

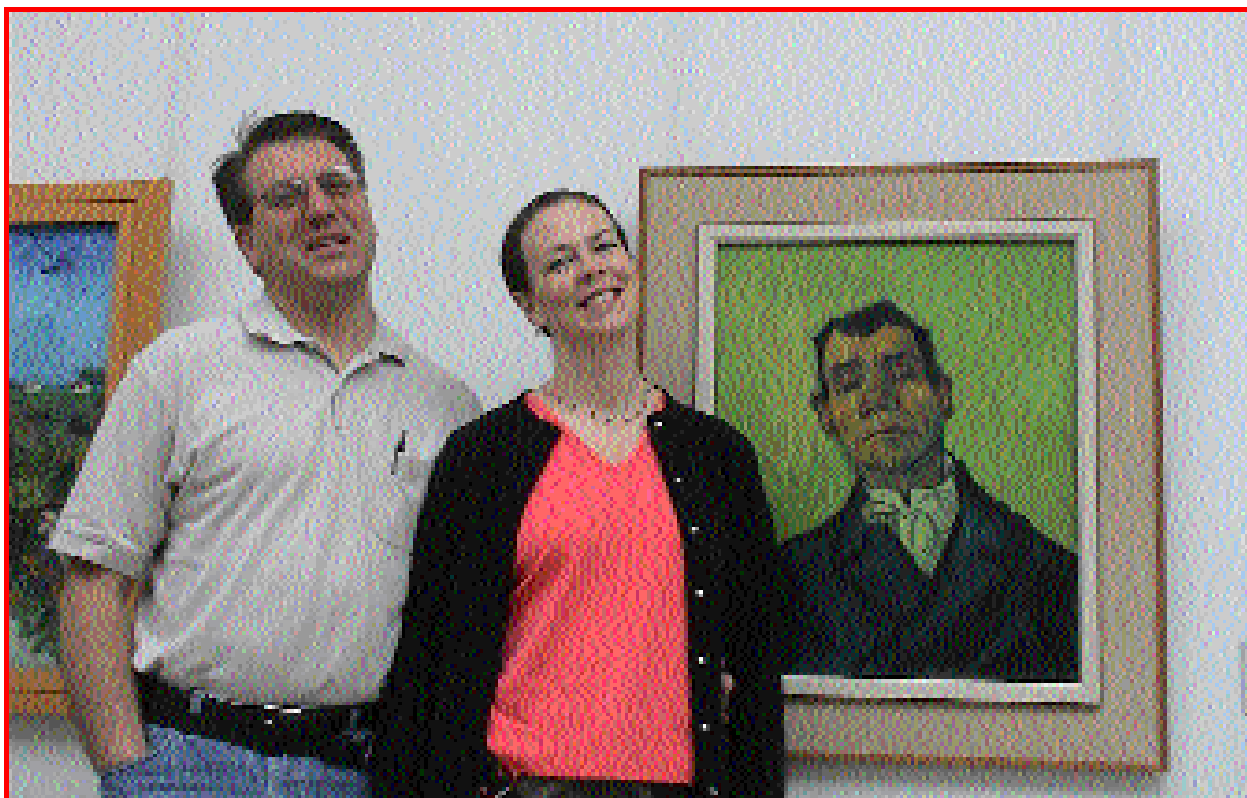


# Somsen horizon

## *New Adventures:*

*Volume 7 - number 14 - November 2004*

- Yankee in Paradise: A Dutch Diary
- Dennis Somsen, the hero of Aalten
- Pool superintendent, do you know what a fly is doing in the milk?
- Julia Somsen makes friends with Paula Crist-Somsen
- Hoopman-years of a boy from Eibergen
- The Apeldoorn Four-day-walking Tour
- Somsen Boattrip + Campingweekend



*Half-yearly family magazine*

**Board of the Somsen Foundation**

Theo Somsen [227], *chairman*  
Hindenhoek 11, 8172 AC Vaassen  
tel.: +31 578-572 867  
E-MAIL: THEOSOMSEN@CS.COM

Gree van Daatselaar-Somsen [53]  
*vice-chairman*  
Esstraat 22, 7131 CT Lichtenvoorde  
tel.: +31 544-375 783  
E-MAIL: GREE.VD.SOMSEN@HETNET.NL

Margriet Iserief-Somsen [2878], *secretary*  
Jan Tooropstraat 2, 3817 PZ Amersfoort  
tel.: +31 33-461 96 43  
E-MAIL: SOMSENSTICHTING@CASEMA.NL

Ada Somsen [75], *treasurer*  
Leusdenhof 298, 1108 DP Amsterdam Zuidoost  
tel.: +31 20-696 18 34  
E-MAIL: ADASOMSEN01@ZONNET.NL

Wim Somsen [518], *vice-secretary*  
Hoge Heurnseweg 8, 7095 CJ De Heurne  
tel.: +31 315-652 115  
E-MAIL: SOMSEN@UWNET.NL

Berto Somsen [423], *vice-treasurer*  
Burg. Wilhelmweg 27, 7151 AA Eibergen  
tel.: +31 545-476 272  
E-MAIL: BCSOMSEN@CS.COM

Helmut Somsen [1562], *member*  
Provinzialstrasse 70, 46499 Hamminkeln  
Bundesrepublik Deutschland (BRD)  
tel.: +00 49-287 35 36  
E-MAIL: HELMUT.SOMSEN@T-ONLINE.DE

Johan Somsen [1089], *member and translator*  
*Somsen Horizon*  
Schietaanweg 11, 8162 GP Epe  
tel.: +31 578-629 893 / 6 290 324 84  
E-MAIL: JOHAN.F.SOMSEN@WXS.NL

**Advisors of the Somsen Foundation**

Dick Somsen [130], *genealogy and databases*  
Monteverdilaan 175, 8031 DL Zwolle  
tel.: +31 38-454 23 60  
E-MAIL: SOMSEN.DJ@NET.HCC.NL

John Somsen [2353], *USA and Internet*  
35 Springdale Avenue Holyoke  
MA. 01040-3421, USA  
tel.: 001 413 538 77 24  
E-MAIL: SOMSEN@CROCKER.COM

Ben Somsen [396], *audio-visual support*  
Lariksweg 1, 7151 XW Eibergen  
tel.: +31 545-472 546, fax.: +31 545-475 359  
E-MAIL: BENSOMSENVIDEO@TREF.NL

**Internet**

Somsen website: <http://www.somsen.org>

**Bankaffairs USA**

Mrs Marieke Edwards-Jager Gerlings [725]  
920 East Bay Dr. NE# 3D301, Olympia,  
WA. 98506-1222, USA  
tel.: 001 360 786 15 83  
E-MAIL: HOLLAMER@AOL.COM

**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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*Mrs Marieke Edwards, 920 East Bay Dr. NE#3D301*  
*Olympia, WA. 98506-1222, USA*

**Copy**

Editorial staff Somsen Horizon

E-MAIL: THEOSOMSEN@CS.COM

**Secretariat**

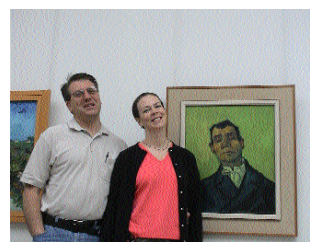
Somsen Foundation, Jan Tooropstraat 2, 3817 PZ Amersfoort, The Netherlands  
tel.: +31 33-461 96 43

E-MAIL: SOMSENSTICHTING@CASEMA.NL

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

**Cover**

*Brad Olson [3891] and Darla Olson-Vandersluis [3942] in the Kröller-Müller museum (Hoge Veluwe)*

Lay-out: Bep Berkhoff  
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## Preface



Until the middle of the 19th century the Somsens hardly moved house. The word "travel" did not occur in their vocabulary. They preferred to stay at home in Aalten and a few of the neighbouring hamlets, like IJzerlo, Lintelo and Barlo.

