

October 2016

Richie Rebel says, "Welkom, William! Welcome to the Netherlands!"

[Click here to view the newsletter in your browser](#)

TEAM69 RECOMMENDS that you click the link above for a .pdf version of this newsletter and links to our past issues.



Life & Times of the Rebels of '69

Thornton Fractional Township High School South Class of 1969, Lansing, Illinois



A Visit to My Dutch Heritage

by **Barbara Homans Schwarz** (Florida)

In the summer of 2015, my husband Matt and I made a trip to Germany, my first overseas trip, to see our son, Matthew, and his family in Brohl-Lutzing, a quaint small town near Andernach. We spent three weeks in Germany and had the opportunity to travel to the

Netherlands, too, where we spent our time in small towns and the countryside.

I'm 100% Dutch. My mother's side came from the Netherlands, and my grandfather and grandmother and five of their children came to the United States and settled in the Lansing area. They chose this area because of the Dutch presence already there.

I still have a number of relatives in the Netherlands and a Homans has always lived in my grandfather's home. My last living aunt of my parents' generation passed away recently at the age of 97.



We had a few days to visit the town of Workum, in northeast Netherlands, where my father's family came from. We got to see the house shown here that my father's father and his father before him were raised in. The local cemetery held a number of names familiar to Lansing.

We visited the church where my grandfather's job was to wind the mechanism that ran the clock that rang the church bell. We saw the dikes along the North Sea and had ice cream



sitting on top of a dike along the water. Most of the dikes we saw are used to graze sheep. The sheep are moved from one section of the dike to another, and the gates are self-closing so no one will accidentally leave a gate open allowing sheep to get into the road and wander in the town.

We traveled to Amsterdam and toured the last Royal Delft Factory. We were amazed by the different things they made, including beautiful life-size paintings in delft tiles and an entire staircase. Of course, we had to tour the gift shop, too, and make some purchases.

It was a wonderful trip, and the best part was spending each day with our three granddaughters, their lovely mother Alexandra, and our son Matthew in this beautiful country with friendly people. I recommend going there for a visit if you get the opportunity.

The Dutch in Our Hometown

A Book Review by **Cheryl Ridder Woldhuis** (Illinois)

I am intrigued with my Dutch heritage, which includes one of the first settlers of Lansing and the Calumet Region in 1849, so my aunt recommended that I read *The Dutch in the Calumet Region* (Arcadia Publishing, 2015) by Ken Bult.

The inside front page of the book shows the historical marker honoring the Dutch in the Calumet Region. It tells that the Dutch settled in the area because it was similar to their homeland. They used ditches to drain the water from the region's marshes and turned the soil into rich land to "expand successful horticultural activities."

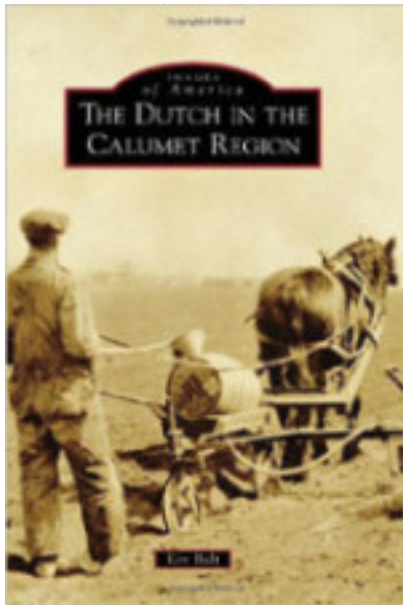
The historical photographs included in the book allow me to see the pictures of buildings, schools, and churches our ancestors helped build. It brought more meaning to the stories I heard from my grandparents of the dirt roads, and digging foundations by hand and hauling away the dirt with wagons pulled by animals or with handmade wheelbarrows.



Cheryl's great-grandparents, John Eenigenburg and Sarah Witte Eenigenburg shown here in a photo from the early 1900s, were the first generation born in the United States after their parents crossed the Atlantic from Eeningburg, Noord-Holland, Netherlands, in 1849.

Through these pages, I was able to revisit the stone that honors my Great-great Grandfather Jan Ton, who was an abolitionist and ran an Underground Railroad Station from 1849–1865, and my Great-grandparents Gerrit and Jannetje Eenigenburg, who are acknowledged for their dangerous voyage to America on the schooner "Boston of Massachusetts." Each photo comes with its story and the contribution the Dutch ancestors made in building and shaping the character of Lansing and the towns that surround it.

