



Somsen horizon

Volume 7 - number 13 - May 2004

Stories and stories again:

- A website for pilots and aviation fans
- Where do the Mormon Somsens come from?
- An exceptional party!
- This really happened to my dad
- Tea Circle Japanese style
- From 'Dokken' Derk to 'Doctor' Derk
- On horseback through the Pyrenean mountains
- A nearly forgotten girl's album of friends' verses



Half-yearly family magazine

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Objective of the Foundation*The aim of the foundation is:*

To preserve and promote the solidarity between people bearing the family name of Somsen, those who are/were related to them or those who are interested in them.

The foundation will try to achieve this object for example by:

- ♦ doing historical research into the family history and the history of the region
- ♦ collecting documentation and genealogical data
- ♦ keeping and taking charge of a family archive and data bases
- ♦ publishing a periodical
- ♦ providing information to persons, institutions and official authorities
- ♦ organising activities so as to realise the object of the foundation

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The magazine is sent tot the supporters of the Somsen Foundation free of charge. The minimum annual contribution is \$ 20,- which can be transferred to:

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*We gladly permit copying of articles on
condition that the source is mentioned.*

Cover

*Japanese Tea Circle:
Herman Soshu Somsen [180] and
his American wife Kristin Hyslin*

Lay-out: Bep Berkhoff
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Preface



We have begun with the seventh year of our magazine. The past seven years were rich years in which the number of supporters grew to over 200 and therefore we could embellish our family magazine and our financial basis remained healthy. Ada Somsen, our treasurer, opens her books in this edition and shows how our financial position is. And when I mention Ada, I simultaneously think of Marieke Edwards-Jager Gerligs who so meticulously takes care of the financial administration of our American supporters. Hear, hear! There is also growth in the number of contributors to our family magazine: Marlou Sprik-van der Burg [115] from Zwolle has helped out fantastically by translating a number of articles into the English language so that this burden no longer rests on the shoulders of Johan Somsen only.

These years were seven rich years. There is a story that tells us that seven rich years are succeeded by seven meagre years. Could this happen to us? Could it be possible that the 13th (!) edition of our family magazine ushers in such a period? It is a fact that we have fallen through the magic limit of 200 supporters, which will make our future financial position weaker. It is also a fact that worldwide the economies are stagnant. Economists only tell us about this when consumers get more trust in the economy again and as a consequence they spend more money so that a period of economic growth

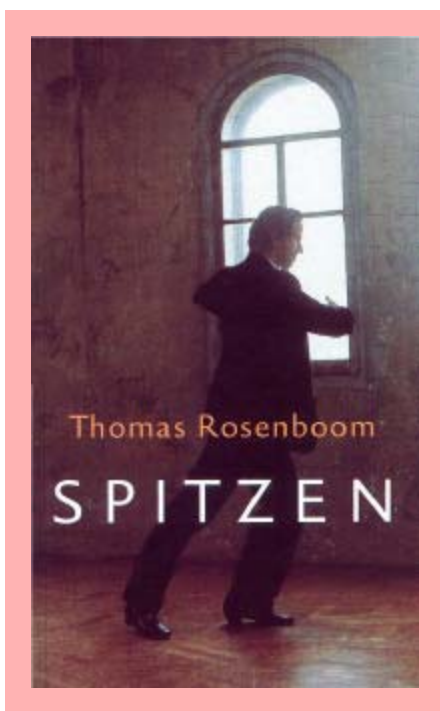
begins. After all this, it will be clear to you that we are also dependent on you as a consumer. What we especially need is more consumers! Therefore we invite you to lift our own Dow Jones index above 200! Please help, try to get other family members interested in our family foundation and in our family magazine. We enclose a brochure in this edition of Somsen Magazine to attract new supporters. If you want more copies then an email or a call to our secretary will do, to get them.

And how about this new edition of Somsen Horizon, isn't it just marvellous?

Stories and stories again! This edition is crammed with stories from every nook and corner in our family. Our 17th century ancestors, Geert Somsen (Boeinck) and Mechtelt Gelkinck, would have been much surprised if they had known what their love for each other had brought about, how much variation, passion and talent there is in our family. ■

Competition

The Netherlands have known the tradition of the annual 'Bookweek' for nearly 70 years. In one week in the month of March there are all kinds of activities with the aim to stimulate the reading of books. Moreover, a famous writer is invited to write a book, especially for that special week. It is called the 'Bookweek Present'.



Anyone who buys a book in that particular week gets this special book free of charge. This year Thomas Rosenboom wrote the Bookweek Present, entitled 'Spitzen', of which 700,000 editions were published. This novel deeply digs into the relationship between two tango-loving people. On the front page there is an elegant photograph with fine back lighting of a tango dancer.

But... just have a good look. This is not just a tango dancer. He is a tango dancing Somsen! But what Somsen could it be? It is up to you to find out. This can be difficult for many of you, especially when you are no close relative of him. Therefore you get two hints. You can find your information in our familybook or on our website: he was born in 1949 and his P-number is 411.

Send your answer to our secretariat **before July 1:**
Somsen Foundation,
Jan Tooropstraat 2
3817 PZ Amersfoort
The Netherlands.

Among the competitors with a good answer we raffle three prizes. In addition your name (and your prize) will be honourably mentioned in Somsen Horizon 14. ■

A website for pilots and aviation fans

Robert Jaap Somsen [255], born in Zelhem, is full of initiatives and presents himself strongly with a highly visited website on the internet.

'It was a little hobby that got out of hand', Rob Somsen [255] told us. 'I have always found the internet to be a fantastic medium but I never understood, back in 1995 while I was familiarizing myself with it, why the tourism world used it so infrequently.'



Rob Somsen

Rob Somsen himself worked for about 12 years in the travel world, among others by the Best Western hotel chain, Garuda Indonesia and Carlson Wagonlits Travel, by the last named organisation as Director of sales in the Benelux countries.

'Your room is on fire!'

Rob always wanted to start something for himself. Four years ago he decided to try it out. 'I quit my job, at that moment we had a little baby at home and I was regularly spending nights in hotels for my work. On one night in Brussels I was woken up with the announcement; *'Sir, your room is on fire!'* The mini-bar had broken down and my room was full of smoke. Luckily, the people downstairs had seen that there was a fire on the detector. At that moment it was time for me to change my ways. The internet hype was just beginning to subside, due to the high invest-

ments. I thought that it would also remain a hobby for me, because it was not possible to earn real money.'