Understandable, for it is a very beautiful region in the Achterhoek! If they travelled, it was only to visit relatives who lived nearby or to have a good time with the boys and girls from neighbouring villages.

This has changed dramatically! Now they live practically all over the world and they have become real globe-trotters. It is a very pleasant aspect that they do not only travel to visit the well-known tourist countries and popular attractions, but they also like to visit each other. The "travelling department" of the Somsen Foundation is sometimes consulted with the result that, very often, an encounter is arranged.

Are they just companionable people, these Somsens, or should we pity them because they are clannish? We, as members of the board, think the first option is true!

In order to convince you of this you will find two stories about young globe-trotters: Julia Somsen from Germany and from the USA: Brad and Darla Olson-Vandersluis.

Julia is a 100% DNA-Somsen and Brad Olson 20% at a rough estimate, but even then the Somsen genes play an important role.

But Somsen Horizon contains more stories about the NEXT GENERATION.

A generation that (hopefully) will continue the work of our family foundation. And a generation that we, as board, would like to promote to the main issue and the main target group of the third worldwide reunion in 2007, to be held in The Netherlands. You can be very helpful now, by making the next generation enthusiastic for this event. You might stimulate them, for instance, to present themselves for the organisation

of that reunion and/or surprise them by giving them the membership of our foundation. In this way they will be informed of the plans for the next reunion in 2007!

One phone-call to our secretariat (+31 (0)33 4619643) or an email [SOMSENSTICHTING@CASEMA.NL](mailto:SOMSENSTICHTING@CASEMA.NL) will do.

## Result Competition

Do you still remember? Our competition in the previous issue with the question:

Who was the Somsen who appeared on well over 700.000 covers of the Bookweek present 2004?

We gave you two hints to give you a hand, for we cannot know every body of course.

The hints were: He was born in 1949 and his P-number is 411. That, apparently, did the job, for 10 readers found the correct answer: Steven (Joop) Somsen

You will find Joop, who lives in Amsterdam, on page 240 of our family book.

During the camping weekend an extremely honourable jury has judged the answers and drawn lots. This led to the following three winners:

### 1st prize :

Mrs. W.E. Gerritsen-Somsen (born.1917) from Dinxperlo. "Tante Zus" will get a huge bunch of flowers.

### 2nd prize:

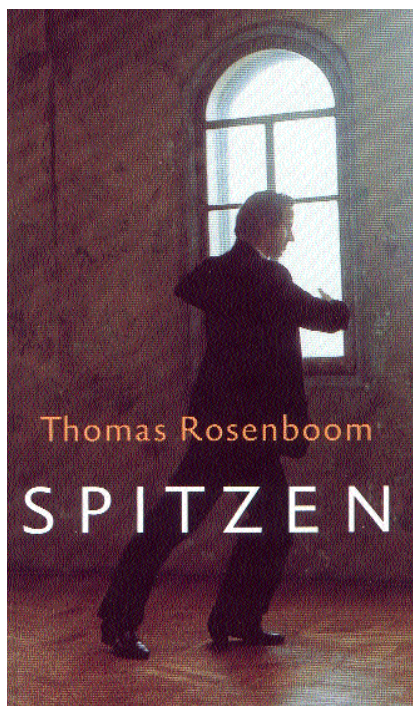
Mrs. A.K. Rodenburg-Somsen (born.1937) from Maarn. Ariaan Rodenburg will get a book with walking tours.

### 3rd prize:

Frederiek Stadler (born.1994) from Didam.

The bookweek for children has just ended, so she will get a beautiful juvenile book.

We thank all the participants and congratulate the three winners and we also thank the incorruptible jury for the job they did disinterestedly.



Book-week present 2004  
with tango-dancer Steven (Joop)  
Somsen



# Yankee in Paradise: A Dutch Diary

by Bradley Richard (Brad) Olson [3891]

**April 30, 2004.** *Jan Hendrik Somsen, my off-the-boat Great-Great Grandfather, I think of you now as I cross the Atlantic for the first time, the opposite way you did. I have crossed the Andes, crossed the Equator, crossed the Great Divide, but this new crossing stirs me in new ways.*

*All lands are old lands  
This land's ages hold bison and plains  
Old peoples with their own brilliance  
and failures*

*But not my people nor their brilliance  
nor failures*

*This oldness is not my oldness  
I am an afterthought in the millennia of  
this land*

*What can it be like  
What can it possibly be like to walk  
On the land where one's Mother's  
Mother's Mother's  
Father's Mother's Father's Father's  
Mother's Father  
Sowed and reaped*

*Such repetition sounds redundant  
Only because we intelligent Yanks  
Can name geological ages  
But cannot comprehend a half-dozen  
generations*

I tell Theo that Darla is 100% Dutch -more than I can boast- with Vander-Sluis, Pollema, Vermeer, and TeSlaa roots.

Theo says we will visit Harderwijk tonight, a likely town of origin for some of her ancestors.

We drive to Vaassen and meet Josette. We drop off the bags and drive to Harderwijk, walk through the town gate, see the church, sample some eel.



Eel stall in Harderwijk  
(Darla is not so fond of it)

the magnificent organ reverberate off the stone, something Darla and I will remember among the most moving experiences of the trip. "Great organs have great organists", Theo tells us. We climb the stairs afterward to meet the organist. Then tour the church.



Sint Walburgischurch - organist Klaas Stok

*Walking down streets  
Where Spanish soldiers pursued  
The defenders of Zutphen to their death  
I can smell centuries*

*My cousin talks about the 1500's  
Like you or I might reminisce  
about the 1950's  
And I feel the memory in my bones*

**May 1, 2004.** The night has gone too fast and yet too slowly, lost somewhere in the netherworld of time zone crossing. Cousin Theo Somsen (fourth cousin twice removed, to be exact) meets us at the airport and buys us a coffee. Darla [3942], my wife, and I discover to our delight that good coffee is as easy to find in the Netherlands as bad coffee is back home. Even the gas stations we visited doled out cups of fresh, steam-expressed java. Bad sleep, new land, a familiar face smiling, and solid coffee: things are looking pretty good for these two Americans.

*Could you live here?  
I ask my wife  
Cousin interrupts Could you live here!  
Of course you could  
Your ancestors lived here  
for years  
Years beyond memory  
You have just been away  
Traveling for a short while  
Welcome back*

**May 2, 2004.** We travel to Zutphen to worship in the cathedral. We listen to



„Uitsmijter“: slice of bread and ham with fried eggs on top

After church we head to Aalten and lunch in what used to be Aunt Mina's (Heersink) restaurant. Darla and I try a Uitsmijter ("Thrower Outer", Dutch for the person we call a "Bouncer"), bread topped with eggs and cheese or meat. We see the church in Aalten. I stand in the pulpit at Darla's and Theo's cajoling. I want to ask permission of the tour guide, but he seems bent on ignoring us while educating a group of German tourists. He turns his back, Theo and Darla coax me up, and give a silent but heartfelt benediction for all the souls that have wandered through these doors, whether for long or short, all the while looking over my shoulder, sure the tour guide will return and curse us all.



