



# Somsen horizon

Volume 8 - number 15 - May 2005

## *Brimful with exciting stories:*

- The Dutch go Irish
- English pilot returns to the *Somsenhuus*
- The 'tragedy' of Aaltjen Somsen
- Born and bred in Baldwin, for sure
- Running through New York City
- Our (Sun)days in Baldwin 1949
- Stanley & Jeanne Somsen-Theobald



*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 archieve 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

**Cover:**

*I-r: Alissa, Coby and Leah  
Somsen (see page 9-12)*

## Preface



Johan Somsen and  
grandson Boudy

after our pennies, a task we entrust to him with great confidence.

Before you there is number 15 of our family magazine *Somsen Horizon*. As a family we may be a little proud of this, for when talking about these matters to other people you sometimes come across a family that publishes a simple stencil at irregular intervals, but a complete magazine – even in two languages - is very special. So as board of our Foundation we are very proud of this, but we also realise that it takes an enormous amount of work for a very limited group of people and therefore we urgently appeal to you to stimulate relatives in your immediate circle to register as supporters of the Foundation so that survival of our Foundation is guaranteed. **Who is going to help us?**

On behalf of the board,  
Johan Somsen

We have witnessed some landslides in the board of the Somsen Foundation as you may find when you read through the list with names on page 2. At the end of last year Theo Somsen announced his withdrawal as chairman. In October 2004 he retired and was convinced that he would get such a busy life that he would no longer be able to cope with the chairmanship of the Somsen Foundation. Honesty commands us to state that he had shouldered too much work and since it turned out to be impossible to recruit new family members for these duties, Theo finally decided he'd better call it a day. In the board we extremely regretted this decision and it took a fair amount of persuasion and negotiation to keep him on board as member of the board of the Foundation. Since I offered to take over the chairmanship of Theo, on condition that he would stay on as editor of our magazine *Somsen Horizon*, we could keep him in the board and in the editorial staff. To be quite honest, it would have been totally unacceptable if Theo would have completely disappeared from our field of vision,

for he truly is one of the men of the first days and he has largely contributed to the birth of our family book, the great reunion in 1997 and after that the Somsen Foundation and our fine magazine. I would like to emphasize that I am ready to fulfil this post because there was a real threat that the Somsen Foundation was to continue as a sleeping body and that may not happen of course, but it sure means that we have to find people who are prepared to make a contribution. When I notice how many, very often young American, Somsens are really involved in our activities then we cannot permit ourselves to let our Foundation to become extinct. Moreover we should seriously think about a reunion in 2007. Many of our American relatives are ready to cross the ocean! **Who is going to help us?**

Our treasurer, Ada Somsen, started in a new job that takes so much of her energy that she could do with some relief and to our great pleasure Jan van Daatselaar – the first Somsen from the “cold side” - expressed his willingness to look





## The Dutch go Irish

by Johan Somsen [1089]

***Our new chairman Johan Somsen doesn't only speak English quite well, he can also sing in that language! And quite successfully, for again 'his' vocal group Doetmaes has released another CD. They are even successful in Ireland. Unfortunately this article doesn't reveal the unmistakable influence of Irish whiskey on this success.***

Three years after the release of our first CD we, the men of *Doetmaes* from Epe, present our second pet. In the course of the years we have applied ourselves to Irish music more and more together with our inspiring director, Hetty Vrinds. For this reason we have given our second CD, *Doetmaes Beter*, the subtitle *Songs of Ireland*. And of course our visit to Ireland, earlier this year, was an important influence as well. By now we have existed for over eight years and they have been sparkling years in which the solidity in the choir has only increased. Our enthusiasm has reached a climax, which is clearly shown, time and again, during our renowned rehearsals once a week: always a full house. A couple of years ago we even had to set up a waiting list for new members since we cannot and do not want to grow.

*Doetmaes* consists of 42 men and one woman: our conductor Hetty Vrinds. We are a colourful company in many respects. It is a peculiarity that one woman has managed for over eight years to make a group of disorderly men sing away to their heart's content. The age distribution of the choir also varies considerably with ages varying from twenty to over seventy, but maybe the most moving of all is the phenomenon that the singers come from all walks of life. Young and old, ripe and unripe, captains of industry and warehouse-clerks, university graduates and hardly educated men: everybody mixes with everybody. An important unifying factor, apart from our singing, is a strong inclination towards very informal behaviour and against this background our singing is always, especially during perfor-

mances, a very special happening. Without exception our spontaneity is extremely great. It was no surprise, for that matter, that we received the first prize awarded by the public at the choir festival of Medemblik and the organizing committee of the "Tear-Jerkers-Festival" of Varsseveld have beseeched us for three consecutive years to perform at their festival,

And, last but not least, our visit to Ireland in May 2004 developed into a true happening. The many performances we had in Galway aroused a great many commending reactions and many invitations for new performances. A couple of times we had street concerts for audiences of a few hundred enthusiast Irishmen so that the main street of hospitable Galway was totally blocked for quite some time. Those splendid Irish audiences – and they are so much accustomed to this kind of music – were so enthusiastic that all of us, very secretly, hope to return to Ireland some day.



CD-cover *Songs of Ireland*

whereas the rules are that one particular choir can only perform two years in succession. At the annual choir festival in *Paradiso* (Amsterdam) they are also eager to invite us and we always get a prime-time place in the programme on the main stage.

The CD can be ordered at Johan Somsen for \$17,50 mailing costs included

# Campingweekend

from August 12 – 14, 2005

We are going to organise our 9th Somsen camping weekend in IJzerlo. For the board it already starts on August 11 for then we will have a meeting, this time at Ben Somsen's house in Eibergen. A visit to the Verbeek family and our lime-tree is planned on Friday, August 12 around 3 p.m. and the barbecue will be, as usual, on Saturday evening at 7 p.m. We have to charge € 15 per person and *you are invited to register well in advance with Wim Somsen.*

On Saturday there will be two activities. In the morning we will pay a visit to Bredevoort, the famous book-city. That day there will be a so-called papers-market. The organising committee says there will be a quality market for rare papers and antiquarian books. You will find anything that was ever published on sheets of paper: documents, picture postcards, etchings, posters, letters, and...what a surprise, there will also be a booth of our editor Theo Somsen.

Place: 't Zand and the old schoolyard in Bredevoort.

In the afternoon we will pay a visit to the *Crash-Museum* in Lievelede at 3 p.m.

The Avog's Crash-Museum is a museum about the history of the Achterhoek during the Second World War. However, that is not all there is. It is mainly about the 400 planes that crashed in the Achterhoek during that period. Because of many air fights or because of anti-aircraft guns many German, American and English aircraft crashed.

The Achterhoek group of volunteers who dig up aircraft wrecks, have put the crashed planes, the engines, the cockpits, the propellers, the pieces of wings and a lot more in the museum. They still find parts of planes in the Achterhoek.