Personal Advice Bureau

Rob Somsen decided to attempt another direction, namely team management, and to do this he established his own Management & Consulting Bureau. His first client was KPN, a big communication company. It was supposed to be a four-month contract but it turned out to be eight. However, his itch for the internet still remained. 'I became absorbed in and understood that you had to set up

a 'community' to be successful (*a sort of subject specific website, ed.*). Considering my affiliation with the tourism industry and aviation I decided to focus on pilots. That is a homogeneous group also in their spending habits.

I also spoke with Irene Bezemer-Somsen [248]. She is a family member but also a communications expert and the wife of a pilot. Together we created a 'portal' for pilots. Through this we tried to distribute interesting information to them. That was still quite difficult.'

There was no business plan, but it was more learning by doing. They decided to put some aviation news on the website. Through research it became apparent that the target group they had in mind were not the ones who visited the website. 'No, those particular people were only interested in news about aviation.'

We decided to register the name: *Luchtvaartnieuws.nl* and one thing led to another. After a long vacation in New Zealand with my wife, Monique Groeneweg [4372] and my son Floris [4373], I decided to expand my business and make it more organised. I made a business plan, showed it to many people and through a tip I ended up at The Chamber of Commerce. During this time Irene was completing the activities for the website. Through the project '*Nederland gaat Digitaal*' (*Netherlands goes digital*) I received subsidies and technical support and through a professional website programmer I had the site upgraded.'

Accessible

It is now possible for Rob to use a database with content management to manage the news. Freelancers help him with that. And little by little they also get advertisers and sponsors on the site. There is also a cooperation with, among others, ATP (The Advanced Travel Partner) taking place. 'The site is aimed towards people who are economically or professionally involved in aviation and in general towards people who have an interest in aviation. 'We now have about 6.000 visitors per day, who together visit about 16.000 pages per day, many of those visitors find us through search machines such as Google and I/se. About 1.300 of those who are interested receive a newsletter from us and every day more people join them.'

Rob Somsen has released the editorial section. He focuses mainly on the promotion of the website. 'Because I see and speak with many people I can combine this with my other work related duties.'

We heartily recommend the site www.luchtvaartnieuws.nl

Good luck, Rob!



Source: Article in Holland Airports no. 14, 2003 (through our editorial staff somewhat modified and updated).

An exceptional party!

by Josta I. Reijnen-Somsen [2896], Switzerland

Who has the privilege today to have been married for 55 years?! Johan and Meta Somsen-Eskes from Aalten have. A privileged daughter shares her memories of their course of life with us.



On December 30, 2003 Johan Dirk Somsen [1085] and Meta Catharina Eskes [1206] from Aalten had been married for 55 years. They had a fantastic day, for a 55-year-wedding anniversary is not an everyday phenomenon, not even in the Somsen family. After Johan had returned from Indonesia in 1948 as an experienced veteran he, as a real shock trooper, immediately attacked again and married his sweetheart Meta from Dinxperlo in that very same year. On the wedding-day itself the pictures of the photographer failed and Meta dropped from a chair when lifted during the merry-making.



55th wedding anniversary 2003



Weddingpicture 1948

House decorating and motoring

Together with his brother-in-law, Herman, Johan continued the house decorating business that his father had started until they decided to start a business of their own each. Since it was impossible to do the job with a bike Johan decided to buy a car; it was to be an Opel which he also immediately used for a holiday to Austria where he wanted to cross Mount Katschberg. He did manage to cross it, but tugged by a tractor though! How funny. Johan had some sort of aversion against motoring for

he did not always stay on the ground with four wheels. When he went to Switzerland to visit his daughter something invariably went wrong. Either he arrived in Switzerland without an exhaust pipe or he had to brake down during a long descent so that the brakes burnt down completely.

'Everything is fine'

In 1968 they built their first house in Dinxperlo in Marijkestraat. It was a beautiful house with a splendid workshop. But Johan and Meta have never stayed in the same house for long. Some years later they moved house again and settled in the manager's house of the Lundia factory in Varsseveld.

For Johan and all the other house-decorators it was not an easy job to find enough work for the long winter months. Replacing an occasional window at a farmstead or wall-papering a bedroom somewhere was not enough to keep the pot boiling. And at Lundia they appreciated Johan's ideas, for he had a large imagination;

ask his grandchildren, they can write a book about it. Granddad's most famous saying is 'Everything is fine'. But not everything went fine! Not even painting his own balcony in Aalten. Before he realised he had landed on his back in the garden with the ladder on top of him. It is still a miracle how lucky he was. But Meta also contributed to a colourful past. A salesman called at their house, delivered a long story and before she realised what had happened she was the proud possessor of a complete set of pans. They are still in the cardboard boxes somewhere in the attic next to another set of pans that have never been used either!

Now, in Aalten their life is mainly filled with taking care of the horses and taking care of the horses again. And if they have a few moments to spare...they take care of the horses! We, their children, son-in-law and grandchildren wish them many more years in good health and happiness.

■

Where do the Mormon Somsens come from?

by W. Randy Somsen [919]

There are Somsens of all kinds, also when religious persuasion is involved. There is a Somsen branch that in a distant past changed over to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons). William Randy Somsen is a member of this church and relates how it all happened.



William Randy Somsen

Several months after their arrival, my great grandfather, Henry John Somsen, was born on the 18th of February, 1852 to his parents Hendrik and Johanna. Thus, this branch of the Somsen family, being my branch, has continued to flourish in the Americas with many descendants, most having similar hopes and dreams as those who first came. Henry John's early life dealt him challenges while he was yet a boy, including the loss of both of his

when he came West to work for a railroad company that was building the Oregon Short Line. Henry John was aggressive, courageous, and intelligent and was soon put in charge of more than 200 men. His headquarters were at an Echo, Utah hotel the railroad company had built in order to house and feed their employees.

During his stay at the hotel, Henry John noticed and fell in love with Emily Gentry, who had come from England with her parents and two sisters and four brothers. They had been devout in the Episcopal Church of England but had become converts to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (viz., Mormon or L.D.S.), having been converted by Elder Charles W. Penrose, a missionary who had made his home with Emily's family for five years before coming to America.

My grandfather, Garrett William Somsen, received an autobiography of Olive Elaine Somsen Sharp in the year of 1962. Much of the information I will give about my line of the Somsen family comes from this book. Also, I attained historical and chronological information from the Somsen Generations book by Derk and Theo Somsen. To these authors, I am eternally grateful for all they have contributed to our understanding of the Somsen history and the legacy in which our ancestors have left us. Without these and other authors' devotion and commitment to research and publish, our ancestral history and knowledge would be vague at best. Let it be a lesson for those of us who haven't even recorded a personal history to do so, so that our experiences and memories can live on.