The rich history of the Calumet Region is well told through pictures, faces, names, and the familiar places we know because we lived there. *The Dutch in the Calumet Region* truly celebrates our history and helps us appreciate that we were raised in a town we are proud to call home!



Ken Bult, author of *The Dutch in the Calumet Region*, is a “shirttail” relation to **Cheryl Ridder Woldhuis**. He is the son of Kay Robertson Bult (TF '56) and nephew of **Pat Walsh**, which is entirely coincidental.

Ken teaches at Purdue University Calumet and South Suburban College. His first book was *Glenwood* (Arcadia Publishing, 2011), a history of his Illinois hometown. Both books are available at Amazon.com



Lest we forget—

The Dutch People Remember and Honor Their WWII Liberators

by **Patricia Walsh** (Arizona)

Between two Dutch towns, Margraten and Maastricht, in southeast Netherlands is an American WWII cemetery that holds the final resting place of 8,301 U.S. soldiers and the names of 1,722 missing who liberated the

Netherlands in 1944–1945. One of these soldiers is my uncle, U.S. Army Pvt. Alfred Alexander Wang, Jr., who was killed in action December 1944 when the 115th Infantry Regiment pushed into Germany prior to the Battle of the Bulge.

While doing family genealogy, I was led to a remarkable organization, the Foundation for Adopting Graves American Cemetery Margraten Netherlands. This nonprofit organization began in 1945 and is made up of Dutch citizens who honor and decorate the graves and the names of the fallen with flags, flowers, and photos. Thousands of people attend the Memorial Day service each year, as they have since 1945.

Every grave and name at Margraten is adopted by a Dutch citizen, and there is a long waiting list of citizens wanting to be involved.

This tradition of honoring the U.S. soldiers who gave their lives for Dutch freedom is so strong that a family passes the adoption of the fallen soldier from generation to generation. This past summer, the Foundation kindly put me in touch with Mr. Reijnen, the adopter of my uncle's grave. Here is an excerpt from the email I received from him:

My grandmother cared about the resting place [of Pvt. Alfred Wang] in Margraten for a long time.... My grandmother passed away. After a few years I was called by people of the American-Cemetery-Margraten with the question if I'll take over the adoption care what was earlier by my grandmother. And so I keep it in our family to care and honor the fallen soldiers.

The mission of the Foundation for Adopting Graves in Margraten is simple and powerful: Lest we forget—*opdat we niet vergeten*. The Dutch people keep the “Margraten Boys” in their hearts, so that our soldiers who never came home from Europe shall forever rest in peace and honor in the grateful nation of the Netherlands. www.adoptiegraven-margraten.nl/en/

A VIDEO LETTER — We invite you to click on the photo to view the video made by a Dutch citizen for an American family whose father rests in the WWII American Cemetery, Margraten, Netherlands.

DEEP RESPECT



Great Grandmother Completes Training in Dial Phone Use

Cheryl Ridder Woldhuis's Great-grandmother Marie, born in Holland in 1872, learns to use a dial telephone in 1958. Gotta love Oma for keeping up with technology! [Lansing Journal, Feb. 6, 1958. Scroll to page 7.](#)

Mrs. Marie Weststraat, 85, a great-grandmother, gets lessons in telephone dialing from her son, Menno Ridder, a Torrence Avenue businessman.

Mrs. Weststraat, who came to the United States from Holland at the age of two, had a telephone installed in her home for the first time in December [1957].



FunFact: The athletic teams of Central College of Iowa are called The Dutch, which makes former Central College students **Harry Smith** (New York) and **Jack Wiers** (Hawaii) "Forever Dutch!"

TFS TEAM69 Heard From...

Alan Liptak (Indiana)—The September issue brought back great memories of the coach I had. ["Heart of a Coach," *Life & Times*] I'll never forget the football game when I was a quarterback on the varsity and I broke my wrist on a play. When I reached the sideline, I was in such pain that I immediately sat on the bench. It was Coach Beckwith who came right away to tend to my injury. I always respected Coach Beckwith as a man who was fair and honest. He displayed all the characteristics of what a coach and teacher should be.

