

Newsletter of the New Zealand Netherlands Society (Wgtn) Incorporated

THE DOUBLE DUTCH

Issue 2025/5

October – November 2025



It's that time of year again!



COMING UP: Sinterklaas * Christmas Lunch * Nieuwjaar
Join us for coffee mornings, Klaverjas and Sunday afternoon socials.

The committee – Het comité

Officers

Co-Presidents:	Pierre Schmits	021 0827 2084	pierre.schmits@yahoo.com
	Carolina van Rooy	021 2179849	carolinavanrooy@gmail.com
Secretary:	Anne-Marie Knibbeler	027 9515770	dutchclubwlg.secretary@gmail.com
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Double Dutch Editor:	Martin de Jong	021 909 688	dutchclubwgn.editor@gmail.com
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	Ann Beyk	04 567 8575	
	Anna Heythuyzen	027 563 6026	
	Saskia Knibbeler	027 522 2287	s.knibbeler@gmail.com

Other responsibilities:

Bar Licence Holder: René van Lierop

Kitchen, bar & purchase manager: Anne-Marie Knibbeler

Klaverjassen: Roel Ymker

Clubroom maintenance: Pierre Schmits

Rejuvenation: Saskia Knibbeler

Facebook and Website Administration: Pierre Schmits/Saskia Knibbeler

Activities – Activiteiten

Klaverjas	Roel Ymker
Dutch Costumes	Carolina van Rooy
Wednesday Coffee Morning	Anne-Marie Knibbeler
Library	Carolina van Rooy & Rita Langerak
Friendly Support Network	Kees Dorresteijn
Waikanae Coffee Morning	Mrs Henny Ekens
	027 9515770
	(see above)
	021 685 649; keesdor@gmail.com
	04 297 2918

Links

Our club's website	www.dutchclubwellington.co.nz
Our club on Facebook	www.facebook.com/dutchclubwellington/
The Federation of NZ Netherlands Societies	www.dutchcommunities.co.nz
Dutch Connections community website	https://dutchnz.nz
Netherlands Embassy, Wellington	www.netherlandsworldwide.nl/countries/new-zealand Email: wel@minbuza.nl Ph: 04 471 6390

What's On

Coffee mornings: 1st & 3rd Wednesday, 10-1pm.

Spelletjes/Games afternoon:

2nd Sunday of the month: 12 October, 9 November

Sunday instuif: Sundays 2pm - 5 pm.

Waikanae coffee group: every 2nd Friday of the month, 10am. At the Baptist Church, 286 Te Moana Rd, Waikanae. \$6.00 per person.

Club account details (for online payments)

Account Name: New Zealand Netherlands Society (Wgtn) Incorporated

Number: 03-0525-0098055-00 (Provide your name and what the payment is for in the reference fields.)

Sinterklaas – Hij komt!

This year Sinterklaas will be visiting the Dutch Club on 7 December to celebrate his birthday with the children of the Wellington area.

I would like to ask all our members to let family and friends know about this happening so we can make it a big party for the “Goed Heilig Man”.

Cost for participation will be about \$20 per child. For this the participating child will receive presents and of course pepernoten and candy.

The event will be held at Avalon House and the doors will be open at 1pm. Sinterklaas is expected around 2pm.

As per the usual (or rather – the unusual), Sinterklaas will be arriving in his own particular way and we will ask the children to guess what it is going to be this year, to be in the draw to win a prize.

Registration for this event is a must! It can be done through the website of the Dutch Club Wellington from 13 October to 24 November: www.dutchclubwellington.co.nz.

Sinterklaas looks forward to seeing the children (again) and of course the parents as well!

De Hoofd Piet.



Sinterklaas' previous modes of transport – in 2021 (above), and from bottom to top on the right: 2022 by bakfiets, 2023 in a motortrike, and last year, on a flat-deck tow-truck!



From the Co-President

Hello everyone,

Fresh back from holiday and I find myself writing this introduction what a slavedriver Martin is!
[Editor: ... mmm, contemplating a response ...]

Let's hark back a month when I left for Canada to spend a wonderful three weeks in the Canadian Rocky Mountains and a restful week on Vancouver Island. For me a first, but I have heard from many of you who have been in that neck of the woods about how much they enjoyed it. And so have I. New Zealand has got its gorgeous scenery but so does Canada and it is totally different. Enjoyed every day of it.

But it is good to be back home and back into business or should I say busy-ness. Because busy it is going to be in the last three months of the year.

By the time you read this, we will have had our "Spring Craft Event" and I certainly hope that you have all joined Saskia and Martin to make this a success. But more about this in the next edition of our magazine.