The Museum's address is: Avog's Museum, Europaweg 34, Lievelede. Entrance fee € 3.



Theo Somsen in Bredevoort

We expect a very large number of Somsen-relatives. One Somsen branch is organising a Somsen reunion of their own at the campsite, so it might get a bit crowded. But there will be place if you register well in advance and if you don't want to stay at the campsite: join the barbecue on Saturday evening, for that is always a great success.

Once again: **register in good time (before August 7)** by mail, phone or email at Wim Somsen.

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phone: +31 (0)315 652 115  
email: somsen@uwnet.nl



*Quite regularly Annie Fukkink-Heusinkveld visited the guests on the campsite. Very often she came together with her mother Lien Heusinkveld-Hoopman [376], daughter of a Somsen-mother. Once Annie brought a beautiful list of pictures of her ancestors. Quite unexpectedly she died on January 25, 2005, aged 63. She used to read our family magazine from cover to cover and sympathised very intensely with us. That is what we now do with her husband Gerrit, her (grand)children, relatives and her mother.*



## English pilot returns to the *Somsenhuus*

*Some fearful hours and times Frank Dell had to go through after that his plane had been shot down during a night air-raid. Also because of the occupants of the Somsenhuus in IJzerlo he survived the Second World War. The Somsenhuus, the farmstead to which the origin of all Somsens goes back, was unfortunately burnt down shortly after the war. Recently Frank Dell returned to that place and to his rescuers.*



In front of the *Somsenhuus*:  
Truida Lammers-Prinzen and Frank Dell

### Autumn 1944

It is night. High in the dark skies the allied planes are roaring to Germany. In the distance there are flames and fires; the fire flares up and dies down again. A *Mosquito* is flying on with its bombs on board. Far below is the Ruhr area, the heart of the German war industry. Everywhere there is fire; red, yellow, orange and bright white. The roaring of the barrage sounds like the chugging of a fast train that is crossing an iron railroad bridge at top speed. Close to the plane the grenades of the anti-aircraft batteries are exploding spreading the pieces of shrapnel in a large area. Still the plane is flying. Again the anti-aircraft batteries fire their shells into the air. A shock, followed by a heavy blow... The *Mosquito* has broken into two parts and crashes down at a raging speed. It crashes in the neighbourhood of Duisburg. The British pilot **Frank Dell** manages to get away with his parachute that opens after three seconds at an altitude of 10,000 meters. It takes 25 minutes before he lands on a ploughed field in the dark of night. He disentangles from his parachute and starts walking. The first identifi-

cation mark is a sign indicating *Ahaus* (a village in Germany, not far from the Dutch border). After walking on for several nights Frank Dell finally gets on Dutch territory and finds shelter in the house of the Breukelaar family in the Varsseveldseweg in Aalten.

### At the *Somsenhuus*

Through the Aalten underground the English pilot is accommodated at the *Somsenhuus* in IJzerlo, where Bernard and Dora Prinzen offer him a place for shelter.

Last week he came back again. The Prinzen family counted a father, a mother and nine children in the years of the war. In all there were seven pilots in hiding and all this while they also had to billet thirty German soldiers at their farmhouse.

secretly give the German cigarettes to the pilots. These are all very valuable memories of the years of the war.

Frank Dell and his wife Elisabeth came back from England to the *Somsenhuus* for a short visit in the autumn of 2004 to congratulate Truida Lammers-Prinzen on her 80th birthday. On that occasion she received from Frank Dell a *Wing*, the official emblem of the Royal Air Force.

The Dell and Lammers families visited the memorial at the Rademakersbroek near Varsseveld. Frank Dell put flowers at the memorial.



l-r: Co Hettinga, Truida Lammers-Prinzen, Frank Dell, Hendrik Lammers and Isabel Dell at the War Memorial in Varsseveld

The Germans slept in the stables while just over their heads the English and American pilots were hidden in the hay.

Their eldest daughter Tina cooked for the people in hiding. She even started smoking so that she could

Copied with permission from Achterhoek Nieuws 16-11-2004 and Aalten Vooruit 17-11-2004.

Pictures: Hans Lurvink (With minor additions of the Somsen Horizon-editors)

## The 'tragedy' of Aaltjen Somsen [572]

by Dick Somsen [130] and Dikky Lenselink [133]

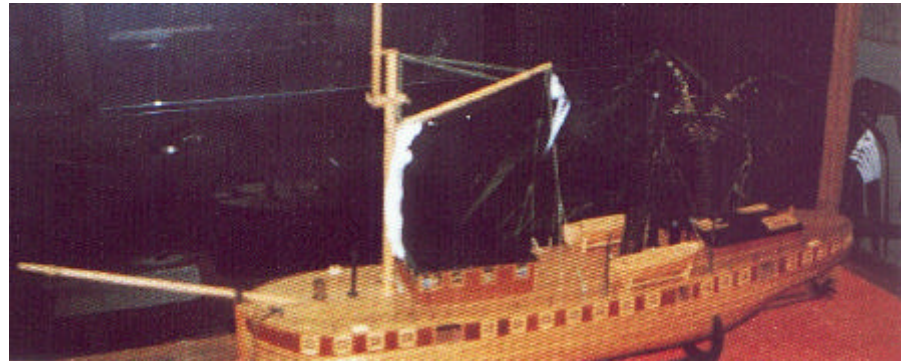
***She was the first Somsen to leave for America. But did she actually arrive? For a long time we have doubted that and we have feared for the worst until we traced her down. Dick en Dikky Somsen-Lenselink give an account of their search and of the adventures of Aaltjen Somsen.***

In our family book *Somsen Omnes Generationes* we can read, in chapter 32, page 61, about the emigration to North America of the first Somsen immigrant, Aaltjen Somsen [572]. At the top of this chapter it says: *Aaltjen Somsen, a Tragedy?* Since we could not find any data about Aaltjen Somsen in America in 1996 we assumed that she and her family had been on board of the Phoenix, which was destroyed by fire. There was no certainty about this, though.

By now it is eight years later and there has been more family research so that we know more about the adventures of Aaltjen and her husband Dirk Jan Rijkers [575]. We know for sure that they were not on board of the unfortunate ship, though we don't know yet on what ship they made the voyage from The Netherlands to North America. The General National Archives and the Central Bureau for Genealogy, both in The Hague, have no passenger-lists of ships that transported emigrants to North America around 1850.

In America they sell, for much money, passenger-lists of emigrant-ships. The archivists of the archives, mentioned above, who we consulted have their doubts as to the correctness of these American passenger-lists, though.