Bill Beckwith, Jr. (son of TFS Coach Bill Beckwith)— Some of my best childhood memories are of running the halls of South. Being the ball boy at football games was the

greatest thrill along with riding on the bus to away games. ["Heart of a Coach," Sept. 2016 *Life & Times*]

Marilyn Rea Beyer (Massachusetts)—What a warm and heartfelt essay on Coach Beckwith. And so great to see Pat Walsh's mom's photo from the VFW bar! ["Heart of a Coach," "Saved from the Wrecking Ball," Sept. 2016 *Life & Times*] Miss all you guys.

Grace Demanuelle Talbot (California)—I agree with Marilyn [Rea Beyer]. I had tears in my eyes while I was reading it. ["Heart of a Coach," Sept. 2016 *Life & Times*] Great Newsletter! Thank you All who work so hard to keep us informed through these newsletter. JOB WELL DONE. I know it's not an easy task, but I know we all appreciate it very much!

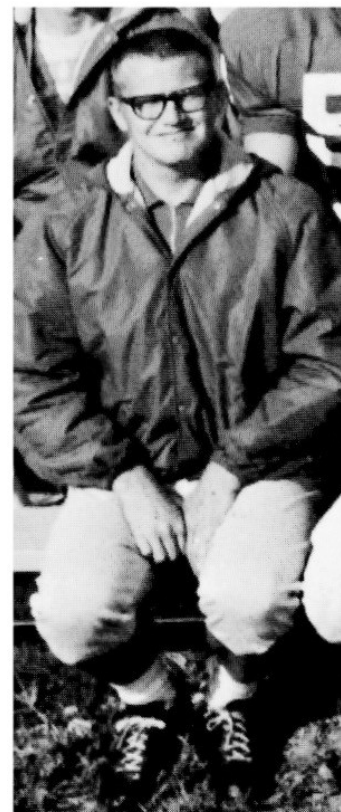
Judy Kaufer Lohr-Safcik (retired, TFS English Dept.)—Great issue. I love the article about Bill [Beckwith]. He was such a mensch! ["Heart of a Coach," Sept. 2016 *Life & Times*]

Denny Walton (Utah)—Man, I really liked this month AGAIN. Mr. Beckwith was the best coach I've ever had. Kinda like an adult friend I felt at ease with. He made me confident in myself and others. ["Heart of a Coach," Sept. 2016 *Life & Times*] So sorry to hear about Bruce Quenzler. What a great player and friend. Thanks again, you guys, for another great one.

Dave Dickinson (California)—I have to say that I think this was the best issue yet—Mike's story of Bill Beckwith's talk to the class tore at my heart; the story of recovering Pat's mom's picture ["Heart of a Coach" and "Saved from the Wrecking Ball," Sept. 2016 *Life & Times*]. Basically all of it in my opinion was top-notch. Wonderful job.

Linda Jensen (California)—Just loved the story on Coach Beckwith ["Heart of a Coach," Sept. 2016 *Life & Times*] and the picture/80th birthday greetings to Mr. Kijewski [Facebook]. You folks are the best at reminding us how wonderful our high school was! Thanks so much.

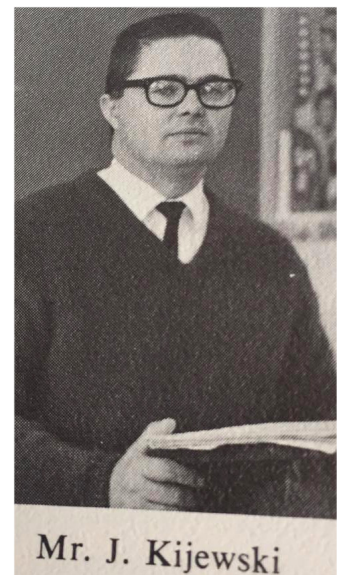
Lynda Schneider Gleim (Indiana)—Thank you for all of your hard work. Excellent issue again! [Sept. 2016 *Life & Times*]



Dan White (South Carolina)—Another fantastic *Life & Times* [Sept. 2016]. You guys are the greatest!! Thank you to all involved.

Mary Ebbens Knighton (Florida)—I very much enjoy keeping up with you all.

Bob Armstrong (Illinois)—Enjoy the updates. Keep it going, please. Be well, my friends.



Congratulations!



Dave Kats (Indiana) made a HOLE-IN-ONE Sept. 11, 2016 with his 9-iron on the 118-yard, No. 11 Hole at South Shore Country Club, Cedar Lake, Indiana. Way to go, Dave!

Celebrating October Birthdays!