USA-clergyman in the Aalten pulpit

*I, Bradley, son of Marilyn,  
Daughter of Gezina called Celia,  
Daughter of Harmina,  
daughter of you,  
First born of a firstborn  
of a firstborn  
Of a firstborn of you, a fourthborn  
Hold in my hands  
What your feet touched  
Likely with klompen you  
made yourself  
And I wonder what you would  
say to me now  
About the shapes and paths  
we all have taken  
I wish for a moment  
That I could sit in your  
kitchen  
Share a warm cup  
with you  
And Great-great Grandmother*



Dutch cigars

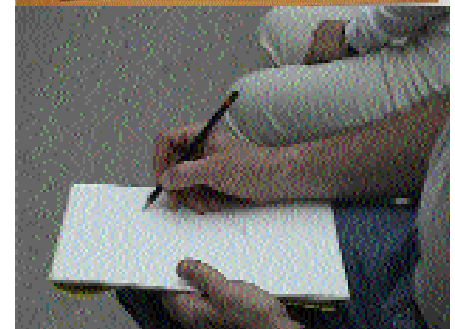
Later on, we visit the Japikshuis and Somsenhuis. I see the lime tree so many of you planted back in 1997 and read the inscription. I am moved by the sight of these buildings so many of us hail from.

Further on we visit the Rensinkhuis, home of Jan Hendrik and Janna just before they came to Wisconsin. We find Mr. Rensink there. He shows us around, inside and out. Then he hands us two tiles, now stacked up outside since he replaced them with new ones. He tells us they were the original tiles from the entryway and threshold to the house. I carry these treasures away gingerly. (More about them in another article, I hope.)

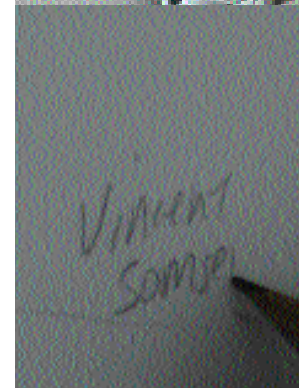
**May 3, 2004.** Darla and I borrow Theo's PT Cruiser to drive across The Netherlands to Zeeland that I might visit my new supervisor in the United Bible Societies. The miles pass. We fill our eyes with the views of this country.

Back in Vaassen we decide to surprise Theo by washing his Cruiser. Instead, we surprise him by snapping off his antenna having left it up in the wash (the antennas on our two cars don't retract and survive washing). Theo tells me we are even because I filled the tank, though he'll probably have to import one from Detroit and pay dear Euros for it. That night we all go to Deventer for a little tour and some Greek food.

Darla takes a swig of clear Ouzo (Greek anise liquor), thinking it's water, and gets a big surprise. She gives the rest to Theo.



Vincent Somsen at work





**May 4, 2004.** Theo takes us to the Kröller-Müller museum to see, among other things, the Van Gogh paintings. They let us sketch and photograph all we wanted (no flash, no markers, no paint, though). Amazing! Unheard of! I have long loved the colors and strokes of Vincent, felt a certain kindred heart with him. But now, so close, having driven and walked through his land, so near the canvas I can imagine I hear him breathing, talking to himself perhaps as he lays down color upon color. A music stirs in me as grand as the great organ of Zutphen. We tour outside and I am disappointed that Kenneth Snelson's Needletower is under repair after wind damage. My son, Isaac, studied Tensigrity, a means of no-torque construction using rods and cables, and had seen pictures of the *Needletower*.

Back in the Cruiser, we head to Amsterdam. After a lovely tour of the canals, Theo drops us off at the Hotel *De Herbergh*, owned by another Somsen: René [429].



Anne Frank image in Amsterdam

## Dennis Somsen, the hero of Aalten

***He is only twelve years old and yet he has put up an impressive performance.***

***Thanks to Dennis Somsen [1113] two children of three and five years old live to tell about their involuntary bath in the Keizersbeek.***

***Especially for the younger of the two the situation would have been quite desperate without Dennis' resolute intervention. With the little boy on his shoulder and the girl hanging on her brother, Dennis reached safely the shore of the Keizersbeek in Aalten on June 12.***

According to a pupil from grade seven of the *Broekhofschool* in Aalten another boy had told the toddler, that he could stand on a certain piece of grass near the brook. Well, that did not work and the result was that the little boy fell into the water. His elder sister saw that and hastened to help him. The unfortunate result was that at a certain moment there were two children in the deep water of the Keizersbeek. Very dangerous! That happened on Saturday, June 12, around half past four in the afternoon.



Dennis Somsen

### With a splash in the creek

Dennis saw the children, as did a friend of his. The latter however wanted to take off his shoes first.

That took too long for Dennis. Without thinking he ran to the place, where both children had fallen into the water, and he jumped into the creek with out thinking. The result is well-known.

Dennis' mother, Henny Somsen-Lammers [706] married to Arent Jan Somsen [705], took a look at the spot in question, close to the flood-control dam in the Keizersbeek, the next day. She was very impressed by what she saw. She was terror stricken when she realized what could have gone wrong the day before. The water on the spot was so deep, that her son Dennis could not stand there, and certainly not the two children who were saved. At the moment that Dennis grabbed him; the boy had already disappeared under water many times. Dennis, who has swimming certificates A and B, said that the water in the creek was very cold. A hot shower at home worked as a miracle.

### Heroic

By now, he has already told his story many times, also at the *Broekhofschool*. Everybody praised him for his act. Henny Somsen said laughingly: 'He is ready for the certificate *Rescue Swimming*'. And seriously: „We think he did really well and find him very brave.“

The parents of the saved children at first didn't realize from what danger their children had escaped. A bell started ringing, especially after that the younger of the two found difficulty in taking a bath. By way of thanks for his heroic action they brought Dennis a bunch of flowers and an envelope with money in it.

With permission taken from :  
Achterhoek Nieuws, June 2004  
(with a few supplements by the Somsen Horizon editors)

## Julia Somsen (Germany) makes friends with Paula Crist-Somsen (USA)

*We only seldom receive Fan-mail. But a letter like this ones compensates for everything!*

*Even without permission of Paula Crist-Somsen [816] and Julia Somsen [1571] we dare to publish their letter to us. We feel very much flattered indeed.*

Dear Johan and Theo,

As the two of you were joining other Somsens, including Helmut and Liesel, at the camping weekend in IJzerlo, Julia was attending another family gathering in Deephaven, Minnesota, with my family: Bruce, Melissa and Adrienne, and my siblings Mary Somsen-Gilbert and her husband Michael, Cindy Somsen-Zignego, her husband Ron and their son Darin and our brother Bill and his friend Julie. We had a nice family picnic at Mary's home; we fed Julia good American food: chicken and beef on the grill, baked beans, cole slaw, veggies and dip, cucumber salad, nachos and some sinfully good sweet bars. (Julia especially liked those!!!)

Julia and I travelled, also spent a day travelling to Winona, Minnesota to see the *Somsen Hall* on the campus of Winona State University. As you know, the *Somsen Hall* is named after Stephen Somsen, uncle to Henry Northrop Somsen and great-uncle to Stephen Duncan Somsen. We were treated like royalty when we told a gentleman, who happened to be the President of the College, that we were Somsens.

We were given gifts that made us very proud.

We stopped in Rochester, Minnesota to visit with Henry Northrop Somsen. He celebrated his **95th birthday** on August 12, and we all three enjoyed a nice visit at his apartment. We have since talked with his son Stephen in Mukilteo, Washington.