At time of writing we were awaiting our longstanding "Leiden's Ontzet" event. I am really looking forward to the herring and "hutspot".

In November we are planning a visit to the Beehive in Wellington, and you will have learned about this in the last newsletter. It's not too late to join us, so, if you haven't seen our main government building give me a call and come along.

December is a very busy month when we will be organising Sinterklaas, our traditional Christmas lunch and New Year's celebration. There is plenty of time to book for these events and you can find out how to do that further on in this edition.

On a different note: I know it is a bit late but, in my defence, it is really the first opportunity that I have writing as a co-president: I would like to welcome Roel Ymker and Martin de Jong who have both joined the committee. Martin will continue to do an excellent job at editing and producing the Double Dutch magazine and, I am sure, have a great creative contribution to new ideas for events and happenings in the future. As for Roel, he will have some big shoes to fill taking over the treasurer job from Rita Langerak. Rita will, fortunately for us, remain as a committee member and continue to share her experience.

As always, I look forward to seeing you at one of our events,
Pierre.

Klaverjas Results from July - August

Date	1st	Points	2nd	Points	Last	Points
1 July	Truus Otte	5063	Roel Ymker	4933	Harry v/d Gulik	4051
8 July	Roel Ymker	5531	Truus Otte	4878	Jo de Grauw	3389
15 July	Roel Ymker	5061	Julie Tan	4992	Jo de Grauw	3924
29 July	Roel Ymker	5353	Arif Effendi	4990	Harry v/d Gulik	4026
5 August	Arif Effendi	5319	Julie Tan	5305	Mien v/d Kuit	3845
12 August	Julie Tan	5752	Harry v/d Gulik	4813	Mien v/d Kuit	3652
19 August	Truus Otte	5216	Julie Tan	5040	Harry v/d Gulik	3954
26 August	Arif Effendi	4790	Mien v/d Kuit	4747	Roel Ymker	4199

(No club day on 22 July due to illness). Thanks to Roel Ymker for keeping us updated on the scores.

From the Secretary

Dear people

Just a very short notice this time. I know I will see many of you at the Leiden's Ontzet meal on the 5 October. The herring has been delivered, the meat has been ordered, and Carolina and I will have a good shopping session next week for the other supplies needed to get the food on the table. I'm looking forward to the day. Doors open at 11:30am.

The last coffee morning this year is on Wednesday 3 December: the usual "bring a small plate" request applies for a shared lunch.

As always, I hope you all are well. If you are suffering illness or bereavement, I wish you strength and, if possible, a good recovery.

Best wishes to you all,

Anne-Marie.

Opinion: BVN Shouldn't Fade to Black

I'm sure many of our readers will be lamenting the impending loss of BVN ("Het beste van NPO"), providing free Dutch public television to people around the world, via an app, livestream and satellite. Here are some thoughts from Christiaan Buijsers, President of the Federation of New Zealand Netherlands Societies.

So here we are — facing the quiet shutdown of BVN, the channel that has linked Dutch New Zealanders to home for nearly three decades. It's easy to dismiss as just another media change, but this one cuts deeper. BVN was more than television; it was connection.

From 31 December 2026, that connection will end. The Dutch public broadcaster NPO plans to replace BVN with its domestic streaming platform, NPO Start. But there's a catch: it doesn't work here. Try to open it in New Zealand and you'll be blocked. The only way around it is to pay for and configure a VPN — a technical workaround for something that was once effortless.

BVN was simple. No subscription. No geo-block. Just Dutch content, freely available to anyone who cared enough to watch. For older Dutch New Zealanders, that simplicity mattered. It meant inclusion.

Now, access will depend on digital literacy and disposable income. For many, that's the end of the line. A public service that once reached everyone will soon only reach those who can pay to pretend they're in the Netherlands. That's not modernization; that's exclusion with a new logo.

A Mistake, Not Progress

This isn't about cost — it's about will. Other countries make their national channels freely available on YouTube, understanding that culture doesn't stop at the border. My Taiwanese parents-in-law can watch almost every Taiwanese channel online for free. Yet the Dutch solution to global access is to shut the doors and hand viewers a VPN manual.

The Netherlands can do better than that. BVN has already proven that worldwide access works. It doesn't need to vanish; it just needs a new home.

The Obvious Solution

BVN should continue as a YouTube channel — the same trusted content, no infrastructure costs, open to anyone, anywhere. That's how you modernize without erasing what matters.

Because this isn't nostalgia. It's about belonging. And when that final signal stops on New Year's Eve 2026, a quiet but important voice will disappear from Dutch living rooms across New Zealand.

The Netherlands should not switch BVN off.