Dirk Jan Rijkers lived, with his family, at the *Rijkers* farm in De Heurne, in de municipality of Aalten. He very probably inherited the farm from his father Hendrik Jan [2107], who, in turn, inherited the farm from his father, Lammert Rijkers. In the birth certificates and the death certificates of these three generations the same house number is invariably men-



Phoenix: scale model

tioned. Dirk Jan is the eighth child in the marriage of Hendrik Jan Rijkers [2107] and Teunissen Doornink [2108]. After Dirk Jan the couple had another son, Gerrit Jan, born at the *Rijkers* farm in De Heurne, Aalten, on September 8, 1815.



Phoenix: the last route

This Gerrit Jan left, together with his wife, for North America in 1846. In the emigration lists of the historian J.P.Swieringa we find: Gerrit Jan Rijkers, farmer, 30, Dutch reformed, destination Evansville, Indiana, USA, reason reunification of family.

Aaltjen Somsen had lived at the Rijkers farm with her husband Dirk Jan Rijkers since her wedding in 1836 and at this farm it was decided to make the crossing to the New World in 1847. Before they left the farm, the land and all their possessions were sold so that Dirk Jan was the last Rijkers owner to live on the family property in De Heurne.

The emigration lists of J.P.Swieringa mention:

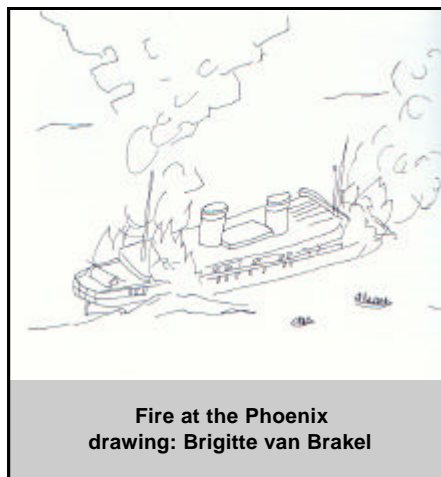
Dirk Jan Rijkers, 33, Dutch reformed, wife and two children, destination Evansville, Indiana, reason reunification of family, also accompanied by his sister Grada Rijkers, 36, same destination as Dirk Jan.

Some years later, in 1851, Hendrik Jan Somsen [577], Aaltjen's eldest brother, and his wife and four children have the same destination, according to the historian Swieringa, and the reason is: reunification of family.

A grandchild of Dirk and Aaltjen, Minnie Elisabeth [5052], daughter of Hendrik Jan Rijkers [3739], writes in a letter of August 28, 1955 to relatives the following:

*My grandfather lived in Rotterdam where he was a civil servant. His sister, who came with him, died in a fire when she was trying to rescue valuable things shortly after their arrival in America. Later on their house was burnt down for a second time and my father had great difficulty in carrying his handicapped mother (Aaltjen) out of the burning house. I have never seen her walking myself. My mother, Willemina Johanna Duenk [4891],*





Fire at the Phoenix  
drawing: Brigitte van Brakel

was on the same ship from Rotterdam to New York as my father, when she was a baby and my father told his children that he had carried mum in his arms when she was a baby.

Research in Rotterdam, however, hasn't revealed anything about the job Dirk Jan was supposed to have had there, nor could we find any information about the date of departure to North America.

In the 19th century there was a census in America every ten years. In 1850 we find Dirk Jan and Aaltjen for the first time in these lists and again in 1860 and 1870. In the 1860 and 1870 lists it says they lived in Waupun City, County Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Dirk Jan Ridders died in Alto, WI, USA on August 25, 1891, aged 77. Aaltjen Somsen died in Alto, WI, USA on August 8, 1887, aged 83. Hendrik Jan Ridders [3739] died in Alto, WI, USA on April 15, 1917, aged 79.

Tonia Johanna Ridders [3740] died before 1851.

Willemina Johanna Duenk [4891] died in Alto, WI, USA on December 14, 1907, aged 60.

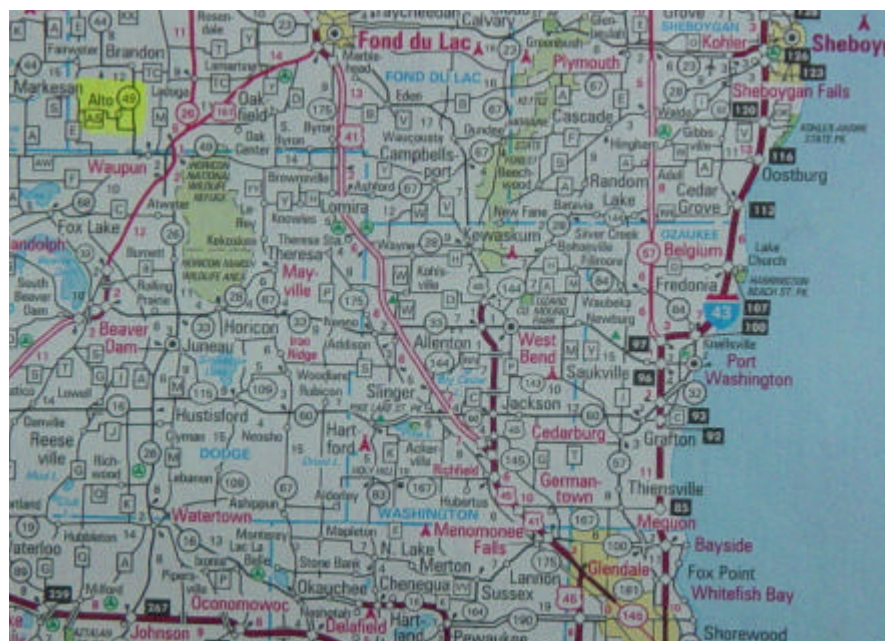
They are all buried at Oak Mount Cemetery in Alto, WI, USA.

Aaltjen Somsen did not have an easy life in her new homeland. She and her family survived two fires in their house. In the first fire she lost her sister-in-law Grada and at the time of the second fire she was disabled and her son had to rescue her from the sea of flames. If this is no tragedy...?!

We thank our fellow genealogist Hans Ridders for placing the data from the Ridders family at our disposal. Through the wedding with Aaltjen Somsen these two families got related.

Reversely we could hand out data from our Lenselink family to him about a wedding between Hendrik Ridders and Hilleken Lenselink in Hengelo (G) in 1867.

Genealogical research is fascinating and exciting at the same time...



Country Fond du Lac with Waupun and Alto left above

In this area, Waupun and Alto, WI, USA Dirk Jan and Aaltjen settled down after their crossing in 1847. On the right is Lake Michigan. A little north of the port of Sheboygan the disaster of the steamship the Phoenix took place on November 21, 1847 in which 144 Dutch immigrants, mainly from The Achterhoek, 15 American crew-members and 13 American passengers lost their lives.