My great, great grandfather, Hendrik Jan Somsen, and his family consisting of his wife, Johanna Berendina Rensink, and children, Jan Willem, Arent Jan, Elizabeth, and Garrett came from Aalten, The Netherlands on the 25th of July, 1851 to settle in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, USA.



Henry John Somsen and Emily Gentry (about 1877)

parents in 1863. Garrett, his older brother who had relocated to Detroit, took over the responsibilities of raising Henry John on a farm. Garrett saw to it that Henry John received a good upbringing and also a good education with the hopes that Henry John would have wonderful opportunities ahead.

At the early age of 20, Henry John taught school until the age of 22

Emily's family was very spiritually minded and had gained a testimony of the truthfulness of the Mormon religion. I am sure they prayed, fasted, and followed the same admonition of discovering the truthfulness just as many people have including Joseph Smith when he was a boy in his fifteenth year. As asked, I will give a short description of some of the happenings that occurred in the life of Joseph Smith in order to

explain a little about Mormonism and its role in the life of Emily's family. This is in no way a complete description of the events leading to the establishment of the religion but will give an introduction to it.

Joseph Smith was born on December 23, 1805 and was raised on a farm in Palmyra, New York. He was one of nine children. Circumstances at his home were humble, and he didn't even have the opportunity to receive a formal education. Joseph, while yet a boy, became very interested in religion but was perplexed at the onslaught of religious gatherings and ministers' professions that theirs was the true church - to come join it.



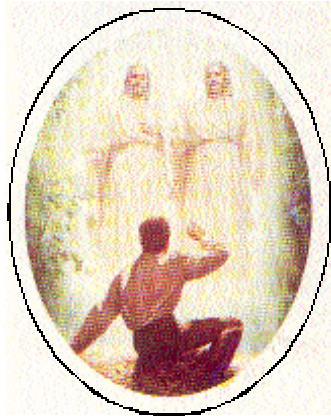
Joseph Smith

Each professed to have the truth but taught different principles. Even Joseph's family was separated on the subject of religion, some joining with the Methodist Church and others with the Presbyterian Church.

Joseph wondered that since Jesus truly taught one gospel as mentioned in Ephesians 4:5 that there is one Lord, one faith, and one baptism,

then how could there be so many different teachings of the one gospel? How could each church claim to have the truth?

These were just some of Joseph's questions.



Vision in which Joseph Smith sees both Jesus and God

Joseph really wanted to find a church that taught the true gospel but continued to question which church he should join until one day he read in James 4:6 that if any lacks wisdom to go ask of God. This scripture touched Joseph deeply for he felt that if anyone needed help it was he, and in the midst of the desperation to find the truth he had not yet asked God which church he should join.

Joseph was determined to find the truth so one early morning he entered some woods not too far from his home in order to ask God which church he should join. The events that happened next changed him and generations after him. Joseph Smith was visited by two heavenly beings - one of whom was God the Father and the other who was his son, Jesus Christ. Joseph, through his desire to find which church to join, asked of God what he should do. He was instructed to join none of them for they had strayed in their teachings and did not teach the full truth. After this experience, Joseph was resolute that if he remained faithful, he would be instructed what to do next.

Many miraculous events occurred throughout Joseph's life after that first experience, including the restoration and translation of records of prophets that had lived in the ancient Americas. The people in the ancient Americas were a devout and religious people and knew God. Just as prophets in the other hemisphere kept records contained in what is known as the Bible, the Americas also had prophets who kept records on the American continent. The great waters separated the people but not God's fairness in having his work go forth in all of the world. The records recorded by the prophets in the Americas are again restored and contained in a book known as the Book of Mormon. Mormon was one of the many prophets who lived on the American continent back around A.D. 400. He was one of the last prophets in that era that had a hand in preserving the sacred gold-plated records that were later transcribed by Joseph Smith. 'Mormon' is also a nickname that has been given to the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.



Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City, Utah

Joseph Smith, the prophet, through revelation and guidance from God, restored again to the earth the same gospel and ordinances and principles that Jesus Christ had taught. The prophet today, Gordon B. Hinkley, continues to receive revelation and guidance of God's will for his people.

This religion, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, is the reason my great grandmother, Emily

Gentry, and her family came to America. They had come from England and had crossed the plains to relocate to Utah. Naturally, the family was most sincere in their new religion, and when Emily's parents discovered Henry John's interest in her and that she cared for him, there was a great commotion in the home. My great grandfather, Henry John, was raised as a Presbyterian but wasn't really religious. He did though have a fine character and was very honest and square in all his dealings. Nevertheless, Emily's parents forbade Henry John to come to their home or to see Emily anywhere else.

Emily was stubborn and insisted that she see Henry John. One thing led to another and through Emily's persistence, she continued to see Henry John for a year. The more her parents argued that she came here for her religion, the more she disregarded their wishes and wanted to marry this young man, not of their faith. They could not understand her, but she told them he had no bad habits, never smoked or drank, and was a good man. Finally, without her family's blessing, she went to Salt Lake City and married Henry John Somsen.



Joseph Smith receives the Golden Plates (the book of Mormon from Moroni, the son of Mormon)

Emily, having been converted to the LDS religion made sure that her and Henry John's children were taught good values and were taught the gospel. Henry John supported her in this endeavor. These things, along with their being located in Utah during the initial rearing of the children, contributed to the baptism of each of their children into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Since that time, many of the posterity of Henry John and Emily have been reared in or have been converted to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

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This really happened to my dad!

by Cora Hunse [188]

Sometimes you are really surprised at what can happen to you. Cora Hunse tells about a tragi-comic event of which her father Teun Hunse [68] became the victim. Originally she contributed the story to the Canadian CBC-radioprogramme Vinyl Café.

I listened to the Vinyl Café today. I am working on a First Nations Reserve called Ogoki where we are unable to listen to the CBC if it were not for satellite television. I have always enjoyed your program many times laughing so hard that I had the tears were rolling down my cheeks. I enjoyed listening to the stories that people have contributed. I have one to contribute as well.

This is a story about something that happened to my dad about

out the eaves of one of the houses up the street. The only problem was that he didn't have a ladder. The man noticed that my dad had an extension ladder under his deck and would my dad be willing to lend it to him for a few hours.

My dad has always been one to help out others but he did confess to being slightly suspicious but his conscience prevailed. He was a Christian and had been blessed with a good job so he should help out this man who was less fortunate than

To his dismay he could not find the young man, however he noticed a house where there was work being done on the roof. He knocked on the door and noticed that the whole family was having dinner. After apologizing for interrupting their meal, he asked if he had seen a young man with an extension ladder with a yellow rope on it. The owner of the house stated 'Yes, I just bought one two hours ago for \$40'.