This was especially nice for Julia since Stephen and his family stayed with Julia and her parents during the 1997 Family Reunion.



I-r: Julia, Henry Northrop and Paula

It is September 2 and Julia has been with us six weeks already. The time has gone quickly and her visit has been so very pleasant. She has to go back home in two days, and I don't think any of us is ready for her departure. We went out tonight for a farewell dinner in downtown Minneapolis. We couldn't resist taking a few more pictures of Julia with our family. We have sincerely enjoyed having her join our family this summer. We have renamed one of the bedrooms **Julia's room**.

We thought you may enjoy pictures of our good times. I am hoping the four pictures transferred easily and timely onto your computers.

We are now looking forward to the next family reunion on your side of the Atlantic with a new interest. We have more family to whom we have become very close. I hope you and the Foundation realize what a wonderful thing you have done by joining all the Somsens together. As Julia looks over my shoulder, I know we both thank you greatly.

Love,

Julia and Paula  
September 3, 2004





## A wonderful time in Deephaven

by Julia Somsen [1571]

**Through mediation of the Somsen Family Foundation Julia Somsen, a Somsen from the German branch of our family, found a trainee post in the hospitable home of Bruce and Paula Crist-Somsen in Deephaven, MN, USA. Julia studies English and German and she has had a great traineeship in the USA. Apart from having had a very useful time she has also tightened family-ties in a very special way. In another article in this issue you will find a letter, written by Paula Crist-Somsen about the same event.**

I have been studying the subjects German and English at the university in Dortmund to become a teacher since October 2002. As a stay in an English-speaking country is required I wondered if the great and international Somsen-Family could help me to organize my stay abroad. Two telephone calls, one with Theo Somsen and one with Johan Somsen, took me to Paula Crist-Somsen and her husband Bruce Crist. They were willing to accommodate me and even asked me "When are you going to visit us, Julia?" when we were talking to each other for the first time...

I could hardly wait until July 25 this year when my journey started in to Minneapolis. After my arrival at the airport in Minneapolis the customs officers asked me for the exact address of my host-family but I couldn't think of the street-name. That turned out to be a huge problem and the officer asked me if I wanted to take the next plane to fly back home. I was so excited and flustered that I started trying to convince him that I was honest and that this family really existed. Getting more nervous I pointed at my Somsen T-shirt until a different officer came who was very friendly and helped to enter the

USA. I told him my story and asked him to look for Paula who was waiting at the entrance hall at the airport. We were both wearing the Somsen-shirts so it was very easy for him to find her.

He came back to me with a bright smile and said that had found her at the entrance hall and that she had given him the exact address. After a little while I was allowed to leave customs and I met Paula and Bruce for the first time. Paula was wearing her Somsen-shirt and was holding a big poster with my name and a few Somsen-stickers on it as well.



The Somsen T-shirt opens borders!



l-r: Paula and Julia in front of Somsen Hall

We all laughed about my experience at the airport and it was the beginning of a great time with Paula and Bruce and their daughters Adrienne, Mellissa, Jennifer and her husband Matt.

We made a lot of interesting trips, had fun at a family-picnic, visited Somsen Hall at Winona State University, met Henry Northrop Somsen in Rochester and did many more nice things. They made it possible for me to spend six weeks with their great family which I love dearly! I thank them with all my heart and I miss them all. I hope that we will see each other again soon in Europe!

■



# The Apeldoorn Four-day-walking Tour

by Ben Somsen [438]

***Walking is the oldest sport in the world and it was already practiced by Adam Somsen (see page 14 and 15 of our family book). Small wonder that his distant descendants still enjoy pedestrianism. In fact it doesn't make much difference where they walk. Just read this and who knows, it may inspire you too!***



Brochure Apeldoorn Four-day-walking tour 2004

After having walked the 40-kilometer tour in Nijmegen four times I had to flee to the Apeldoorn Four-day-walking Tour this year. I registered too late for Nijmegen and was rather disappointed, like so many others. Actually these two walking events cannot be compared as I have experienced. In Nijmegen there are about 40,000 participants whereas Apeldoorn is already fully booked at 10% of that number. Apart from this, in Nijmegen it is only possible, because of the large number of participants, to walk on wide and well-paved roads. Only on the third day the track leads through the woods: the much feared "Seven-Hill-Road". In Apeldoorn this is all different; just have a look at the programme below. In Apeldoorn the start and finish are in the sports complex of the football club "Victoria Boys".

## Tuesday, July 13

First walking day: direction Lieren, Loenen and Beekbergen, with music at the waterfall near Loenen.

## Wednesday, July 14

Second walking day: direction Beekbergen, to the Bruggelen Estate, Lierderbos, Woeste Hoeve and the hamlet of Groenendaal.

## Thursday, July 15

Third walking day: direction Assel, Hoog-Buurlo, Radio Kootwijk, Kootwijk, Assel and Hoog Soeren, with music at the fire station in Hoog Soeren.

## Friday, July 16

Fourth walking day: direction Ugchelen, Woeste Hoeve, Hoenderloo, Ugchelen and ... Apeldoorn!

Here we also pass through villages and towns, but these are situated in the middle of the woods of the Veluwe. Most of the time you are walking on forest paths that are sometimes so narrow that you have to walk in single file.



right: Ben Somsen

When summarizing the differences: the Apeldoorn Four-day-walking is more beautiful but also heavier, whereas Nijmegen is a lot pleasanter. Not only because it is much more massive but also because in every town you pass through there is a big party going on! In the towns and villages around Apeldoorn people don't even look at you.

For a matter of fact I must admit that they tried to do their utmost to create a nice atmosphere on the final day: in the bandstand in Hoenderloo there was a concert by the brass band "Music Friends" from Boekel and on arrival in Apeldoorn there was a barrel organ playing very cheerful music.



Medal for the 4 x 30 km. tour

The arrival of the participants was cheered up by a performance of brass bands and the band of the Royal Military Police, which played in the sport complex. The finish-party took place in the party-tent at the sport complex of the "Victoria Boys". Unfortunately the weather was not so cooperative on that final morning: in the morning it rained, just like in the afternoon and evening because of which quite a few parts of the programme fell to the ground.

Finally a request!

Are there Somsen walkers who would like to meet in Nijmegen or Apeldoorn next year so as to walk together?

Please contact me:

+31 (0)75 6168523 or send an email: [CORRY-BEN.SOMSEN@PLANET.NL](mailto:CORRY-BEN.SOMSEN@PLANET.NL)

## Hoopman-years of a boy from Eibergen

by Dick Somsen [408]

**On our request Dick Somsen (born 1940) from Eibergen has written down some memories of a colourful and instructive period of his life, which he spent in IJzerlo, the origin of many Somsen-stories. When he was still young he ended up in the Hoopman Family, later the Hoopman firm, related to the Somsen Family.**

### Dick tells:

In Omnes Generationes, the big Somsenbook, you can find my name, Dick Somsen, on page 200, son of Dirk Johan Somsen [361] and Willemina Hendrika Somsen-Smits [362]. To be perfectly clear I will summarize the history of the Hoopman-years, in chronological order.