Summer 2004: Marco Somsen from Aalten visiting the Somsens from Orlando, Florida, USA.

l-r: Roger Somsen [2387], Marilyn Somsen-Dallman [2388], Marco Somsen [545], Karen Somsen-Ryan [3873] and Jon Somsen [2389]



## Born and bred in Baldwin, for sure

by Philip J. Somsen [2685]

***As a member of the third generation USA-Somsens Phil Somsen was born and bred in Baldwin, Wisconsin. He spread his wings and flew out to lots of other places and positions. In this article he tells about his adventures in the third person singular.***

You see pictured, Rev. Philip J. Somsen, M. Div, BCC, presently the Coordinator of Spiritual Care/Chaplain at Trinity Regional Medical Center in Fort Dodge, IA. After 20 years of parish work in Minnesota, California and South Dakota, camp work in Michigan and Iowa, and work on the mission field in Kentucky, Phil has found fulfilling ministry on the health care team. Along with daily visitation on hospital patients, he is also involved with the clergy and churches in the Fort Dodge region, leads worship for churches when their pastor is on vacation or they are without a pastor. He and his family are active in the First Presbyterian Church of Fort Dodge.

Born in Baldwin, Wisconsin to Harry and Wilhelmina Somsen-Muyskens [340-341], Phil lived in the neighboring town of Woodville until he was 18. He attended the First Reformed Church of Baldwin along with all his parents, one brother (Cornelius-deceased) and his 5 sisters (Ruth-deceased, Rachel, Miriam, Lois and Eunice).

Phil 'escaped' to Northwestern College in Orange City, IA. in 1968 to get away from home. Like many young people, he felt the urge to make his own way. He also relates that he was very lackadaisical in high school, barely getting by academically. It was the comment of the guidance counselor advising him that he had better look at a trade school, since he was 'not college material' that finally woke him up, and forced him to look hard at his future course. Phil started college 'on probation' meaning that he had to make a certain grade point just to remain in school. Fortunately, he did manage

that, though at times it was a close call. He followed his brother into employment with the college food service, ranging from janitorial work to week-end kitchen manager and chef. It seems the time spent home with Mom while suffering with childhood asthma paid off!

Phil met his wife Evelyn 'Evy' Van Bruggen [2696] in the fall of 1970. She was a new student from North Dakota. Evy had grown up on a farm and attended the First Reformed Church of Litchville, ND. with her family. Both her parents were of Dutch ancestry, though there continues to be some friendly debate if her mother's family (with the Frisian name: Reinstra) should call themselves Dutch!

Phil and Evy officially met at a retreat mixer when they needed to find



Phil Somsen (born 1950)

another person with the same number of brothers and sisters. It just so happens that Evy has 4 sisters and 2 brothers, making for the identical match! Later that evening, Evy saw Phil walking by himself and asked if she could walk with him, and the rest is history...

During that same retreat, Phil and Evy both felt a calling from God on their lives for the future, but had no idea that this call would be together.

Evy and Phil were married 10 months and 10 days later on August 12, 1971. From North Dakota, they honeymooned to Baldwin, Wisconsin.



The Somsen-Muyskens family, 1951  
l-r: Harry, Ruth, Cornelius, Wilhelmina and Philip

sin-staying with his aunts Dena, Jennie, Ella and uncle Herman Somsen (since Harry and Wilhelmina had moved the year before to Orange City, IA.), who hosted a reception for the Wisconsin family and friends-many who had not met Evy until then.

The honeymoon concluded at their new home in Denton, Texas to run a motel and restaurant.

That adventure only lasted 6 months. As a young couple, Phil and Evy found themselves completely unequipped to handle the challenges of a 24 hour / 7 day a week business and personal life in a major metropolitan area, and ran for home in Orange City, IA. Back in Iowa, Phil drove a garbage truck and Evy worked for a company manufacturing caps and jackets. And then another adventure started.

They were invited to work for the summer at a Christian youth camp in Michigan. That started something and continued on/off for

6 summers. Phil went back to complete his college work, but still did not feel sure of ministry as a career path. He often remembered his family mentioning that his mother Wilhelmina had been praying for one of her boys to go into ministry, but states that as a boy he often felt pressured, and completely unqualified to become a minister. As college graduation approached, and Phil was accepted into seminary, another door opened. With some relief, they

accepted the opportunity to be teachers and dormitory parents at a mission boarding school in the mountains of Kentucky. During these two years, Alissa Joy [2697] was born on 04-06-1974 in Richmond, KY.

but they also found that God provided for their needs in marvelous ways.

As Phil graduated from seminary, he interviewed for 5 different parish possibilities, and received calls to them

all, from Stone Ridge, NY. to Belmond and Allison, IA. to Harrison, SD. and Leota, MN. Since he could only take one, and with a counsel of a trusted friend that one did not have to take the hardest assignment to prove obedience to God, Phil & Evy chose a move to Leota, MN. only 60 miles (1 hour) from Harry and Wilhelmina in Orange City. Coby Lynn [2699] was born on 06-24-1978, within a month of their arrival.

After 5 years in a rural parish, Phil found himself restless again and they moved to Elk Grove, CA. just south of Sacramento. The church had begun in 1967 in a drive-in theatre and that continued to be a main focus of ministry. It was a very different ministry from their rural/small town Midwest upbringing, but they found the people friendly



**Evy and Phil in the summer of 2004  
Still enjoying each other in the 33rd year of marriage!**

Phil & Evy found themselves restive again as the second year in Kentucky came to a close, and through prayer and some practical experience preaching and leading worship in small rural churches in the mountains, Phil decided to finally try seminary.

The next 3 years were in Holland, MI. where Leah Rachel [2698] was born on 10-04-1976. While Phil attended school, Evy worked at a variety of jobs to maintain the family,

and very willing to accept those coming from other states, for most of them were not native Californians either.

The family thrived in California and continues to have many fond memories of the people and events of these days. Evy started giving piano and guitar lessons in their home, developed a thriving business and became a sought-after teacher for young people, just beginning to try their skills with music.





**Ethan Ledeboer, Isaac Kippes, Benjamin Kippes, Elizabeth Kippes**

After almost 8 years of eventful ministry, Phil accepted the opportunity to go into full-time camp ministry back in northwest Iowa. From the summers of camp ministry, Phil & Evy thought this would be a dream come true.

It did not turn out that way. Though it was good to be back closer to family, father Harry had died in 1985 and mother Wilhelmina was in declining health, Phil's work as the first program coordinator at the camp proved to be very difficult. Charting a new course with uncertain support of camp leadership, and struggles with those with longevity at the camp made this work very unsatisfying. After two years Phil and Evy moved about 40 miles west to Monroe, SD. into parish work at Calvary Reformed Church. That experience featured many significant moments in the life of the church and also the Somsens.

A children's ministry was born that continues till this day, focused on all the children in the community rather than just those of church members. Phil was on the Fire Department trained as a volunteer firefighter and served as secretary of the organization. Alissa was married, had a child (Ethan John Ledeboer, born 08-13-1996) and was later divorced. Leah was married to Kent Kippes and had a child Isaac Jerome (born 12-23-1997). Later came Benjamin Philip (born 02-28-2000) and Elizabeth Joy (born 10-11-2003).