It should press upload instead.

- Christiaan

Craft Day Afternoon

Experimenting in more ways than one, we held a craft afternoon on 28 September, with opportunities for origami (paper folding), crafting picture cards, colouring in, and collage making. Thanks to Saskia for teaching us how to make paper tulips from two pieces of square card – which were able to adorn the tables for Leiden's Ontzet the following weekend (see pictures over). We have plenty of craft materials available, so may bringing them out again on Spelletjes – or just ask if you're in the house. Christmas is coming up – and we have plenty of materials for you to craft your own special cards to send to family!



Perfecting the art of paper tulip making – almost!



There's always one! Ben preferring to throw paper darts than make tulips.



They stand up! Some a little 'wind-blown', perhaps.

Leiden's Ontzet

We had another good turnout for our annual commemoration of the liberation of Leiden with a traditional meal of herring, onion, white bread, and hutspot with meat, and of course a little dessert for afters. Thank you to all who helped make this a successful event again on Sunday 5 October!



At the (co-)President's Table!



—A great spread!



*Pierre tells the story of Leiden
and why we are here.*



Above: 'Haring op witte brood' – await their adornment with onions.

Left: Ans shows how it's done.

*Right: It's tulip time!
Thanks to Saskia.*



Coming Up

Christmas lunch

You are all invited to join us at the Christmas lunch which will be on 14 December this year. Once again "Fine Touch" will be catering a delicious main menu for us. It will be preceded by a light starter and, of course, there will be dessert afterwards.

The price for the lunch is set at \$45.00 for members and \$60.00 for non-members. This includes your drinks during the lunch and coffee/tea afterwards.

Because of the minimum order quantity from our caterer, we will only go ahead with 30 or more participants.

The lunch will be held at Avalon House. Doors will open at 11:30 and lunch will start shortly after noon.

Registration before 7 December is necessary. If you want to join us, please contact Pierre or Anne-Marie by phone or email, or let them know at one of our Sunday or Wednesday gatherings. You can pay for the lunch in cash before or at the event, or online by transferring the total amount to the account of the club.

Account name: **New Zealand Netherlands Society (Wgtn) Incorporated**

Account number: **03-0525-0098055-00**

Please provide your **name** and **Xmas lunch** in the reference fields.

Pierre.

Uitnodiging – An invitation

Chris and Mary would like to invite you to Chris Veenswijk's 85th Birthday celebration

Afternoon tea at 2-4pm

Saturday 8 November

534 Main Road North, Upper Hutt.

RSVP to Chris at 04 5267631.

New Year Celebration

On 4 January we will celebrate the New Year at our Social Sunday meeting. This means that we will be serving Oliebollen and other goodies at the event.

Opening time will be, as per usual, 2pm to 5pm and the event is free for members.

Come and join us to wish your fellow members a Happy New Year, boast some New Year resolutions (and take bets on how long you will keep them) and make it a "gezellige" afternoon.

See you then,

Pierre.

Hartelijk Gefeliciteerd ...

to our members celebrating upcoming birthdays:

October: Sandra Donsen, Bert ten Broeke, Riekie van Dorrestein.

November: Joke Effendi, Harry van de Gulik, Chris Veenswijk, Bill van Waas, Pierre Schmits and Jan Bakker.



News from the Embassy – still time to vote in the Dutch elections if you’re eligible – deadline of 24 October at the Embassy. So good to have a real Dutch footballer on the Wellington Phoenix team! Love her name!



Kingdom of the Netherlands

NEWS FROM THE EMBASSY

AUGUST 2025

MESSAGE FROM THE AMBASSADOR

Dear Dutch community in New Zealand and the Pacific,



Last week, I had the honor of visiting the Cook Islands on the 60th anniversary of self-governance. One of the most special moments of the visit was meeting the small but close-knit Dutch community living in Rarotonga. We spoke about life and work in the Pacific, staying connected to the Netherlands, and practical matters such as consular support.

As the Embassy in Wellington, we are here for you, also in the South Pacific, but we can only help if we know what you need from us. So, a gentle reminder: if you ever require assistance or support, please don't hesitate to get in touch. Whether it's a lost passport or renewal, questions about travel documents, a life certificate, consular matters, or an emergency — we are here to help. You can contact us 24/7 through [NetherlandsWorldWide](http://netherlandsworldwide.nl), by phone or email (see info in the orange column).

In addition to the Embassy, you can also reach out to our honorary consuls in Apia (Samoa), Nuku'alofa (Tonga), and Suva (Fiji). They serve as local points of contact and can often assist with basic consular matters in the Pacific, whether you live there or are on a holiday. You can find their contact details on [NetherlandsWorldwide](http://netherlandsworldwide.nl).