My dad laughed and told him the story. He asked if they could split the difference and if he could buy the ladder back for \$20 - citing that they were both losers that day. Although my dad lost \$20 that day it never stopped him from helping people out. At the age of 73 he continues to drive people from St. Catharines to Hamilton for the Cancer Society and walks a dog every day for a disabled person.



**Teun Hunse at the Campingweekend 2003
between Theo Somsen (left) and farmer Veerbeek (right)**



**Cora Hunse at the Campingweekend 2003
together with John Howard Somsen**

20 years ago. One afternoon he had returned from his job and was working outside in our back yard. A man approached him and started to talk about the economy and how bad it was. It was in the 80's when the construction business had gone bust and this man told my father that he had been unemployed for some time. He was happy to report that he had just got some odd jobs cleaning

himself. He gave him the ladder and watched him walk down the street carrying the ladder.

My father continued to work in the yard and the young man did not return. He began to get a little uneasy as it was getting dark. He decided to investigate and began to walk down the street in the direction where he had seen the ladder disappear.

He has passed on his spirit of volunteerism to his children and his grandchildren. He may be a loser by some people's standards but he is a winner in our eyes.

■

Tea Circle Japanese style

Aalten is situated in the the most extreme eastern part of The Netherlands and Japan in The Far East of the World.

What have these two got in common? Herman Bertus Somsen [180], born in Aalten, left for Japan, returned to The Netherlands and shows to be a true easterling in everything he does!

Truly Dutch is a cup of black tea with a biscuit. In Japan people do not just have their cuppa but transform it into a complete four-hour-ceremony with green matcha-tea, earthenware tea-sets and snacks of the season. 'There are no less than two hundred different ways to make tea. These rituals date from the sixteenth century', Herman **Soshu** Somsen relates. Every week he teaches interested ladies who like to master the Japanese tea culture.

Herman Soshu Somsen is standing in the doorway, dressed in style in a dark-blue Japanese kimono. We follow him but first we have to take off our shoes. In his living-room we imagine ourselves to be in a Japanese tea-house.

It is still early in the morning. It is only a matter of minutes before some Asian ladies will enter the room, ready to perform the rituals of the tea-ceremony.

Herman Soshu -which means teacher- sits down on his futon in a relaxed way and tells why he, as a true Dutchman, is so fascinated by Japanese culture.

'The interest had always been there. Especially my special liking for Japanese tea earthenware.'

Herman points to the racks full of earthenware cups, plain and with decorations, bowls and saucers. 'These are very important for the Japanese tea-ceremony. According to western ethics the whole set is identical. In Japan it is important to have as many different items in the set as possible and also from various potteries. The use of all sorts of earthenware also makes every tea-ceremony different.'

Herman Somsen loves it to use his Asian tea-sets quite frequently. 'I loved to know more about the backgrounds and the history. It seemed interesting to me to create

a Japanese tea-house. I had the accommodation, I only had to go to Japan for some time.'

In Kyoto he studied the various uses of the Japanese tea-ceremony at the Urasenke foundation for three years with some intervals. He studied at a 16th century tea-institution where girls and ladies prepare themselves for the ceremony.

'In 1997 I finished my study and got permission to start a school myself. At the moment I have 32 Japanese and Dutch students. Once in every three years I return to Japan to brush up my knowledge.'

Ritual

'A Japanese tea-ceremony is not just a cosy tea circle, on the contrary.' Herman Somsen laughs: 'No, it is a ritual that lasts for four hours. Mostly a group of three to seven guests is invited and round lunchtime we cook a complete meal on a charcoal-fire. I winter it is interesting to do this in the evening and with candlelight it is very especial. A tea-ceremony is a very important meeting. The point is to achieve mutual harmony among the people present and their belongings and nature', Herman says. In this period of four hours everybody sticks to the rules and everybody knows his duty: be very polite. The guests have to avoid every subject that can lead to discussions. 'So no pithy conversations about religion and politics nor any gossip. In this way there will not be any stress and everybody will feel at ease.'



Herman 'Soshu' Somsen
and his American wife
Kirstin Hyslin



Hostess

In the meantime four Japanese students have arrived. They greet the people present with a bow. From their bags they take tea and snacks. From the cupboard they select the earthenware that will be used later on. They carry out various cleaning rituals. Then the ladies carefully sit down on the reed mats.

In turn the ladies perform as hostesses. It is a very serious thing. The guests sit on their knees which is very uncomfortable for Westerners. 'For people who are not used to it this position is a disaster. After just a few minutes you have to move. There is only one way: practise it as much as you can and you will get used to it', says Herman. Then the hostess steps forward and sits down in front of a kettle and starts making the tea.

Herman explains how the tea is made. 'The leaves of the green matcha-tea have been ground into a powder, which is put in a bowl with hot water. The tea is beaten with a bamboo brush.' Each movement is slow and well-thought out and according to tradition. In turn the guests may sip from the foaming tea and they get a colourful snack on a saucer. By way of thanks they bow and wipe their mouths with a lace-like napkin which the hostess skilfully produces from her apron. 'The Japanese don't have sugar in their tea, but very often they give a sweet in advance, in accordance with the season. Now it is marzipan for example', Herman explains.

Roll painting

In an alcove behind the ladies there is a roll painting with Japanese characters. 'Such a painting is very important and is always on the wall at each ceremony. The guests can read the day's theme on it, which will be discussed later. There is always a bunch of flowers in front of it as a sign of domesticity.'

Herman stays interested in the secrets of the Japanese tea ceremony. 'If you get familiar with this culture you not only learn everything about tea but also about architecture, landscaping, cooking, painting,



earthenware, poetry and history. That's what makes it fascinating. You will never have finished studying.'



For further information:
 Urasenke Foundation
 Netherlands Liaison Office
 Gijsbrecht van Amstellaan 5
 1181 EJ Amstelveen
 The Netherlands
 phone: +31 20 647 77 53

Source:
 Article by Annemarie de Haan in the
 Zondagochtendblad, Purmerend area,
 of November 9, 2003 (abridged and
 adapted by the editor).