My grandfather, Berend Hendrik Somsen [344] died on January 18, 1918, when he was 35 years old. My grandmother Gesina Joh. Th. Navis [345] was left with four young children, which was very hard in those days, without all present social services. As was common at that time in similar cases, members of the family took care of one or more children. That's how my father ended up with Uncle Jan Hoopman [351] and Aunt Anna Hoopman-Somsen [350] in 1915. Aunt Anna was a sister of my deceased grandfather. At that time they had one daughter, Lien [376], there would follow more daughters and one son called Bram [381].

### Strict, but fair

My father lived in IJzerlo for about ten years. He spent his childhood there and it was also there that he went to elementary school. After he had finished that school they put him to work at the blacksmith and bicycle repair shop of Uncle Jan Hoopman. At the same time he learned the trade of electrician. From later stories I understand that uncle Jan was strict but fair; this attitude to life shaped my father and that was also his attitude later at home. Son Bram has always considered my father as an older brother, he told me later.



Dick Somsen

When my father moved to Eibergen, he always looked upon the Hoopman Family as his second home. By then my grandmother was remarried with Nijman and lived there too. It was therefore not so amazing that, when I was a child, I liked to spend my holidays in IJzerlo, because of my father's stories.

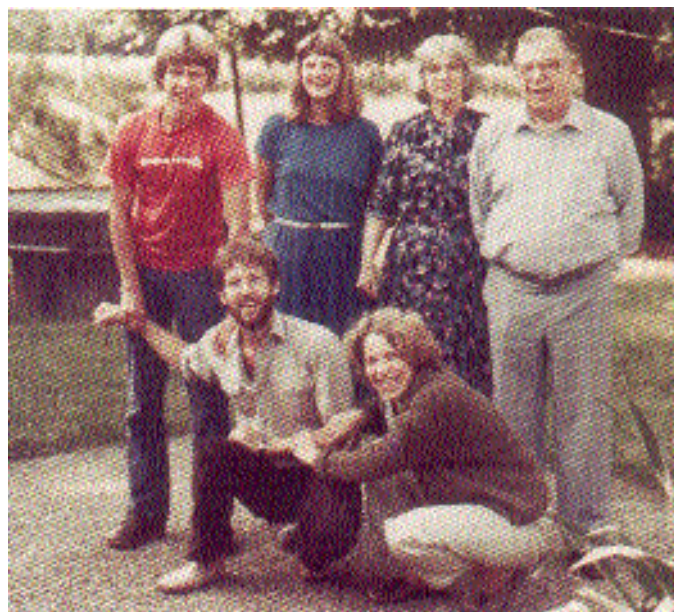
That started in 1953. Bram, at that time still Uncle Bram to me, had married Thea Kaemingk [382] in the meantime.. Bram's other sisters were all married and had left home. Uncle Jan Hoopman had passed away in 1950. Aunt Anna, Bram and Thea lived under one roof at the smithy, but all in separate apartments. Thea and Bram got five children, one of whom passed away unfortunately.

### Exciting things

What was so special in IJzerlo? For a boy my age, I was about thirteen years old, exciting and unexpected things happened. Besides continuing the smithy of his father, Uncle Bram had started a wholesale business and he imported agricultural machines. So I went along with Uncle Bram to Germany by truck. I didn't have a passport, so at some borders they refused to let me through. But Uncle Bram was a diehard and kept on talking, so that they let us through after all. I had never been in Germany before!

I quite well remember that Uncle Bram had tickets for a circus in Bocholt (Germany).

We would go there in a company of five: Jan Geven, Theo Bolwerk, Johan Kruisselbrink, Uncle Bram and I. Uncle Bram fell ill, though, and a replacement, Gerrit Brunsveld from



Hoopman-family  
ca. 1980  
standing l-r : Peter,  
Mirjam, Thea and  
Bram  
sitting l-r: Jan  
Willem and Eva





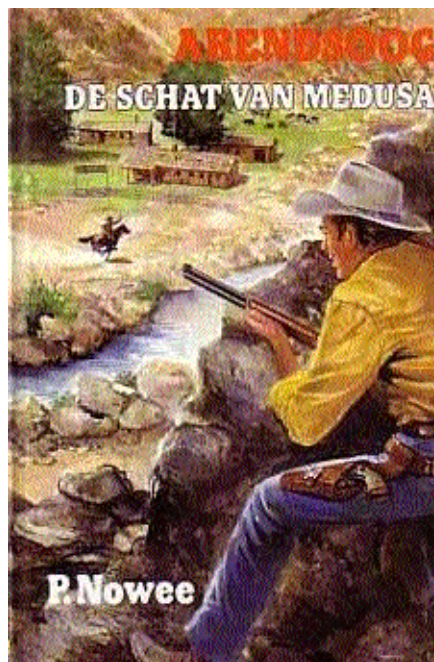
Border crossing Heurne-Hemden

the “mölle” (the mill) joined us. After the show in the circus the second part of the evening programme started.

First we went to a pub, *Café Wesselbaas* in the Spork (Germany), where they had a one-armed-bandit in those days in which you had to put 10 cents. There we met one of the Bruntink boys – they were very popular in IJzerlo, Suderwick and the whole area. He wanted us to stay longer but that was impossible for in those days the barrier at the border was closed at 12 p.m. and after that it was no longer possible to cross the border by car. But we found a solution. We drove our car across the border in Suderwick/Dinxperlo just behind the barrier and walked back to the pub *Gasthof Jägeringshof*, better known as *Katrentje*. There we stayed until very late at night telling each other the most fantastic stories. By dawn we were back in IJzerlo. Afterwards I learnt that Johan Kruisselbrink, who was the oldest of the company, was rebuked quite seriously by Bram for taking a fifteen-year-old to the pub...

### Eagle-eye

Guess who I also met in IJzerlo? Theo Somsen [227], son of Uncle Johan [226] and Aunt Marie [354] from Arnhem. (See *Somsen Horizon*, page 2, our chairman). Theo did not particularly come to IJzerlo to work, but more for pleasure and also to satisfy his literary needs: he has devoured all my books about Eagle-eye!



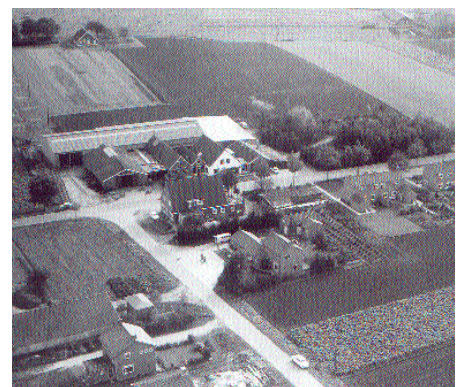
Eagle's Eye: The Treasure of Medusa

### Hoopman Machines Company

I always liked the holidays in IJzerlo very much. When, after primary

school, I had to choose a special department at technical school the choice was easy: metalwork. And in addition, at my father's advice, also electrical engineering. By doing so I hoped to get a steady job from Bram, Hoopman Machines by then, after having left school.

In 1957 I got this steady job. I left my parental home with the warning words of my father: *Mind you, it is not always partying over there; now it is time to work!* And that is what I have always done as best as I could.



Hoopman-company ca. 1960

Accommodation had been taken care of: I was accommodated at Bram and Thea's home. In the beginning I went home to Eibergen every weekend, but this gradually decreased. I felt really at home in IJzerlo, got many friends there, became a member of many clubs in *Het Gebouw*, took part in the *Oranje* celebrations and so on. Bram and Thea also thought it wise to take care of my spiritual well-being and sent me to catechization in Aalten.

Another recommendation was to become a member of the Young Men's Association. But when I said that this had not been such a great success in Eibergen, because I played truant quite frequently, Thea and Bram understood and I did not have to go.