In late 1997 Phil realized that parish work had become harder and harder to do with a sense of fulfillment. He looked at other churches and also

driving truck. Finally one of his colleagues suggested that he might want to consider hospital chaplaincy. So in the spring of 1998 Phil interviewed at two training centers, before choosing to work at Gundersen-Lutheran Medical Center in La Crosse, WI. After almost 2 years there, he took his present position at Fort Dodge.

Just as Phil & Evy seem to have a wanderlust, a need for new and different experiences, their daughters have continued the tradition.

Alissa tried college twice and assorted employment before she settled on preparing for a career in theatre. She graduated from the University of South Dakota in May of 2004 and is now in a Master's program at Southern Methodist University in

Dallas, TX. She is focused on lighting, set design and make-up. The program at SMU is a challenging one and there is not much time for her and Ethan to spend together. Leah and her family continue to move through the long and complex process of medical education. She is finally a M.D. (medical doctor), but continues in a first year residency in internal medicine in Sioux Falls, SD. while Kent is working in computers with one of the large bank-card companies. In the summer of 2005, they will move to Omaha, Nebraska so Leah can begin a 3-5 year residency in anesthesiology.

Evy has been commuting (about 180 miles) to Sioux Falls from Fort Dodge almost every week to take care of the grandchildren. This arrangement has been in place in November 2003, and will continue



**The Somsen family in the summer of 2004**  
**I-r: Coby, Leah, Phil, Alissa and Evy.**  
**Celebrating College graduation for Alissa and Coby,**  
**and Medical school graduation for Leah.**

(Lord willing!) until July 2005. Kent and Leah have invited her to continue the travel to Omaha, about the same distance, but Phil & Evy are looking forward to having more time together. We will have to wait to see how this all turns out!

Coby, the youngest continues to travel. She graduated from the RN (registered nurse) program in the summer of 2003. But rather than stop there, she continued on to graduate with a bachelor's degree in 2004. After some months of working at the same hospital Phil works at, she took an assignment as a 'traveling RN' with an agency that placed her in Lewes, Delaware. From the Midwest, she spent the fall of the year on the Atlantic Ocean, living in the oldest incorporated town in the oldest state in the USA. The agency provided a lovely 3-bed-room home only blocks from the beach. It also paid much more than regular employment. Coby has been home since Christmas, working at Trinity, but will soon be traveling again. She has accepted a short-term mission with Mercy Ships International ( [HYPER-LINK http://www.mercyships.org](http://www.mercyships.org) ) a medical mission that sends hospital ships into underdeveloped countries to provide medical care that would be impossible in their own country. She will be assigned to the SS Anastasis, docked in the capital city of Monrovia, Liberia.

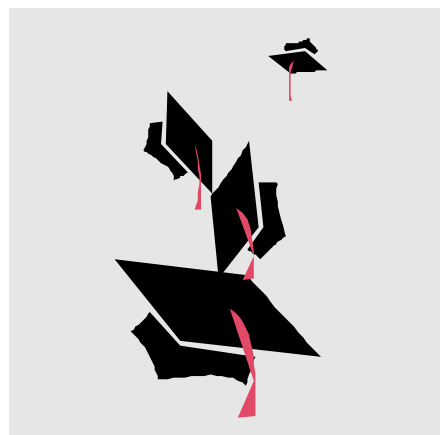
For three-months she will be a staff RN serving the needs of those who come.

But when she steps on the ship it will not be for the first time. When the family lived in California, the SS Anastasis docked at the port of Sacramento on an informational tour of the States. The family saw that tours were being offered, and took a Saturday afternoon to become informed of this mission. As they were finishing the tour, standing on the bow of the ship, Coby said to her family, "someday I want to do this". At age 9, it was received as the wish and whim of a child. Little did anyone know at the time, how God would honor that heart desire!



**l-r: Alissa, Coby and Leah  
Graduates at last!**

Life continues to be an adventure. Even as we share what has happened to this part of the Somsen family, we look forward with anticipation to reading about other members of our extended family.





# Running through New York City

by Berto Somsen [423]

**Not only Ol' Blue Eyes Frank Sinatra wanted to wake up in a city that never slept. Around 36.000 participants start every year on the difficult run of 42,195 km on famous Verrazano Narrows Bridge. The run takes the runners of the New York City Marathon through five different districts: Staten Island, Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx and Manhattan. The finish is in Central Park. The Marathon of New York is a constant fight of suffering and loving. But there is so much more. The two million spectators, the sponge over your face. And every time something different, something unique. Together with his brother-in-law John D'Angelo [3820] Berto Somsen ran his first New York City Marathon on the seventh of November 2004.**

## The preparations

In January 2003 I heard from a journalist from the daily paper *Twentse Courant Tubantia* that there were plans from a group of Tukkers and Achterhoekers to participate in the Marathon of New York in November 2004. This paper has organized walking clinics for nine years with the purpose of participating in the semi-marathon of Enschede. To celebrate the tenth jubilee of the walking clinics, they had drawn a plan to go to New York in 2004 with a group of 175 runners. When I heard about these plans I was very enthusiastic as was my wife Carla and both our sons Thijs and Joost! For running a marathon and for the essential preparation, one thing is necessary: the home front has to stand support it. I decided to register and hoped of course to be one of the lucky 175. And yes, in October 2003 the good news came: I was in. The organization kept us well-informed of the developments. The closer we came to the date the more information we were getting. We also knew our hotel in New York: *The Grant Hyatt New York*. And that was very good, because my sister, Anja D'Angelo – Somsen [426] and her husband John D'Angelo both work in the Hyatt hotel in Orlando, Florida. Anja proposed, now that we were staying in the Hyatt, that it would be wonderful if Carla could come too. Anja and John arranged a room for us and we booked a flight for Carla. John had already run several marathons and it would be nice to run this one together.