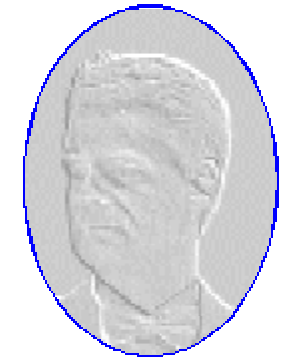
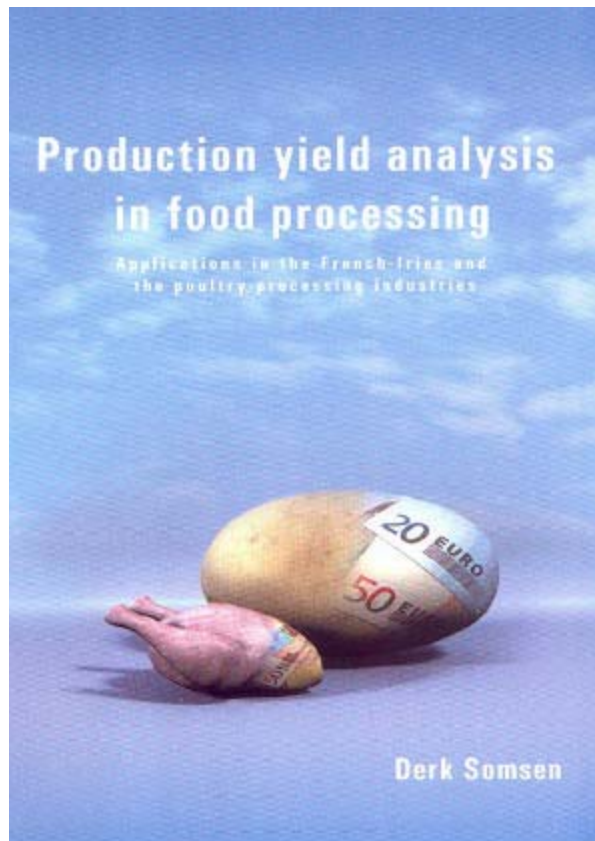
From 'Dokken' Derk to 'Doctor' Derk

door Theo Somsen [227]

On March 31, 2004 43-year-old Dirk Johan (Derk) Somsen [413] from Zutphen took his doctor's degree at Wageningen University. The sun was shining so nothing could go wrong!

His great-great-grandfather Derk Somsen (1853-1904) was called 'Dokken' Derk because he was a thatcher and always sought higher spheres. His descendant 'Doctor' Derk received his Doctor's degree because of something much more down-to-earth: a graduation research into the production yield of French fries; so potatoes. We, the innocent, only know about French fries whether they taste nice or not, but Derk knows how you can produce them most effectively and how you can prevent unwanted loss of raw materials.

According to Derk his thesis has great practical importance for one of his theses to defend his work was: *It is not too much trouble to pick up millions from the floor in big companies.* It may be expected, therefore, that Derk, head processing technology of the biggest French fries producing factory in the Netherlands (Aviko from Steenderen, Gelderland) will become fabulously rich!



**Thesis
Production yield
analysis in food
processing**



Doctor Derk Somsen

Usually taking a doctor's degree is a journey to Calvary. In the Netherlands only seven percent of the candidates succeed within the fixed time of four years. With our Derk it was different; he managed to do his research and write his thesis within three years! At the graduation ceremony he was praised to the skies, for he did the job next to having a very exacting job and a young family.

The young doctor was well aware of that and therefore dedicated his thesis to his family with these words: *To my wife Jacqueline and my children Mart and Penny who helped me exceptionally well during these years of unwearying work.*



Mart and Penny

On March 31, 2004 Derk defended his thesis in the Hall of Wageningen University. Four opponents got three quarters of an hour to criticise his thesis but Derk was able to defend himself brilliantly.

Derk's colleagues will have enjoyed the scientific and technical tournament, but the relatives and friends who were present in large numbers most of all enjoyed the ritual and the things they also understood. One of the things they appreciated very much was the fact that one of the opponents was the Secretary of Agriculture, who is also a professor. I enjoyed the view of one opponent who stated that the paperback edition of Derk's thesis was proof that a pronouncement of a renowned Dutch comic character was not true. This character, Sir Olivier B. Bommel stated: *Books in paperback edition can never contain deep thoughts.* After the defence of his thesis the graduating committee arrived at the conclusion that Derk from then on could be called 'Doctor' Derk, which led to a great applause of the people present.



Congratulations for Jacqueline and Derk

One may be sure that we enjoyed the reception which Derk offered us afterwards in hotel 'De Wageningse Berg' on a sunny day with a view of the River Rhine...!

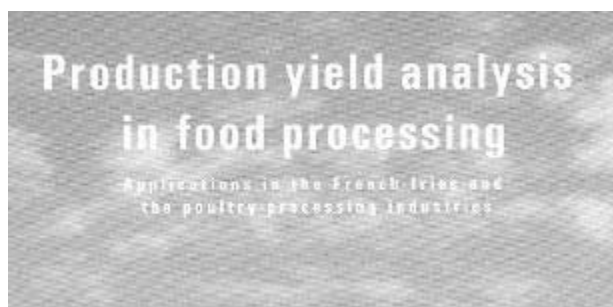
■



Secretary of Agriculture and Fishery
Prof. Dr. C.P. Veerman



Reception with a view of the Rhine



On horseback through the Pyrenean mountains

by Emma Somsen [1190]

In 1996 several 'Achterhoekers' (people from the Achterhoek region) rode on horseback through the Pyrenean mountains, the region between France and Spain.

For Emma Somsen this was an unforgettable occurrence and after reading about her experience you will understand why!



Straight through a herd of cattle

You must not have a fear of heights because you will travel along a two-meter wide path, with the mountain face on one side and a sheer cliff on the other side. The Pyreneans are a beautiful natural area where in one-week time, you will meet not more than ten people. However, along the way, you will see many cows, sheep and wild horses (among which there was a stallion and one of our mares was in heat; whoa, watch out!).

Sometimes you walk with your horse, sometimes you go through the water. You carry your supplies on the horse, delicious French cheese and baguette, 'salade' with lots of garlic. You come through little villages where time stands still, You ride over old smuggler paths between France and Spain. Sometimes you spend the night in an old ballroom and in the morning you must wash outside

by the water pump. Sometimes you spend the night in a former monastery, however most of the time in 'gites' (hikers cabins).

The guide is a Frenchman who of course knows very few Dutch words. You do not need to bring much clothing: a few pairs of jeans, some sweaters and your riding clothes are enough and of course rain clothing. You absolutely do not need dressy clothing because you travel through forested areas with low hanging branches. The whole day you sit on your horse from 11 a.m. until around 5 p.m. Every day you can take a shower but all facilities, such as showers and toilets are poorly maintained. The breakfast consists of only baguettes with jam but on the other hand dinner is great.

Sometimes you must also take your sleeping bag on the horse because

you spend the night in a little village where no cars can come. Normally your baggage will be brought to your new overnight place by a car. Well, a car? It looks more like a tin can on wheels that could die at any moment!