Bram very soon understood that working in the production department was not my strongest point, but that I was more interested in trade. In a company like the Hoopman

Company, it was of vital importance to be flexible and employable in every department and therefore I worked in every department of the company. So I worked in the chemical department, in the production department but I also delivered and demonstrated the machines

### Dick on the truck

There is a story about the delivery of machines: Johan Kruisselbrink, who normally delivered the goods, was on holiday. The deliveries had to be continued and Bram asked me to take care of them. There was a slight problem: I did have a driver's licence but no licence for trucks. There was a fast and efficient solution for this: I would drive the truck and Bram promised to pay all the fines. I drove along the roads of Holland for one week without a single fine. I must admit that Bram inquired very interestedly every night how things had been that day. Very often I came home very late, but there were no special rules in those days and we did not know tachometers yet. It stands to reason that I was thrilled and proud that he trusted me on the road with a truck.

It was also a great experience to go on a business-trip abroad. Various agricultural machines were imported but we also exported machines built by us. First we went to a car exhibition in Frankfurt (Germany); then to Munich to a show for agricultural machines and also to the famous *October Celebrations*. We also went to Austria and Switzerland, where we had a business relationship on the Zürich lake.

For a 19-year-old boy this was a great experience. The trip lasted about a week.

### Import of horticultural machines

In 1960 Bram started with a new activity: I.T.M. Import Tuinbouw (Horticultural) Machines. This company was accommodated in a new building on the opposite side of the Dinxperlosestraatweg. The administration was done by Wim Kämink. I was asked by Bram to start up and expand this new business. This meant: selling machines, taking care of presentations at exhibitions and



**Hoopman-staff 1952**  
standing l-r: Bram Hoopman [381], Willem Hengeveld, Johan Kruisselbrink, Henk Heinen,  
Wim Navis [380], Jan Geven, Theo Bolwerk and Willem Westervelt.  
sitting l-r: Thea Hoopman-Kaemingk [382], Anna Hoopman-Somsen [350]  
and Riek Westervelt with daughter

agricultural fairs, giving demonstrations, delivery, spare parts supply, repairs etc. I drove 50,000 miles a year, but with the greatest pleasure.

### Passion for BMW

Finally a nice story: it must have been around 1960-1961. One Saturday Bram and I went to the Betuwe and the North of Limburg to visit some business relationships. On the way back we drove past a car dealer in Malden near Nijmegen. Very enthusiastically I said to Bram that I saw the car that would like to buy some time: a BMW-Isetta! Bram reacted as you might expect from him: he stopped the car, drove to the parking lot and walked to the BMW in question. He looked at it and asked: *"Is that the car you are looking for, the car you want?"* Before I realised he had already bought the car. The dealer got 300 guilders earnest money and we made a deal that I would collect the car the next week. On the way back I realised that I had not yet saved enough money for the car. Bram reassured me that I need not worry about the 300 guilders and that there would be a very favourable term of payment for the rest of the money. With this BMW-Isetta my passion for BMW had started. In the course of years many other BMW's followed.

In 1963 Rita Schuurman [409] became a new colleague at the office.

Since I was on the road for the major part of the week I hardly got a chance to get to know her. This changed dramatically when we had to travel to the agricultural fair in Amsterdam in January 1964 every day. This close cooperation resulted in our wedding on February 17, 1965.

In January 1965 I exchanged my job at Hoopman for a job in the company of my father in Eibergen

I have the finest memories of my time in IJzerlo and especially of Bram, Thea and their children. Their family was my second home. Till the present day we still have many friends and acquaintances in IJzerlo. If possible, we spend a week on the campsite of Eddy and Alice Sticker every year and then we visit many relatives and friends, many Käminks and ex-colleagues. We really hope to be in a position to do this for many years to come.



**My first BMW**



## Deventer-Zutphen-Doesburg, vice versa

by Wim Somsen [518]

**On Saturday, May 15, 2004, The Eureka II transported a sizeable group of Somsens on a river that is probably the most beautiful river in the Netherlands: the IJssel River. Wim Somsen from Dinxperlo also embarked and relates about this Somsen boat trip and about a visit to the picturesque little town of Doesburg.**

On our way to Deventer we hear on the car radio that the *Catshuis*, the official residence of our prime minister, was on fire. And they had just finished a complete restoration. Where should the poor man receive all those foreign guests now? Very soon afterwards I know the answer. In the docks of Deventer! In the IJssel River there is beautiful excursion steamer. It is spacious, easy to protect and there is food and drinks; that should do the trick, I suppose.



The 'Eureka' and Deventer

The Somsen Foundation has organised a boat trip for the second time. Theo, as chairman of the Foundation, welcomes the guests at the gang board. We expected about 75 people; twice that number would have been better if you take the size of the ship into account. At 10 o'clock most guests are present. Only Emma Somsen from Dinxperlo is waving to us very energetically from the wrong side of the river. She got lost in Deventer because of roadblocks and deviations. Of course we wait for her and ten minutes later she is on board. Emma has finished her first stage and it clear to see that it was a tough one.

All the other guests have found themselves a place on the ship. Most of them are outside on the deck in the sun; at first more or less arranged according to the branch of the family to which they belong. A number of little kids use the big dining-room as a playground.

Accompanied by a small breeze we leave for Zutphen at 10.20. It is really nice to view the surroundings from the water, it looks so different then. Harmien Somsen from Amsterdam has brought her binoculars for this purpose and those who are sitting near her are told what she discovers with her binoculars. Marco Somsen from Aalten is taking pictures all the time: this is going to be a very complete report!

When sailing between the holms of the IJssel River we are automatically



Taking pictures and relish



Inside the joy of playing and outside a slight breeze



overwhelmed by peaceful and quiet feelings. And there is a lot to be seen! Huge, strong workhorses are grazing peacefully among the many red and white and black and white cows, we see all kinds of birds with their young – Joep Iserief from Amersfoort has even spotted a stork – an old farmer is transporting grass on a donkey-cart and a painter rescues his easel and keeps his feet dry by moving rapidly away, for the waves of our ship are about to wash over him. Almost unnoticed we arrive at Zutphen. The characteristic steeple of the church strikes the eye immediately. We do not moor here for we have to go on to that other Hanseatic town: Doesburg. I meet Henny, originally a native of Eibergen, who had settled down in Loenen and Ida from Bergen op Zoom. Two cheerful ladies who largely contribute to the atmosphere on the ship. Later we forgive them for being so late back on board on leaving Doesburg. Even their dear mother got a little bit worried then. Then we reach Doesburg, the old city where they produce mustard. On the quay there is a Somsen of the Zelhem branch, who is waiting for us. Doesburg is also the place of birth of Gree van Daatselaar-Somsen. Therefore she takes care of a tour of the city at which the participants have to answer a number of difficult questions, but if you watch



**De Waag in Doesburg**

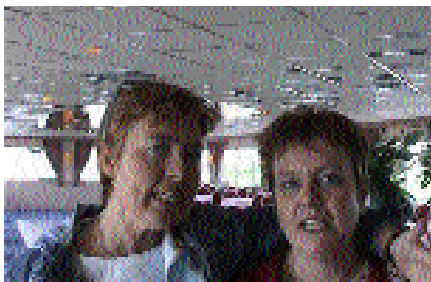
carefully and listen well you should find the answers. Knowing the Somsens, listening might be a bit of a problem, though. I also thought I had all the right answers but at the distribution of prizes afterwards I do not hear my name to my great sorrow. The winners are Emma Somsen, who has overcome her fright of the morning, Sien Overduin-Somsen from Soest and Joke Somsen from Lelystad (the sister of Dick Somsen from Zwolle). Gree and of course also Jan: many thanks and compliments for the interesting tour along the many historic buildings and the assignments, even though they were a bit difficult. It is also very interesting to see how, mainly female, volunteers are doing restoration work. With original peat from Germany they are restoring fences in an old city garden. Johan Somsen from Epe is so enthusiast about this that he immediately offers to assist. This offer is not at once rated at its true value and later on he mutters that the ladies were not attractive enough after all... Thus one group is exploring Doesburg but at the same time the others have settled down at an outdoor cafe to fortify the inner man. Almost on the appointed time we begin our home voyage. That is

very important, indeed, for the bridge near Zutphen only opens at particular times and if you are not in time you have to wait a full hour.