Jim Wagner, Mike McNary, Sally Steeb Harvey, Bill George, Alan Liptak, Henry Sterk, Jeri Kazen Morgan, Cheryl Ridder Woldhuis, Ruth Percak Patterson, Judi Wrzesinski Cuffney, Lauri McVicker Norris, George Grote, Eston Ellis

Celebrating September Anniversaries!

Cindy and **Dennis Knoerzer** (Missouri)—40 years
John and **Mary Ebbens Knighton** (Florida)—1 year
Dave and **Darlene Barzda Snell** (Florida)—47 years
Toodie and **Robert J. Murray** (Georgia)—18 years
Greg and **Kathy Neumann Smith** (Texas)—35 years



**TFS Class of 1981
35th Reunion!
October 8, 2016**

News from Pam Ross (TFS '81)—TFS Class of 1981 reunion is Oct. 8, 2016, at the Lansing Country Club, with appetizers, open bar, DJ, and panoramic photo. \$45 per person. For information, go to the Class Facebook page **TF South Class of 1981 35th Reunion**.



**TFS Class of 1967
50th Reunion!
September 2017**

News from Linda Eckstein Todd (TFS '67)—TFS Class of 1967 is organizing its 50th reunion! We have a Class Facebook page **TF SOUTH - Class of 1967** and an email address Tfsouth67@gmail.com. Please let the committee know if you are interested in attending our 50th Reunion.



Sadly We Report...

We lost classmate **Kathie Dyrz Orr** of Indiana, September 22, following an illness. A Memorial Mass will be held 11 a.m., Saturday, Oct. 8, 2016, at St. Paul Catholic Church, 1855 Harrison Blvd., Valparaiso, Indiana. Our hearts go out to her husband Bob, daughter Elizabeth, her family, friends, and the many people whose lives she touched during her career as an accomplished teacher and principal.

Condolences to These Classmates...

David Dodaro (Illinois) and his family on the September passing of his mother, Dorothy Dodaro, at the age of 92. Mrs. Dodaro generously donated her time and love to many Lansing area charity organizations.

Marlene Koster Taylor (Texas) and her family on the loss in September of her father, Cornelius C. Koster of Lansing. Mr. Koster, a WWII Navy veteran, was laid to rest with military honors and the love and pride of his family.

Mike Sailor (Illinois) and his family on the July passing of his mother, Florence Sailor, at the age of 93. Mrs. Sailor was a true friend of animals, and her favorite charity was the Humane Society.

Jack Wiers (Hawaii) and Carol Bendell-Wiers (TFS '70) and their family on the August passing of Carol's mom, Betty Jean Bendell, at the age of 91. Mrs. Bendell was honored in September with a gathering of her family in a Celebration of Life.

Help Us Connect with Our Classmates

We appreciate your help locating classmates who we've lost contact with. Please invite classmates you know to subscribe to our *Life & Times* e-newsletter or to contact us at our website tfsclassof69.weebly.com or email address TFSouth69@gmail.com

Here are a few of the people we hope to hear from—

John Pranger
Greg Polanski
Diane Poffenberger Kubicki
Jan Plate
Patricia Padjen McNulty

Peggy Padgen Mekki
Cheryl Oppenhuis Morrone
Daryl Olsen
Michael Olen
Joe O'Malley

For the October 2016 *Life & Times*

Photos: Barbara Homans Schwarz, Cheryl Ridder Woldhuis, Ken Bult, U.S. Air Force, Lansing Public Library, 1968 Postscript, Pam Ross, 1967 Postscript, Bill Hutchison Photography

Video: Jean-Paul Toonen

Technical/Design Consultant: Bill Hutchison

Editorial: Pat Walsh, Cheryl Ridder Woldhuis

Correspondent: Dave Dickinson

Owns Silver Skates: Bud Jenkins

Keep in Touch!

Email us at TFSouth69@gmail.com

You can find us on the TFS High School District 215 website, too!

<http://www.tfd215.org/south/aboutus/alumni/>

Remember to Update!

Keep your snailmail and email addresses and phone number current in our TFS Class of 1969 database. Send your changes to us at TFSouth69@gmail.com.



Forward to Classmates, Family, and Friends



Twitter @TFSTeam69



Facebook Tfsouth Classofsixty-nine



Website tfsclassof69.weebly.com

Our Mission: To promote and grow our network of TFS Class of 1969 friendships by sharing information and planning reunion events to keep the spirit of the 40th Reunion alive and vibrant.

Copyright © 2016 TF South Class of 1969, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)

MailChimp.