You do not need to be an expert rider, since we mostly travel at a fairly slow pace. It is really the whole day uphill and downhill and you must lean forward and backward on the back of your horse and sometimes do a little walking. It is also very remarkable to see how the horses find their way through the boulders. Sometimes the guide loses his way and we jokingly suggest that he should call the guide from last year. As revenge he will send us through the broom bushes, the steepest way to the top (walking!).

In the evening it is very cosy with our group of people from the same riding school. But most of the group went to bed at 10 o'clock, also because of the wine: after all you are in France. At the end of the week we are all in total agreement: We will do this again next year and... : Hats off to the horses!

■



Lunch break for Emma

We are not (yet) rich

by Ada Somsen [75], treasurer of the Somsen Foundation

This is the first time we write an article about the financial position of our family foundation. Our treasurer had the desire to bring about this change.

By now the Somsen Foundation has existed for quite a few years; six years to be precise. There is no legal obligation for foundations to publish their results, yet we would like to give you some more insight into our financial position. It is very healthy but we are not (yet) rich.

Every year the treasurer gives a financial account, consisting of a results account (a survey of receipts and expenditure) and a simple balance (a survey of the possessions and debts – if any – per December 31).

Results account 2003

In table 1 one can find the results of 2003 with separate columns for the bookkeeping in The Netherlands and the USA. The American accounts are kept by Marieke Edwards-Jager Gerlings [725] from Olympia, WA. From the results account the following facts may become clear:

1. The annual donations are the most important source of income. Without your financial support we will not be able to manage for long. Compared to previous years the donations unfortunately decrease.
2. The donations from the USA amount to about 35% of the total amount (rate: \$1 = € 1).
3. The most important expenses entry is the production and mailing of our magazine Somsen Horizon, which is published twice a year.
4. The results of 2003, both in the Netherlands and in the USA show a positive balance of nearly Euro 500 (\$1 + € 1). So we have made a little profit, but then, we did not organise any risky activities.

Balance per December 31, 2003

The balance of the Foundation is quite simple. There are no debts; only possessions. We do not work with cash money, we only work with bank accounts. This implies that our only possessions consist of the balance of two bank accounts.

Though the amount of donations received has been declining over the past few years and also in 2003, the financial position of the Foundation has not deteriorated; on the contrary, it slightly grew. But we are not (yet) rich!

Table 1: RESULTS 2003				
		NETH		USA
RECEIPTS				
year 2003				
Periodical donations				
o.w. over 2004	1.581,00	2.118,68	\$820,00	
Single receipts		338,80		\$9,42
o.w. Surplus camping-weekend	98,88			
Interest	-		\$9,42	
Receipts sales	10,00			
Contributions expenses board	229,92			
Total		2.457,48		\$829,42
		NETH		USA
EXPENSES				
year 2003				
Expenses Somsen Horizon		1.824,55		
o.w. Cost of production				
SH / mailings	1.089,57			
Postage / packing-materials.	734,98			
Remaining expenses		962,61		
o.w. Campingweekend	34,20			
Stationery	158,32			
* Expenses board	740,45			
Miscellaneous	29,64			
Total		2.787,16		-
RESULTS 2003		329,68-		\$829,42
* to be received : Euro 250 contributions expenses board				

Table 2: BALANCE PER 31 - 12 - 2003			
	NETH	USA	TOTAL**
Opening balance 1 January 2003	3.683,36	\$124,35	3.807,71
Results in year 2003	329,68-	\$829,42	499,74
FINAL RESULT			
Bankaccounts 31-12-03	3.353,68	\$953,77	4.307,45
**\$ and Euro rates 1 to 1 here.			



Our shop

We have still for sale in our shop:

- ◆ Familybook Somsen Omnes
Generaciones € 25 - \$ 25
- ◆ Video Somsen Panorama
€ 10 - \$ 10
- ◆ CD-Rom The United Somsens
of Aalten € 7 - \$ 7
- ◆ Old issues Somsen Horizon
€ 1 - \$ 1 each

Prices are without postal charges

To be ordered at our secretariat

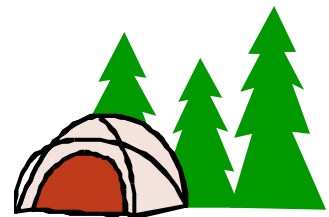
Campingweekend in August 13-15, 2004

Already for the eighth time we organise the Somsen campingweekend in IJzerlo. A visit to our lime tree on Saturday afternoon and the barbecue (costs € 12,50) on Saturday evening is one of the fixed components of our program. On Saturday morning we will visit the magnificent 'Schloss Anholt' in Anholt. The castle is known as a fairytale-like water castle close to the German-Dutch border. In the castle you can look at a nice collection of paintings, among which is a real, well protected Rembrandt! In the distinguished library halls there are beautiful choir books, original Blaeu-atlases and much more to admire! The plan is to take a guided tour in the castle and a stroll through the garden. This will cost some money, you will hear the exact amount with your registration.

Again we expect a lot of relatives. Apart from the steady core we also see new faces every year, so... And as you know the weather is always nice, the drinks cheap and the atmosphere perfect!

If you want to participate in the barbecue and/or the visit to 'Schloss Anholt' please inform us in advance by phone or e-mail to Wim Somsen.

Wim Somsen
Hoge Heurnseweg 8
7095 CJ De Heurne
The Netherlands
phone: +31 315 652 115
e-mail: somsen@uwnet.nl



The Somsen Family Web Page

www.somsen.org

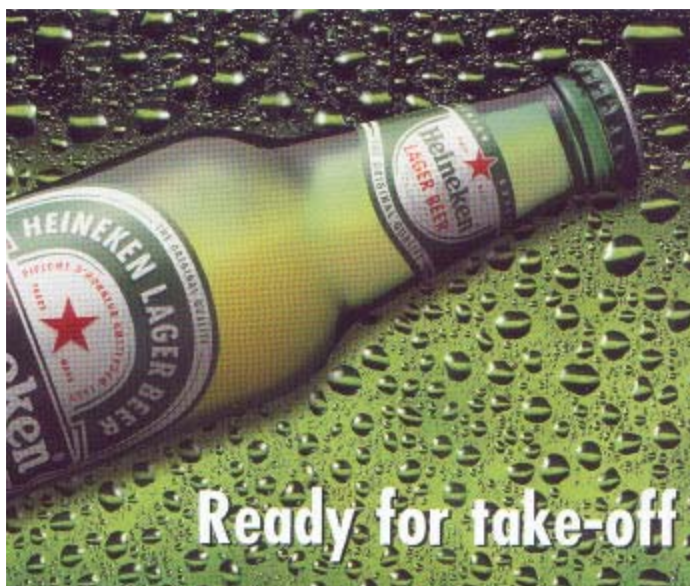
For the past ten years our family has had a presence on the Internet. This has served as a nexus or connection for our family to share information and to learn about our common heritage. In addition, many other researchers with connections to our family have been in contact with us.