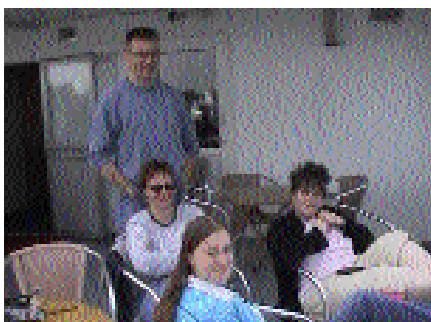


**Teun Hunse and Emma Somsen**

On the way back our chairman Theo thanks everybody for their participation and mentions the exposition of many Somsen attributes in the dining-room of the ship. Everybody is in the mood for one or two drinks now. Teun Hunse from Canada (!) is surprised that there is no whiskey on offer, so that he has to make do with a beer. Without being aware of it we reach our starting-point: the Hanseatic town of Deventer. After taking leave the sailors spread all over The Netherlands. Still enjoying a very nice day!



**Henny, Ina and more travelling companions**





## ‘Pool superintendent, do you know what a fly is doing in the milk?’

About Ernst Jan Somsen (born 1962), swimming instructor

**Boys and girls feel like fishes in the water with swimming instructor Ernst Jan Somsen [254] from Vorden in Gelderland!**

Just a normal weekday

Outside it is almost 38 degrees Celsius. At the border of the swimming pool *In de Dennen* stands a man. Around him a group of boys and girls who listen with attention to the instructions of their pool-attendant. Subsequently they jump in the water after each other. Some children wear clothes, which is part of the swimming lesson. From the side of the pool the voice of Ernst Jan Somsen sounds loud and clear: „Come on, Thomas, move your legs. Stretch your arms forward Stijn, and heels against the buttocks. I see it guys, you do better than your mom.“

And that’s how he goes on, the children follow the directions of their swimming instructor with much enthusiasm, as much as they can. Then also Ernst Jan jumps in the water. „I show the breaststroke, watch my arms and legs.“ And then another joke: „Did you know that I’m much stronger than your daddy?“

At the end of the swimming lesson Ernst Jan goes to the starting point at the deep side of the swimming pool and he throws the boys and girls into the water one by one, and remarks „Now you swim to the opposite side.“ And indeed the children

swim to the opposite side, some a little faster than others.

Ready for today. Tomorrow there will be another swimming lesson.

Still the swimming lesson hasn’t completely come to an end. Ernst Jan calls the parents together for a short evaluation. „Yes dear fathers and mothers, you have seen it, your children must still practice a lot. In a few weeks we will have the test for a swimming certificate. For a few children it will be very hard. They don’t have control over everything yet. For the fathers and mothers there is homework too. You must practice with your child every day, besides the lessons. Pay special attention to the leg stroke. The children have to develop more power in their legs.“ The parents nod and understand the importance of Ernst Jan’s words. Practice and practice once more. „Goodbye!“



Ernst Jan teaches swimming

### Expert

Ernst Jan Somsen, sitting under the sunshade on the terrace by the canteen of the swimming pool and enjoying a cool drink, explains to us in a professional way, what kind of swimming lesson we have been watching. „These children have started their swimming lessons in May. Twelve children, some four, some five years old. Some children of this group will get the swimming certificate A in two weeks. I think that 70 or 80 percent is ready for it. Of course the children that aren't that far will not do the test. They will take more lessons.

The ideal age for a child to start with swimming lessons is five. It takes about fifty hours of swimming lessons to do the test. We teach the children thirty minutes four times a week. It's necessary to learn to swim well and safely“, Ernst Jan says.

### Ties of confidence

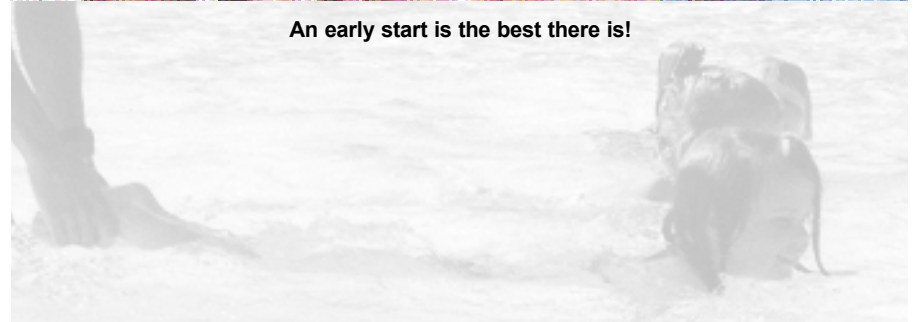
According to him a bond between the swimming instructor and the children is very important, „Many children, who come for the first time, know me already a little bit through a brother, a sister or a friend. Within a week I know all the children by name“, he says. That means for example that during this summer season he has made himself familiar with about three hundred first names! „Oh, you get used to that more and more“, Ernst Jan says modestly.

„A joke from time to time also gives them confidence. Through that it's easier to make contact“. The children also keep their end up as far as jokes are concerned.

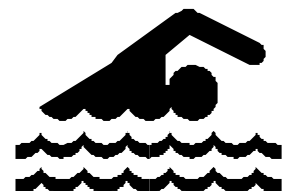
„Pool superintendent, do you know what a fly is doing in the milk?“, a little four year old boy asked. „I figure he was drinking milk“, Ernst Jan says. „Oh no, he is doing the breaststroke“, the boy says yelling with laughter! A very important aspect of the swimming lessons is: make the child familiar with the water. Ernst Jan: „Here in Vorden we start the lessons always from different sides of the pool. Sometimes they go from the



An early start is the best there is!



All passed, thanks to Ernst Jan





wading pool into the water, or from the bridge, or from the side of the deep pool. Every time it's different. Another important thing is that the children get their instructions every time from the same pool attendant."

### Girls are go-getters

According to Ernst Jan Somsen especially with the swimming lessons there is a distinct difference between boys and girls. "The girls are real go-getters, they also have a better feeling of balance. The feeling of rhythm is also better developed in the girls. Look at gymnastics, the exercises on the beam. They are usually girls that practice these sports."

A few years ago the examination requirements were tightened up. This was a result of the fact that children were drowned quite regularly, even children who had their swimming certificate A. This happened in particular with non-native children. A child can be pushed into the water by accident in a full swimming-pool and can get all panic stricken. So it is justified that the requirements are more stringent.

It is not so amazing that Ernst Jan Somsen is a strong supporter of swimming at school. As a gym teacher associated with the elementary school *De Kraanvogel*, he changes his gym lessons for swimming instructions in the summer months.

