audience for a short time before returning to the stage.

The Bollywood film industry began with silent movies, advancing to black and white and then colour, paralleling Hollywood and sometimes plagiarizing Hollywood, growing larger than Hollywood and, finally, influencing Hollywood to produce a few musicals itself in recent years.

Bollywood developed its own style, which began to incorporate Western influences. Movies were mostly pure escapism with a number of films being made in other countries like Switzerland or Italy. There were love stories, "angry young men", and family dramas. The sex appeal got a boost in 2007 as the movie *Om Shanti Om* introduced "six pack abs".

Bollywood films are musicals with singing and dancing. Thus, the choreographers had an important role on the production team. It is the story of the most influential choreographers, in this case, a grandfather and a granddaughter that is told in this story: the Merchant family. *Bollywood - The Show* emerged from its roots as "The Merchants of Bollywood", which was an Australian musical. The story follows the development

of Bollywood while touching upon events in India's history.

The Story: The story begins in a temple in Rajasthan. The Merchant family is in charge of maintaining the traditional dance to the Gods. The grandfather, who was in charge of the temple dance, had been a famous choreographer in Bollywood but left when his traditional artistic vision clashed with the new ways in the modernizing industry. His granddaughter left the temple over his protests to follow her dream and become a star in Mumbai. To her grandfather's disgust, she embraced the new trends and became a famous choreographer herself. The theme dealt with the rift between old traditions and change, the rift between the way life is and the way one might wish it would be different, and the eventual "return to one's roots" in which the old traditions are respected as a driving force and inspiration for the new. *Bollywood - The Show* was a burst of different dance forms, all the way from traditional temple dances to disco, as well as a good story. It was glitter and glamour all the way through this wonderful celebration of traditions and change, and full of optimism for a brilliant future.

Sources: www.iffc.com, Wikipedia, www.merchantsofbollywood.com.au

Margaret Metsala



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