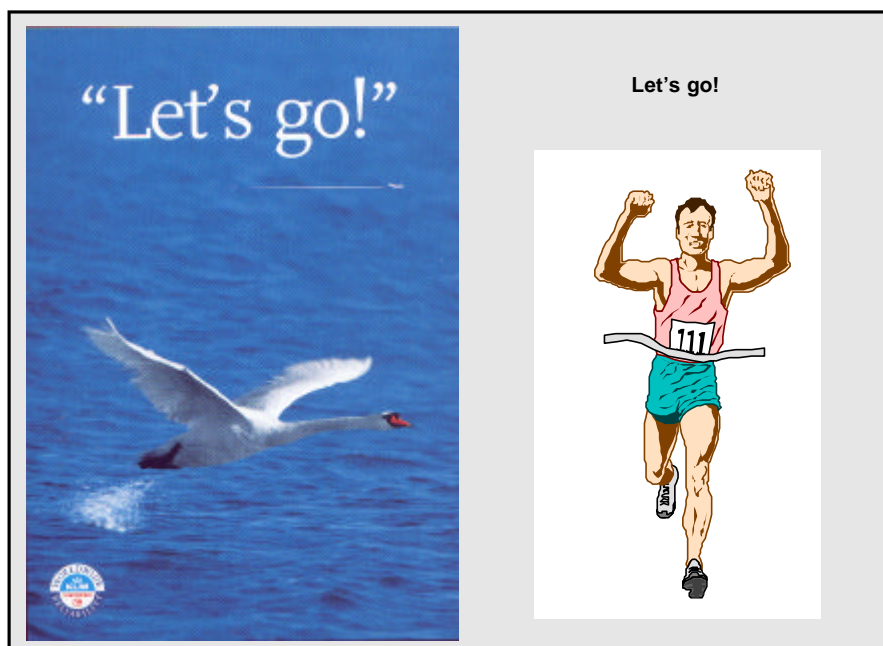
In May 2004 I ran the semi-marathon of Enschede (time: 1.48.39); I was

satisfied and I had a good basis to train for the whole marathon. After Enschede I took it a little easier and in the beginning of August I started training on a schedule. I made this schedule myself on the basis of training schedules of the New York Road Runners, which I found on imply internet. The schedule contained a period of 14 weeks. Mondays and Fridays were my days of rest, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday were my training-days. On these days I usually ran for one hour in the *Assinkbos* nearby. Usually on Saturdays I did a long walk, which is important in the preparation of a marathon. I usually trained from an hour and a half to three hours. On Sundays I usually had a light walk in my program. I registered for several recreation walks in the neighbourhood, so that the training would not be too boring.

Saturday October 30 I walked my last training round in the Netherlands, I was ready for it! Not over-trained, no injuries, I felt good: New York here I come!

## On the way to New York

Wednesday morning on the third of November we say goodbye to Thijs and Joost, who are very enthusiastic and wish me lots of luck! Carla brings me to Enschede where we leave with a bus to Schiphol. In Enschede I also say goodbye to Carla, who will take a plain to New York the next day. The whole Tubantia-group flies to New York in five different groups. My group flies with the KL641, with a complete crew from Twente, straight to New York. They welcome us in three different languages: Dutch, English and Twents (the dialect of the region). The flight is very smooth.





l-r: John, Carla and Anja

On arrival in New York we are taken with buses to the Hyatt hotel where I meet my sister and her husband. In the evening we go out for supper with the three of us and make a walk through New York. The next day we drive to the airport Newark, it is bad weather. We are in a traffic jam for hours, but luckily we are in time to see Carla arrive. She had a good flight. The drive back to the hotel is normal.

Saturday, November 6 we have the *Continental International Friendship Run* on our program. This warming up run over 6 km on a part of the track brings us to the building of the United Nations and to the finish in Central Park. The atmosphere is excellent, the many flags are very colourful and make you dream of world peace and friendship between all people. In the afternoon we visit Ground Zero which makes a deep impression upon us. We also have a look in St. Paul's Chapel where we are impressed by the experiences during the days directly after September 11 - 2001. In the evening we have, of course, pasta on the menu. We go to bed early because tomorrow morning the alarm-clock will wake us up at five.

### **Sunday November 7, 2004: Marathon Day**

After a good night's rest John and I go to the lobby of the hotel at six o'clock in the morning. It is still cold outside so we put on a lot of clothes. We both put on an old jogging suit, which we can throw away when the race starts. I put on Anja's jogging suit, which is too small, but it keeps me warm. With buses we drive to the enormous starting point at Verrazano Narrows Bridge on Staten Island.

We have to wait at least three hours before we can start. We kill our time with eating, drinking and resting. There are no spectators here, just marathon runners, it's getting busier all the time. Bands are playing on a big platform. The sun is breaking through, the atmosphere is relaxed and we say to each other: 'It's going to be a beautiful day'. At ten past ten the starting sign is given and six minutes later when I cross the start line I push in my stopwatch. And we leave on the suitable tones of Frank Sinatra's 'New York': *If you can... make it there, you'll make it... anywhere*.

The first after Verrazano Bridge brings us right away to a stiff climb, but nobody complains. We are to walk on the top deck. The view is spectacular. The feeling is super and all of a sudden I think of my two sons at home and wish that I can share this with them some time. In the foreground several fireboats salute us with many colourful water jets, as if we are real heroes. The background is, if possible, even more impressive: the skyline of Lower Manhattan, even without the Twin Towers, is unique. This is the first time I'm biting my lips. It will not be the last emotional moment of the day. Brooklyn is the next district that we cross and there we are supported by different bands on the sides of the road. Next to Queens and on Pulaski Bridge. We have passed the half-way marathon point. Next on the way to Manhattan, where, on Queensboro Bridge, I enjoy the New York Skyline. I feel very good and want to go faster but John knows from experience that the hardest part is yet to come and he knows how to slow me down.

After going downhill we arrive on First Avenue, which is very long and we have to climb constantly, at least that's what it feels like.

As far as I can see I see runners over the full width of the Avenue and not to forget all these enthusiastic fans: 'You are almost there' or 'You are looking good'. I heard it many times and it gave me energy, since I still had 15 kilometers to go. On *Tubantia Holland Point* along First Avenue, orange is the dominating colour. In the morning don filled with energy drink hoping that I would see her at the *Tubantia Holland Point*, but it was so busy, that I missed her. It was no problem, every mile along the road there were long tables with water and energy drinks, volunteers behind these tables gave you the drinks. John usually gets the water and gives it to me. This way I can keep my own speed.



Berto

### **The Wall and the Finish**

After about 33 km it is getting difficult for me. A well-known fact for every marathon runner: *The Wall*. From that moment on I walk on my automatic pilot. I look around and many runners are having a hard time. I see people who look dazed and don't know what they are doing anymore. Big groups are walking, they cannot run anymore. I don't want to walk, I want to keep on running!

John tries to encourage me, I try to enjoy the surroundings and the whole happening, I have to go on. We are coming near Central Park that we pass on the East Side, it's a long section, which slightly goes up hill. After 38 kilometers we enter Central Park. We can hear the speaker and the chanting of the people at the Finish. At the finish Carla and Anja are waiting in suspense, we have been on



the road for almost four hours. Central Park is difficult, small hills and sharp corners. I am starting to get hungry now. Only a couple of hundred meters more and I see the finish. John and I look at each other and shake hands, we made it! Fifty meters before the finish we hear our names, we look to the right, and there are Carla and Anja together with the parents and brother of John, we wave at them. Then we pass the finish. My first marathon has finished. It took us 4 hours 14 minutes and 46 seconds. We were on place 13.087 of the 36.562 people that finished. It's indeed true what they say: *The marathon of New York is a bitch of a marathon; the only part that is level, is the part where you think it is level.* Right after the finish I know: here I'll come again!