On the pages are a privatized (details of living family omitted) genealogy, a photo album of many family members and many pictures and stories from both reunions.

Also included is the entire preface to our familybook, *Somsen Omnes Generationes*. There is also a link to the contact information for the members of the Board of the Somsen Foundation.

We try to upload our family newsletter, the *Somsen Horizon*, as quickly as it is published. For many it is the only means of learning more about our heritage. All twelve editions, in both Dutch and English, are available.

It is important to note that these are **your** pages. We strive to incorporate any reasonable request. Please understand that with hundreds of pages some changes and major revisions take time. Please address any comments to any Board member or directly to the webmaster:
Somsen@crocker.com

In Memoriam

Gerda Johanna van der Vinne-Somsen [166]



by Dick & Dikky Somsen-Lenselink [130/133]

'When on January 20 the granddaughter who was named after her lit a candle everything became quiet in De Hoofdhof. It was the silence for the personal reflections and memories of a mother and grandmother, Gerda Johanna van der Vinne-Somsen. A large group of relatives and friends had gathered together in a Church Service to pray and to console and encourage each other. The relatives had already been around her for a couple of days, full of love and caring, in the nursing home Zandhove where she had arrived not so long before. Her passing away was expected and it happened fairly soon. On January 14, 2004, she returned to her Creator, who had given her her life on October 11, 1910.'

These are the opening lines of the 'In Memoriam' we found in the Church magazine of the Dutch Calvinist Church of Zwolle-Berkum, where Gerda had been a loyal member since she settled in Zwolle in the fifties of the last century.

All of us, as members of the Somsen family, got to know her at the Reunion of 1997, as the oldest Somsen present, 86 years of age, who was offered the first copy of our family book *Somsen Omnes Generationes*. It was one of the many highlights of the Reunion but also a highlight in her own life, in which she had also known deep valleys. When her husband Jenne van



Gerda receives the first copy of the familyboek on August 9, 1997

der Vinne {173} died in 1956, she was left behind as a widow who had to care for two older and three very young children. This was certainly not an easy task. With much love and caring she accomplished this task, though. She was a unique, compassionate and caring woman who felt very much attracted to the Somsen family and to her children, her grandchildren and her great-grandchildren until she was struck by a cerebral hemorrhage, when she needed care herself.

'Nothing shall part me from Thou' sounded, accompanied by her son Gerard on the church organ and with the words from the Hymn 296, verse 3, the coffin, which had been closed by the children themselves, was carried out of the Church. She intensely longed to be reunited with her Lord. On the cemetery Bergklooster her mortal remains were interred next to those of her husband Jenne. May God bestow upon those who are left behind the consolation and strength to overcome this great loss.

In Memoriam

Bernard Somsen [1347]

by Dick & Dikky Somsen-Lenselink [130/133]

Addressed to the Somsen Foundation we received the obituary of Bernard Somsen from Slagharen, who passed away on February 19th 2004. The funeral service took place in the Christian reformed church in Lutten, where many family members, friends, acquaintances, and veterans of the Dutch East-Indies from the years 1946-1949 were gathered together to pay their respects to a dear man, a special father, a proud grandfather, and an unforgettable friend.

The theme of the funeral service which took place on February 24th 2004 was from Psalm 23 verse 1: 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall lack nothing'. These are the words of the text used in the marriage celebration of Bernard Somsen and Hennie Schetsberg [1348] on March 7th 1952 in the same church.



Bernard and Hennie Somsen-Schetsberg

Bernard was the youngest from a family of seven children and (as you can read in *Somsen Omnes Generationes*, pg. 174) he never knew his mother; she died six days after his birth. Bernard knew that he was terminally ill, but he was not afraid to die because, he said: 'I will go through the open gate to my Heavenly Father and hope to see my own mother again.' This is why the front page from the liturgy of the Service of Word and Prayer shows the illustration of a stone archway with the iron gate standing wide open!

Son Willem and half-brother Dirk said words of remembrance and appreciation for Bernard and also we got the good feeling of 'belonging' to the large Somsen family.

One of the present old veterans spoke impressive commemorative words and reminded us of the close camaraderie and trust between the service men from those days in the far East-Indies, where Bernard got the unforgettable nickname 'Pa Somsen' from them. See also the article by Gree van Daatselaar-Somsen [53] in *Somsen Horizon*, volume 3, number 5 from May 2000. After the children closed the coffin with their own hands, we entrusted his body to the earth of the cemetery in Lutten. The Somsen Foundation loses in Bernard Somsen a charming, dedicated contributor who was very touched by all the ups and downs of the Somsen family. May the God of life and death bestow upon those who were left behind the consolation and strength to overcome this great loss.

Family Announcements

In this column we would like to draw your attention to the family announcements that have reached us. We are very much pleased to present them to you and are grateful to everybody who took the trouble to inform us about the merry and sad events in their and our family. This also enables our advisor Dick Somsen from Zwolle to keep our genealogical files up-to-date, so that we, in turn can inform you in Somsen Horizon.

We really appreciate it very much that you send in your family announcements to our secretariat: Somsen Foundation, Jan Tooropstraat 2, 3817 PZ Amersfoort, The Netherlands.



Born

11-10-2003: Elizabeth Joy [5077]
d.o. Kent Jerome Kippes [4009] and
Leah Rachel Somsen [2698]

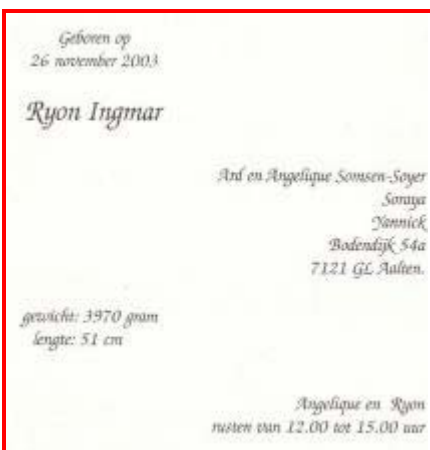
29-10-2003: Ruben [5173] s.o. Ard
Somsen [1809] and Mirjam
Rhebergen [3890]

17-11-2003: Boudy Ferdi Simcha
s.o. Maruschka Somsen [2881] and
Rob Wennekendonk

26-11-2003: Ryon Ingmar [5174] s.o.
Ard Johan Somsen [544] and
Angelique Soyer [549]



