

### Preface

***Quite unexpectedly I was deprived of the safe home of my existence.***

I have very often had to think of these lines from a poem by the Dutch poet Ad den Besten in the days following the horrors in New York and Washington. How inconceivable and appalling it was to see, hear and feel what people can be capable of if another human life, even thousands of lives, does not count for them anymore...

What lifelong unfathomable sorrow has been brought about. What fear for our existence. And what concern for the consequences of the hatred and feelings of revenge that have been aroused.

And yet! This other, better side in man also comes forward again: unselfish aid, care and attention for the victims, surviving relatives, colleagues and friends.

Relatives!

It was stirring and heart-warming to experience how in our family all over numerous spontaneous contacts were established. Expressions of sympathy, solidarity and commitment with each other's well-being were exchanged and shared among Dutch and American family members.

Without the existence of our worldwide family foundation this would not have been possible!

For that reason the board is grateful that we have been able to contribute to making and strengthening a good deal of international contacts.

Our severely tried relatives in the USA should know this:

*We feel ourselves intensely united with your grief, your cares and your good will!*

Shaping solidarity is one of the aims of our Foundation. We are trying to do our best.

The family magazine you are reading now will show this. Next year will be the fifth anniversary of our existence. Our family foundation is becoming a real small child.

And just like a young child that is growing up we are becoming more and more inquisitive, enterprising and creative.

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How about, for instance, Jos Somsen's [1426] exciting idea to organize a **Cultural Family day**?

Isn't this interesting? A day for young and old, a day full of activities and certainly a day that will be well filled with cosiness and encounters.

And what about the **Family Photo Album** on CD-ROM made by John Howard Somsen [2353]?

You will certainly buy that, won't you? (see pages 5 and 20)

And finally..

The **USA-Reunion 2002** in Baldwin, Wisconsin, is really coming closer!

Marilyn (Berkseth) Olson Lear [3850] from Baldwin and other relatives in the organising committee have picked out the following dates:

**Friday, August 2, 2002,**  
**Saturday, August 3, 2002,**  
**Sunday, August 4, 2002.**

This will be a unique opportunity for everybody inside and outside the USA to meet relatives you have never met before and see the area where the Somsens from IJzerlo settled in 1847, 1851 and 1881 to build a new and above all better future.

And you will probably combine your visit to the reunion with a trip to other parts of the New World. Please reserve these dates in your diary, for you will get more news about this new reunion in the coming months! (Also see page 8)

On behalf of the board,  
 Theo Somsen