Berto and John finishing in Central Park

## Stan and Jeanne Somsen's 60th wedding anniversary

by Jeanne K. Somsen-Theobald [2412]

***In a letter of Stanley J. Somsen [2408] and his wife Jeanne [2412], Jeanne gives us a short review of their long marriage. They have spent 60 years together for better or for worse. These Somsens live in Fontana, California, in the environs of Los Angeles, where several Dutch Somsens visited them. Dirk Somsen [136] from Hillegom (Netherlands) dropped by a few times when he had to be in L.A. for business. In 1998 Johan Somsen [1089] and Yvonne Reijs [3926] also visited them when they were on a roundtrip in the USA. Stanley and Jeanne came over to Holland for the great Somsen reunion of 1997 and they still remember this event with great joy. Jeanne concludes her letter with these meaningful words: 'Thanks for being such nice relatives'.***



1944:  
Weddingpicture



2004:  
60 Years together

Stan [2408] was born in North Dakota in 1924 and moved to California in his teens. I, Jeanne [2412] was born in California in 1924. We met in September 1944 and were married December 5, 1944. We moved from L.A. to Barstow where Stan worked for the railroad. Daughter Carol [2413] was born there. From there we moved back to L.A. and both went to work for Hughes

Aircraft Company. Stan worked in transportation and I was a draftsman. We spent over 30 years there and both retired at age 60.

We have travelled a lot, camping, cruising and flying. I think the best trip of all, though, was the reunion in Holland. It was great to see where Stan's family originated and meet his many wonderful relatives.

Six years ago we moved to Fontana, CA. where much of our family is, and December 5, 2004, we met 25 of them at our favourite restaurant and celebrated 60 years of marriage. It has been a good life so far and we hope it lasts a lot longer.



Jeanne, second right,  
at the 1997 Reunion

## Our (Sun)days in Baldwin 1949

'Hello Mrs Somsen, I already spoke to your boss'

by Theo Somsen [227]

**Jan Willem Somsen [352] and his wife Johanna (Anna) Frederika Somsen-Kemink [353] from Amsterdam set out in 1949 to visit their family in Canada and America. And that is why they also visited Jan Somsen's cousins in Baldwin, Wisconsin. From this journey they kept an extensive journal and from that we selected a few passages. Passages which are especially from the Sundays they spent in Baldwin, because this year the First Reformed Church of Baldwin celebrates its 100-year existence. Also the Baldwin-Somsens belonged to the founders of this church.**

**Brace yourselves, because Jan and Anna are coming to Baldwin..!**



Baldwin's indolent hills



Christian Reformed Church

### Thursday June 30, 1949

We continue our journey and again we drive through Wisconsin's fertile surroundings. In general the farms here look better. They are splendidly situated against the hills, which gives them a picturesque look. It is dry here; people long for rain, but till now they have kept waiting. (...) All the time we come across villages and drive on extended roads along farms and pastures. Then we see a sign, with the words: *Welcome in Baldwin*. We are in suspense: now we will see the Somsen families, who have written so often, that we should come over.

Up the hill, down the hill. Left of the road on a corner we see the

Christian Reformed Church in the middle of the farms, about a 20-minute-walk from the village. The village itself lies there so quietly amidst the green trees. (...) Claude (distant relative from Grand Haven, Michigan, *editors*.) looks up that street and, yes, there is the indicated house. Claude drives the car up to the garage behind the house, walks to the front door, knocks, but doesn't get any answer. He walks to the backdoor and yes, there comes Jenny, who opens the door, followed by Dina. Both cousins are happy to see us. But before we do anything else we want to take a refreshing bath, which we do straight away. And after that we can relax. We enjoy dinner, which is served quickly. They have stuck to some habits and rules from Gelderland, which is pleasant for us.

They ask me, if I will say grace before and after dinner and if I will read aloud from the Dutch Bible from Uncle Jan and Aunt Anna. (...) It is nice, that we can speak our own dialect with them.

Around 6 o'clock Herman and Ella are coming home. After a warm welcome we sit down to dinner. Dina asks, if I – as long as we stay with them – will say grace and read, because – she says – we do understand Dutch well. I hope I can comply with that request. In the evening we go for a drive, cousin Edward is in the shop, he owns a hairdresser's shop. I say to Dina, who drives the car, let me go and see if he recognizes me. I walk into the store, he looks at me, observes me again, glances outside and suddenly he says: 'Hello, Jan!' and shakes hands with me.

Too bad, he is deaf and suffers from rheumatoid arthritis. We have a little chat and in the meantime I ask him if he will cut my hair. Of course he will do that and so I leave him after a little while completely modernized.

### Sunday July 3, 1949

Sunday morning we get up at half past seven, have breakfast, and drive to the church at 9 o'clock. We are hardly in the church or the person, who hands us a piece of paper





Many cousins

I-r:

Ella Somsen [339], Minnie Somsen-Kappers [334], Gertrude Somsen-Snoeijenbosch [327], Sally Somsen-Forman [811] with her son Billy [815] in her arms, Lelas married to James Wernlund [803], Wilhelmina Somsen-Muyskens [341], Geraldine Ista-Somsen [2472], Minnie Wernlund-Somsen [320], Laverne Somsen-Voskuil [2785], Nell Somsen-Tellman [323], Anna Somsen-Kemink [353], Celia Berkseth-Wernlund [801], Dena Somsen [337], Jennie Somsen [335].  
crouched: Jan Somsen [352].

vice the minister goes to the exit to shake hands with everybody, and calls them all by name, which I find very exceptional. Outside the church we talk with several people from Dutch origin, also Harmeling, who brought my brother Johan to Chicago in 1934.

Around 3 o'clock Henry and his wife and 2 children from Bloomer (Wisconsin) come over for a visit.

It is the youngest cousin that we haven't seen or spoken yet. He is 47 years old, a fun type, and it is easy to make contact with him. He works at the butter factory as a controller. Time flies as we are talking and after lunch we go to the Christian Reformed Church, where Rev. Everhuis will conduct the service. He preaches about Psalm 16, verse 8. *I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.* This sermon is also very easy to understand.

of the church, asks us if we are from Holland. On my affirmative reply he tells us his name, Huitink, and that he is originally from Winterswijk. We take a seat on the places which are pointed out to us.

Reverend Muyskens conducts the service and reads Psalm 19, preaches about verse 14 *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.* A ladies' choir sings alternately and the platform is decorated with flowers. The sermon is very understandable, especially because it is a well-known psalm. When we left the church the reverend stood at the door and shook hands with us. He asked me if I had understood the sermon. To Anna, who walked a few paces behind me, he said: 'Hello Mrs. Somsen, I have already spoken to your boss.'