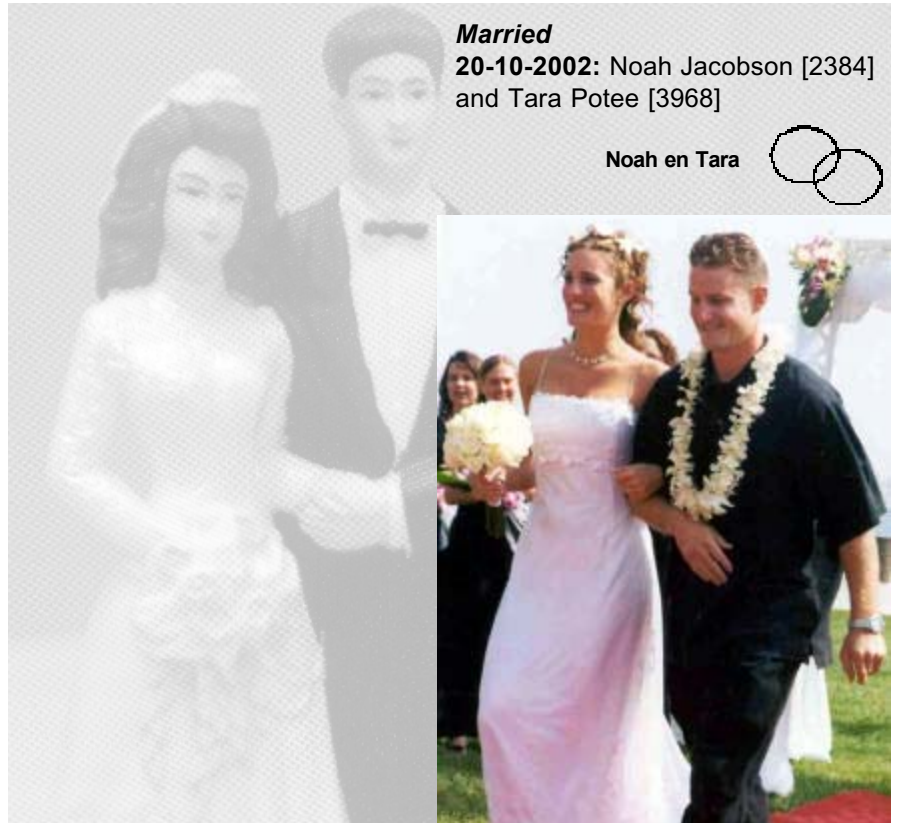
Maruschka and Rob with Boudy



Married

20-10-2002: Noah Jacobson [2384]
and Tara Potee [3968]

Noah en Tara



Deceased

21-03-2003:
Gosen Bovenhoff [1341],
90, Nieuwleusen

14-08-2003:
Frederik Derk Schuurman [1958],
68, Dinxperlo

03-10-2003:
Anna Ruesink [2157],
89, Dinxperlo

05-11-2003:
Ruby Hannah Mattison [3464],
79, Lake Lawrence, Yelm, WA. USA

20-12-2003:
Gerrit Johan Somsen [2224],
64, Varsseveld

07-01-2004:
Drika Johanna (Annie) Maalderink-
Somsen [1846], 71, Eibergen

14-01-2004:
Gerda Johanna van der Vinne-
Somsen [166], 93, Zwolle

02-02-2004:
Everdina Geertruida ter Horst-Somsen
[973], 85, Chatham, Ont. Canada

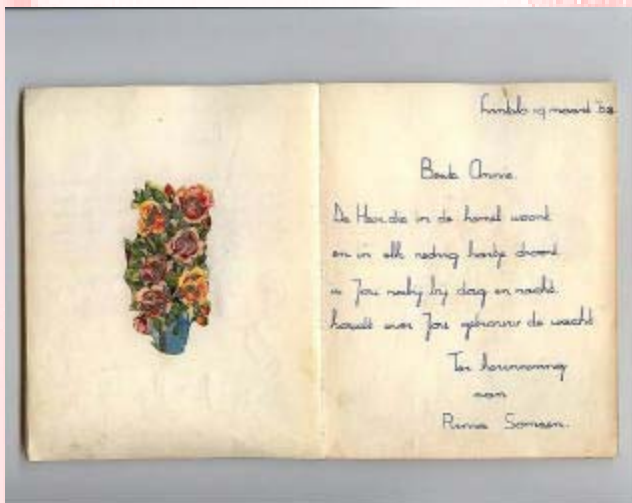
19-02-2004:
Bernard Somsen [1347],
78, Slagharen



Poem of 'Mrs. Somsen'
Johanna Christina Somsen (1904-1984)

Present

Yesterday is history
Tomorrow is a mystery
Today is a gift
That's why we call it –
present.



Poem of 'Rinia of the Snieder'
Hendriana Wilhelmina Somsen (1954)

For Annie

Sometimes children do have sorrows
But grown-ups have many more
Entrust them during all your life
To our Saviour, our Lord

In memory of
Mrs Somsen

Aalten,
April 22, 1964



A nearly forgotten girl's album of friends' verses

by Gree van Daatselaar-Somsen [53]

Our family has not produced great poets yet. Though there are some occasional poets as our starreporter discovered at a party; read for yourself!

At a very nice party on the occasion of a 50th wedding anniversary of some very dear friends I was seated next to Annie Maters-Rensink from Terneuzen, the daughter-in-law of the bride and bridegroom.

It turned out that Annie was born in Aalten and in these situations the Somsen name very soon pops up. To my great surprise Annie mentioned her needlework teacher, Mrs Somsen. 'Oh, that must have been Christien of aunt Dora', I said elatedly. I am of an older generation than my companion. 'My mother used to call her so, so that she was not mixed up with other Christiens.' 'Actually she has written in my girl's album of friends' verses', Annie continued, 'and she added some beautiful pictures. And at Aalten high-school Rinia Somsen was a classmate of mine; Rinia of the Snieder, that's what she was called, after the name of the farm in Lintelo, where she lived. She also wrote in my album!' The result of this conversation can now be seen on the back page. Something nice to keep: it is something special! Enjoy it.

Johanna Christina Somsen [164], called Christien, was a needlework teacher in Aalten and lived from 1904-1984. Hendriana Wilhelmina Somsen [707], called Rinia, was born in 1954. Her poem is exceptionally compact and yet very expressive. Very clever for a nine-year-old girl!

Lintelo, March 19, 1963

Dear Annie

Our Lord, who lives in heaven
and also dwells in every humble heart
is near you day and night
and watches faithfully over you

In memory of
Rinia Somsen