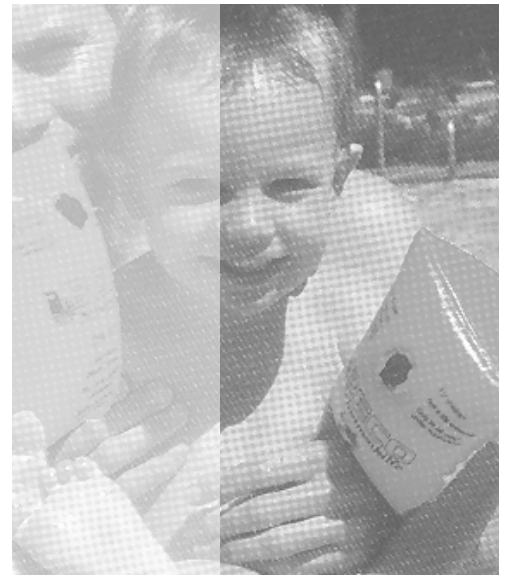
### Experimental project

"A few years ago I started teaching swimming, at that time we had twenty children of asylum-seekers at school. Children who could not swim. Swimming lessons in school is nowadays not an obligation any more in Holland. Fortunately the government is trying to introduce it again.

Twenty cities in the Netherlands are working on an experimental project. Hopefully everything will end positively, although in some big cities there are already some logistic problems to get the children to the swimming pool in time."

After summer the swimming season is over for Ernst Jan, then he will be a part-time gym teacher again. Besides that he works in Zelhem in the management of the "Sport and Recreation Foundation" one day a week. The rest of the week he is active at a sports- and advice centre. "Wonderful, this alternation in jobs", says Ernst Jan, who can prepare himself the coming years to teach his children Daan [4055], five, and Evi [4868], three, how to swim. Definitely in the presence of his wife Ellen [3944]. Meanwhile the number of children that get swimming lessons in Vorden is growing every year. When Ernst Jan Somsen started four years ago in the swimming pool *In de Dennen* there were 45 children for the lessons, the second year 180 and now there are more than 300 pupils! That's a great success.

From: Contact Nieuws- en  
Advertentieblad, edition Hengelo



*Swimming  
document*  
**A**



## Camping weekend IJzerlo



by Wim Somsen [518]

***Culture and biking, feasting and gobbling, but also enjoying beautiful nature and also one another: it is all part of the camping weekend.***

***Our board member Wim Somsen quite well remembers what it was like on the campsite 't Hoftijzer from 13 – 15 August 2004.***

It is for the first time that a weather-forecast in the invitation for the camping weekend hasn't completely come true. We have always got nice weather, that is what is said in the invitation, but this year it is very wet on Thursday and that implies for those with a tent that they have to be brave. Fortunately the Board has planned a meeting at the house of Wim Somsen in Dinxperlo and everybody can simply defy the heaviest showers there; the members of the board do so by deliberating till very late at night.

The campsite has become rather full on Friday with many of the regular guests; but there are also new faces like the Horst-Somsen family from Dinxperlo, who have found a nice place for themselves. Annie and Ap are so enthusiastic that they are the latest to leave the campsite after the weekend! On Friday we spend the time renewing and improving family-ties, going out for shopping, making cycling-tours in the beautiful environment of Aalten and Dinxperlo and in the evening we sit together with a drink till late at night.

On Saturday morning we - a small but very interested group - visit the castle of Anholt (Germany) with Helmut Somsen from Wertherbruch (Germany) as our guide. We are guided through the beautifully furnished rooms of the castle at a fairly high speed. We admire the splendid Blaeu atlases, the beautiful collection of paintings with a real Rembrandt. From the walls the descendants of the Salm-Salm fami-



The Somsen-Somsen family visiting the Salm-Salm family

ly look down on us. It is nice to learn that a real Salm-Salm has lived in some of the rooms of the castle for the past couple of years. We finish this visit to the "Wasserburcht" (water castle) in the gentle and warm sunshine in the outdoor café belonging to the castle, overlooking the moat and we enjoy our coffees or other drinks, while being served by a lady who clearly has an off-day.

Saturday afternoon we pay our traditional visit to the *Japikshuis* in IJzerlo. The Veerbeek family give us a hearty welcome, as always, and



Henk Somsen and his Golden Retrievers

we accompany our gratitude with flowers and the traditional bottle(s) of lemon-brandy. We have our toasts at the Somsen lime tree that is doing very well indeed. Suddenly Johan produces a miraculous tool from his pocket and starts sawing one of the poles near the tree. Has the brandy gone to his head?

But no, he only wants to demonstrate that he has a tool with which he can do anything. A little later he removes the commemorative plate near the Somsen-tree with the same super tool, with a little bit of effort, though, for Henk Somsen from Dinxperlo is going to polish it and put it back as if it were new again. By the way, in the evening Johan's super tool appears not even to include a corkscrew!

After having spent some time at the IJzerlo festival, where it was pretty hard to shoot down the "bird" (a shooting contest where a wooden "bird" has to be shot down from a pole), we end the day with our well-known barbecue.

Well over 35 people take part. Our traditional supplier, Rudolf Brunsveld, has very well taken care of everything. There is enough food and drinks, the weather is fine and we are all in very good spirits. Marco Somsen shows his pictures of the Somsen boat-trip. We sing for Henk Somsen, for it is his birthday. When the last visitors go to bed it is very early in the morning.

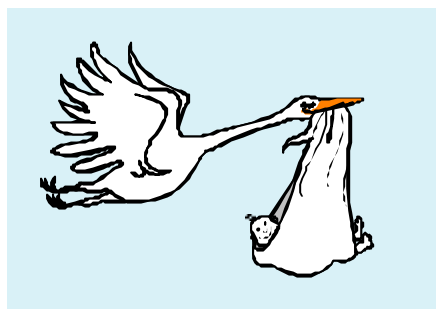
"See you next year", you hear all around you, expressed in subdued voices.

■



## 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*



### Born

#### 05-06-2002:

Jona [5351] s.o. Robert Martin Somsen [1422] and Hilegien Meilink [4381]

#### 17-11-2003:

Boudy Ferdi Simcha [5344] s.o. Robertus Theodorus Weneken-donk [3875] and Maruschka Elisa Jeanette Somsen [2881]

#### 17-04-2004:

Robin Pieter Ivo [5350] s.o. Peter Henri Bancken [5347] and Elisabeth Corinne Rodenburg [600]



### Married

**17-08-2004:** Johannes (Hans) Somsen [64] and Theodora Arnolda (Dorrih) Hillenbrink [5357]



#### A platium-wedding!

**97-year-old Frits Schuurman [1957] and 92-year-old Dien Schuurman-Somsen from Dinxperlo had their 70<sup>th</sup> wedding celebration on May 23, 2004. Together with their nine grandchildren, fourteen great-grandchildren and flowers from the Somsen Foundation.**

### Deceased

#### 01-05-2004:

Catharina van Erp-de Korte [2918]  
83  
Haren

#### 29-05-2004:

Maria Johanna (Marietje) Visschers-Somsen [1853]  
52  
Borculo

#### 12-06-2004:

Johanna Wilhelmina Beek [662]  
84

#### 24-07-2004:

Daniël Jasper (Niels) Somsen [677]  
44  
Wassenaar





Somsen Boattrip  
May 15, 2004  
Deventer-Zutphen-Doesburg  
vice versa

