

# DUTCH HERITAGE MONTH FLAG RAISING CEREMONY AT QUEEN'S PARK

*'Proud of our Dutch heritage, even more proud to be Canadian!'*

- by Theo Luykenaar -

Schiedam born, Dutch-Canadian Elizabeth Witmer, former MPP for Kitchener-Waterloo and now Chair of Ontario's Workplace Safety and Insurance Board returned to Queen's Park to MC a Flag Raising Ceremony to celebrate Dutch Heritage Month.



• Speaker of the House David Levac addressing the MPP's, the veterans and Dutch Canadians present. Behind him from left to right: Elizabeth Witmer; Ernie Hardeman; John Gerretsen and Consul General Hans Horbach.

After all, it was her private member's bill to have the month of May proclaimed Dutch Heritage Month in Ontario which bill received unanimously consent from members of the Ontario Legislature in 2011. Ms. Witmer extended a warm welcome everyone and asked the MPP's present to stand behind her. Consul General Hans Horbach then raised the Dutch flag, which was followed by the singing of both the Dutch and Canadian national anthems.

Surrounded by a number of MPP's, Ms. Witmer introduced Attorney General, the Hon. John Gerretsen, MPP for Kingston and the Islands, who introduced mem-

bers of the Liberal Party present, including the Hon. Yasir Naqvi, Minister of Labour, and as always brought a smile to those in attendance. "The Dutch immigrated because after the war there was no land, no housing and they were also overtaxed." Ernie Hardeman, MPP for Oxford, talked about his family who came to Canada to farm, yet none of the five boys became farmers. "Becoming Minister of Agriculture made up for it somewhat." He introduced the Conservative MPP's and introduced his sister's son John Vanthof, MPP for Timiskaming-Cochrane, who introduced the



• Consul General Hans Horbach. Behind him from left to right: Elizabeth Witmer; Ernie Hardeman; John Gerretsen and Speaker of the House David Levac.



• Consul General Hans Horbach raising the Dutch Flag at Queen's Park.



• John Gerretsen, always full of enthusiasm.



• Former Minister of Agriculture Ernie Alderman.

NDP members present, and noted the influence that the Dutch had in horticulture and landscaping. Before Consul General addressed the MPP's, the veterans and Dutch Canadians present, Speaker of the House David Levac, MPP for Brant, welcomed all in attendance and like the other speakers recognized the contribu-



• Words of welcome from MC Elizabeth Witmer.

tions that Dutch-Canadians have made to the economic, political, social and cultural fabric of Ontario's society. Consul General Hans Horbach noted how the



• Delicious Dutch cheese and snacks were served at the reception.

Legislative Building, where one enjoyed a variety of Dutch cheeses and other delicacies along with coffee, tea and soft drinks.

As the Legislative Assembly had convened for its afternoon session, one could see, on a large screen, the Minister of Labour, Yasir Naqvi, MPP for Ottawa Centre, himself an immigrant, introduce Dutch Heritage Month to the Legislative Assembly. He talked about the influence of the Dutch Canadian community on all aspects of life in Ontario and with pride spoke about the Canadian Tulip Festival in Ottawa, which had its foundation with the tens of thousands of tulip bulbs the Dutch send to Ottawa, commencing after the end of the Second World War. Both Arnie Haldeman and John Vanthof responded with pride to Yasir Naqvi's remarks.



• Second generation Dutch-Canadian John Vanthof.



• Deputy Consul General Jeanine de Vos and MPP Ernie Hardeman.

Dutch Canadians have totally integrated in Canadian society and emphasized the continued strong bond between Canada and The Netherlands both economically and politically.

The flag raising ceremony was followed by a reception hosted by the Netherlands Consulate General in Room 315 of the

## CANADA NETHERLANDS FRIENDSHIP DAY

- door Theo Luykenaar -

De stad Burlington vierde de Canada-Netherlands Friendship Day met het hijsen van de vlaggen van Nederland en Canada en het zingen van beide volksliederen, begeleid door drie trompettisten van de Burlington Teen Tour Band.



• MC Blair Lancaster opened de Canada-Netherlands Friendship Day voor de ongeveer 110 aanwezigen.

Dit vond plaats op 4 mei voor het stadhuis. Wethouder Blair Lancaster, in 1978 Miss Canada, was de MC en introduceerde de drie sprekers, burgemeester Rick Goldring, consul generaal Hans Horbach en WO2 veteraan Ken Philips, naast andere gasten zoals Sonja Horbach, MP Mike Wallace, MPP Jane McKenna en voorzitter van het Burlington-Apeldoorn comité, Arnold Koopman.

Officieel valt de Canada-Netherlands Friendship Day op 5 mei, maar wordt traditioneel op een zaterdag gevierd. Omdat 4 mei de dag van de Dodenherdenking is in Nederland werd ook hier twee minuten stilte geobserveerd. Na het hijsen van de vlaggen was er een gezellige receptie in de aula van het stadhuis, met koffie en thee en natuurlijk koekjes van Voortman Cookies uit Burlington. Er waren gratis exemplaren van

het maandblad De Krant, van DUTCH, the magazine en van De Nederlandse COURANT beschikbaar, waar natuurlijk voordeel van genomen werd. Het was prettig zoveel leden van De Nederlandse COURANT te ontmoeten, er werd natuurlijk veel over onze nieuwe koning Willem-Alexander gesproken maar ook over de Tweede Wereldoorlog. Met 110 deelnemers was de op-



• Rick Goldring en Hans Horbach hijsen de vlaggen.

komst laag, voor een aantal jaren was de Windmill Herald de media-sponsor, maar deze krant hield er vorig jaar mee op, daarom werd dit evenement dit jaar nauwelijks bevorderd. De



• Blair Lancaster met de sprekers: burgemeester Rick Goldring, consul generaal Hans Horbach en WO2 veteraan Ken Philips.



• Gepensioneerde rechter Jan van der Woerd, Hans Horbach en Jack van der Laan, oprichter van de Canada-Netherlands Friendship Day.

Nederlandse COURANT hoopt voor 2014 media-sponsor te zijn, want we willen al het goede werk van oprichter Jack van der Laan en ook de stad Burlington niet verliezen.