

Dear members

Thank you for attending our 54th AGM Meeting today.

Before I Proceed with today's AGM I will read out the names of those members who have passed away over the past 13 months.

1. Harry Crijns – 21 September 2022
2. Riet Heyman – 23 September 2022
3. Anne Neil – 24 November 2022
4. Lynne Smit – 2 December 2022
5. Corrie van Ryt – 26 December 2022
6. Bill van der Heiden – 6 January 2023
7. Bart Struijke – 29 January 2023
8. Henk Oorschot – 9 February 2023
9. Peter Raayen – 14 February 2023
10. Thea Bloks – 14 April 2023
11. Rolf de Groot – 21 July 2023
12. Shirley Dercksen – 4 August 2023 – The wife of our former Patron and Honorary Consul
13. Henk Uyen – 13 August 2023

In some way, each of these members has been a dear and close friend to many of us. If you are able, please stand and let us show our respect to these members that have passed away over the past 13 months and are no longer physically present in our midst with a minute silence.

Thank you, Ladies & Gentlemen. Now we can proceed with our AGM.

Let me start by thanking those Neerlandia members who have helped, yet again, to keep our club running.

1. For keeping our membership registration up to date: - Kay & Bob Wegman.
2. For continuing to present our members with an amazing magazine: - Pieter Leeftang.
3. And of course, this could not be produced without our proofreaders: - Henk Oorschot until December last year, Lianna Parker, and Helen Levy.
4. The different array of entertainment provided throughout the year by your Events Coordinator, very ably supported by Machiel, Helen, Jeannette, and Babette.

Can I ask for a round of applause, as without them, the club just wouldn't work.

When I looked back over the past year, I discovered that there were a number of new events, and special gifts, that were Provided to our members. These new events were a great success. These include: -

- The Auto Puzzeltocht in November.
- The Easter Craft afternoon for our kids in April.
- The Father's Day Movie afternoon in June.
- The Silent Disco on the 30th of June.
- The "Tiptoe through the Tulips" at Araluen, only last month.

The gifts provided were: -

- The "Anton Pieck" placemats for our Christmas Lunch, which members were able to take home, was very well received, including a Neerlandia pen.
- Our new Calendar, which was sent to every member.

Then we had a few items we had on our agenda in past years but were different this year.

- Christmas Lunch in November 2022.
- Nieuw Jaar's Duik – 1 January.
- Rottneest Trip in January.
- Ice Skating in February and August.
- The Around the World Lunch with the Swiss Alphorn players.
- Another side-splitting afternoon with video clips from André Rieu in May.
- Anniversary Lunch in July.
- The Quiz Night in August.

I think members will agree that Neerlandia is continuing to rejuvenate itself by trying out new things, putting our best endeavors behind them, in order to ensure these new events are a success. However, what's more important, that our members enjoy being a part of it, and we attract new members.

I do need to highlight two very special events that occurred this year.

1. At our Maas & Waal Event in February, we were surprised by a visit by her Excellency, the Honorable Dutch Ambassador to Australia, Mrs. Marion Derckx. This was a last-minute announcement and required an urgent increase in preparations for that evening. That evening was enjoyed by all who were there.
2. Then, a very Special event when Mrs. Marion Derckx returned on the 25th of June to present our Past President, Past Secretary, and ongoing editor of our wonderful Magazine, Piet Leeftang with a very special award issued by Koning Willem-Alexander, as "Ridder in de Orde van Oranje Nassau.". It is an award very well deserved, and we can all be very proud and thankful of Piet's many unselfish years he devoted for the benefit of Neerlandia and the Dutch Community.

So, what can we expect for the new year you may ask. Well, we will look into the possibility of reviving Carnaval. The usual events will be on the agenda again. We will make a great effort in

celebrating the 450th Anniversary of Leiden's Ontzet. The Car Rally is on again this year so make sure you are a part of it. The Rottnest trip in January as well as the Ice-Skating events in February & August will be a lot of fun for those who attend. The Easter Craft session was well received and is on the agenda once again. The Araluen event was well received and if we are invited back for 2024, we will perform there again sometime in either August or September next year.

Last year, our past president, Eric van Waaijenburg, mentioned that the Neerlandia Committee had started to invest in a portfolio of Blue-Chip Shares in Companies which have long-term financial stability and a proven dividend track record. This was undertaken to ensure the ongoing financial stability and success of Neerlandia. You will see the results of this strategy when our Treasurer, Henry Koldenhoven, presents his report.

Neerlandia has continued to sponsor our sub clubs with support for outings or promotional items. It remains the objective of Neerlandia to continue being able to support our sub-clubs in this fashion. It is therefore also important that each member encourages family & friends to join in with the various activities and become members of Neerlandia. We can achieve so much more, and continue to hold on to our culture and traditions, when more members are a part of our various clubs.

It is important to highlight that under our constitution, any member who has not paid their membership fees within 3 months after the due date will cease to be a member. Rule 12 (4). Unfortunately, we have had to cease the membership of a fair few members over the last few months. Therefore, I urge members to ensure that they pay their membership as early as possible. Remember that as a financial member, you gain lots of benefits. By simply attending a few functions a year, you will have recovered your membership in full. For example, attending the Christmas Lunch and the Anniversary Lunch would have saved you \$45.00, compared to the full price ticket. So if, as most members would be, you are a concessional member, paying an annual member fee of only \$35.00, you are \$10.00 better off. Any additional event you attend will simply add to this saving.

In closing, I express my sincere thanks to my committee members and their partners for their ongoing and continuing support. Without their continuing support, we would not have achieved the results we have had over the past twelve months. THANK YOU to each and every one of you.

Please join me in showing our appreciation for a job very well done.