At home we had a lovely lunch. We were in the basement, because upstairs it was too warm. In the afternoon we stayed at home and in the evening we visited our cousin B.J.Somsen, who also lives in a nice house. A sister of the minister is married to Cousin Harry.



Baldwin: First Reformed Church  
(burned down in 1949, shortly after Jan and Anna left!)

### Sunday July 10, 1949

At half past seven we get up to get ready to go to church in our new car. Rev. G.C. Muyskens preaches about Mathew 10:28: *And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* He is a serious preacher and we understand him very well. The church is full and after the ser-



I-r: Mrs. Muyskens, Rev. George C. Muyskens, Harry Somsen



After church we meet a couple of Achterhoekers, and we talk to Mr. Van Someren, who is well-known to my brother Johan, Dan te Grotenhuis, the Wevers brothers and Geurkink. We also talked to Rev. Everhuis and he asked us to say hello to Dr. Boshouwer and Bavinck. We were talking for about an hour with the Achterhoekers outside the church, whom we will pay a visit one of these days. At 10 o'clock in the evening we came home. We talked for a while yet and went to bed at eleven thirty.

### Sunday July 17, 1949

We went to church to hear missionary Corn. Muyskens. He is the brother of the reverend and works at Greyhawk, Kentucky. He was preaching and told us about his work among the Indians. He also is a brother-in-law of Cousin Harry Somsen, who is married to his twin sister. We cannot understand his sermon very well. It's the same in the evening sermon. In the evening the whole Muyskens family came to visit us. It was a very nice evening.

### Sunday July 24, 1949

Went to church, where we listened to Rev. Muyskens. Mrs. Stronks plays the psalms 42, 68 and 150, which sounded very good, because they don't sing psalms in the church in Baldwin anymore.

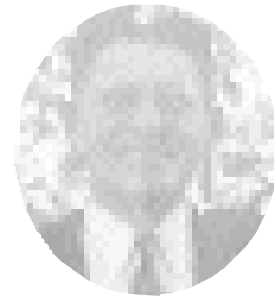
In the afternoon Harry and Henry came by with their families. We had a nice talk. In the evening we went to church again. The women always take good care that there is lots of food on the table. Then it is time to say goodbye to Henri and his family. They leave before church starts. In the evening we go to Cousin Albert, where we had a nice evening. Too bad that he is deaf, even though he was operated on in the previous spring.

Remark:

The Bible texts have been taken from the ancient version that was common at the time.



Three first cousins  
l-r: Henry [342], Jan [352] and  
Herman Somsen [330]



with Cindy Somsen [814]



above l-r: Barbara [3851], Grace [3855], Ann [3853] and Louise [3842] Berkseth  
below: Charles (Skip) Rasmussen [2770]



## 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

**28-04-1998:** Sjoukje [5413] d.o. Bob Somsen [428] and Marjo Annema [2064]

**27-09-2001:** Devin Gordon [5417] s.o. Michael Paul Anderson [3939] and Lori Michelle Gordon [5414]

**22-07-2002:** Noa [5406] d.o. Frank Leneman [5405] and Karin Somsen [2240]

**13-05-2004:** Ilya Gé [5361] s.o. Johan Friso Jansen [5360] and Ingrid Wilhelmina Somsen [997]

**01-09-2004:** Levi [5366] s.o. Mark Alexander Somsen [1423] and Jolanda Valkman [4758]

**03-12-2004:** Fleur Gerjanne [5407] d.o. Frank Leneman [5405] and Karin Somsen [2240]

**20-12-2004:** Jordyn Kay [5402] d.o. Jason Ronald Zignego [2762] and Kristen Kay Kaberna [3218]

**09-01-2005:** Jared Gordon [5418] s.o. Michael Paul Anderson [3939] and Lori Michelle Gordon [5414]

### Married



**18-09-1999:** Michael Paul Anderson [3939] and Lori Michelle Gordon [5414]

**06-04-2001:** Frank Leneman [5405] and Karin Somsen [2240]

**29-12-2003:** Johan Friso Jansen [5360] and Ingrid Wilhelmina Somsen [997]

**19-05-2004:** Jacob Herman van den Essenburg [5390] and Abelina Wilhelmina Somsen [711]

### Deceased

**25-10-2004:** Geert Klompier [1055], 56, Arnhem

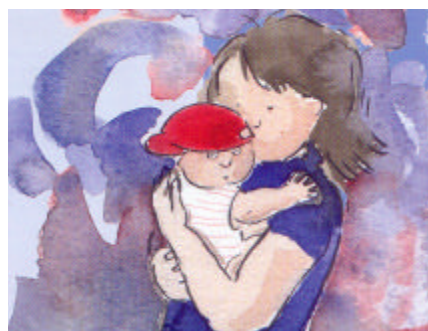
**16-11-2004:** Johanna Navis-Hoopman [379], 86, Aalten

**16-11-2004:** Grietje Somsen-Maret [1978], 90, Dinxperlo

**01-12-2004:** Frederik Johan Schuurman [1957], 97, Dinxperlo

**22-12-2004:** Roelof Somsen (Roelie) [1292], 49, Aalten

**02-03-2005:** Arent Jan Willem Somsen (Wim) [500], 75s, Arnhem



*Het geloof nu is de zekerheid der dingen, die men hoopt, en het betwijfel der dingen, die men niet ziet.*  
Hebreeën 11 : 1

In zijn vertrouwde omgeving hebben wij afscheid moeten nemen van mijn lieve en zorgzame man, onze vader en opa

**ir. ARENT JAN WILLEM SOMSEN**  
Aalten, [500] Arnhem,  
17 februari 1930 2 maart 2005

Amhem:  
G. B. Somsen-Klein Wolterink

Amhem:  
Henriëtte Somsen  
Piet Boer  
Hannah, Simon, Julia

Zwolle:  
Gerard Somsen

Amsterdam:  
Jolanda Somsen  
Nico Kortland  
Immer

Halévystraat 10  
6815 HC Arnhem

Wij gedenken hem op maandag 7 maart om 13.00 uur in de Vrijzeniskerk, Beethovenlaan 7 te Arnhem. Voorafgaand is hier van 12.30 uur tot 12.50 uur gelegenheid om afscheid te nemen.

Na de dienst vindt de begrafenis plaats op begraafplaats Moscowa, Waterbergseweg 18 te Arnhem.

Na de begrafenis kunt u de familie ontmoeten in het Noorderhok, achter de kerk.



Roelie  
Somsen

### Back page:

The other day a book was published with as many as 80 nature and scenery photographs, taken in and around the Achterhoek village of Eibergen. Our board member Ben Somsen [396] is the author and, what is more important, the photographer. You can place an order for this beautiful book '... om Eibergen' with Ben (see colophon) for only \$ 12.00 (without postage)



Summer



Autumn



Winter



Spring