We would also like to remind you of the upcoming elections for the Dutch House of Representatives (Tweede Kamer). If you live abroad and wish to vote, make sure you register in time as a voter outside the Netherlands. **Deadline for registration is 17 September 2025.**

You can find all the necessary information at www.netherlandsworldwide.nl. Please don't wait too long — without registration, unfortunately, you won't be able to vote.

Finally, we want to stay in touch with Dutch nationals in New Zealand and the surrounding Pacific islands. If you have suggestions, questions, or something you'd like to share, don't hesitate to contact us.

Your Ambassador,
Ard M.M. van der Vorst



CONSULAR FAQs

HOW TO REGISTER FOR AND VOTE IN THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS OF 29 OCTOBER 2025

Are you a Dutch national living abroad and have you not registered in the past to vote in the elections? Your registration must be received by the municipality of The Hague by 23.59 (Dutch time) on **Wednesday 17 September**. Follow this link to register: nederlandwereldwijd.nl/stemmen.

After registration, you will receive your voting pass, by email or by post. The ballot papers will be sent to you by post around the first week of October.

You can cast your vote in four ways:

1. Send your vote by post to the Embassy.
2. Hand in your vote in person at the Embassy.
3. Send your vote by post to The Hague.
4. Ask someone in the Netherlands to vote for you ('vote by proxy').

Electronic voting is not possible.

All postal votes must arrive at the Embassy in Wellington by **Friday 24 October** to ensure they arrive in The Hague in time.

POP-UP DESK CHRISTCHURCH

Our second pop-up desk in Christchurch was well-received, with many satisfied customers. We are looking forward to our upcoming visit to Queenstown in September, followed by the final pop-up desk of the year in Christchurch this November.

Please monitor our Facebook page or sign up to our newsletter to stay posted! If you can't secure a spot, we advise to renew your passport in Wellington or Auckland.

DUTCH MIDFIELDER TESSEL MID-DAG JOINS WELLINGTON PHOENIX

There's no shortage of Dutch sports talent making their way to our corner of the world. After 4 years playing for the Rangers in Scotland, Amsterdam-born Tessel Middag recently signed with the Phoenix in the A-League Women. We're pretty confident that she will help the club win their first trophy in women's football. No pressure, Tessel!

Tip from us:

For all your Dutch government related questions,

call our
Netherlands
WorldWide
24/7
contact center:
0800 388 243

Or visit:

netherlandsworldwide.nl

Embassy closures

Labour Day
27 October '25

Our address:

Embassy of the Kingdom
of the Netherlands

Kiwi Wealth Building
10th Floor
20 Ballance Street
Wellington 6011

Advertise with us!

If you want to advertise, please contact the secretary. Six issues are published each year.

Advertising rates (excl GST):

A4 (full page): \$150/year or \$45/once

A5 (half page): \$100/year or \$25/once

A6 (quarter page): \$60/year or \$15/once

Avalon House Hire

If you want to hire space at Avalon House, please contact the Club secretary.

Hire fees (excl GST):

Half-day (4 hours)	\$50
Full day (9am – 5 pm)	\$90
Evening (5-10pm)	\$60
Bond	\$100
Cleaning (if required)	\$50



Retail Team Member

(Competent Dutch Required)

We're looking for someone with retail experience and exceptional customer service skills to join our team. Our clientele is predominantly Dutch so fluency in Dutch is a must.

Email us at the address below or alternatively drop a resume off at the shop.

The Dutch Shop, 89 Jackson Street, Petone 5012

E: thedutchshopnz@gmail.com

W: www.thedutchshop.co.nz

We thank Harbour City Funeral Home for generously printing The Double Dutch in full colour for us.

ABOUT FUNERALS

Informative
FREE guide

This beautifully designed booklet contains answers to all the immediate questions family and friends will want to know at the time of a funeral. Colour photographs throughout, make this an easy to read comprehensive booklet, as the perfect guide to pre-planning a funeral. Included are sections for recording personal details and funeral preferences that can be retained for future use, making funeral planning easy for your loved ones. Call us now for a **FREE** copy of this guide, while stocks are available.



Call Danny Langstraat on
570 0111


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Members of The Funeral Directors
Association of New Zealand


Local People
Caring in our Community


Harbour City
... FUNERAL HOME ...

Sender:
New Zealand Netherlands Society (Wellington) Inc.
61 Taita Drive, Avalon
Lower Hutt 5011

Next Double Dutch: December – January. Deadline: 20 November 2025
(Contributions to the Editor at dutchclubwgn.editor@gmail.com; or post to the address below)

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