



Unidentified teacher and students, 1962, Netherlands. Back of the photo: inscription - "Oud Zandbergen Holland [Holland Crossed Out]," "A class at 'Oud-Zandbergen' (Netherlands)." Back also has stamps from General Conference Department of Education and "May 24 1962."

Photo courtesy of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Archives.

Netherlands Junior College and Seminary (Oud Zandbergen)

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Reinder Bruinsma, Ph.D. (University of London), is a retired church administrator, scholar, and author. From September 2011 to early 2013 he served as the interim-president of the Adventist Church in Belgium and Luxembourg. Since then he has returned to his status as a retiree but remains active in preaching, lecturing, and writing.

From 1948-1995 the Netherlands Union Conference operated a small theological seminary and a secondary school in the village of Huis ter Heide about 6 miles (10 km) east of Utrecht. In 1947 the church bought an estate of about 86 acres (35 hectares) with a stately mansion and a few other buildings and houses. After renovations, lessons started in January 1948.

The place had a rich history before it became the property of the Seventh-day Adventist church. In 1654 Jasper Schade van Westrum received a plot of land along the road that was being constructed between Utrecht and Amersfoort, on condition that he would build a stately house, be responsible for the upkeep of the road that ran over his property, and cultivate the heathland that he now owned. The mansion on the estate was likely designed by the famous architect Jacob van Campen, whose name is also connected with the Royal Palace in Amsterdam. It received the name "Zantbergen." The word "Oud" (English, "old") was added after 1913, when a stately house was built in close proximity which received the name "Nieuw Zandbergen" (meaning "New Zandbergen").¹

Over time the property had several different owners and was gradually reduced in size. The last private owner was the Jewish banker Robert May, who could not afford to maintain it after World War II. During the war the house had been severely damaged. The Adventist Church was able to buy the property for 325,000 guilders (at the time about US\$75,000, but had to spend a considerable amount on repairs²

Before World War II the Adventist Church in the Netherlands was organizationally connected with the Church in Germany and the Dutch pastors were educated in Germany.³ In 1946 it was decided to transfer the Netherlands Union to the Trans-European Division (then: Northern European Division). The Church in the Netherlands felt the need to establish its own center for the training of its ministers, the more so, since a serious lack of ministers had developed. The new educational program was to be linked with Newbold College, where the students were to spend the last two years of their course of studies and would receive a bachelor's degree issued by Columbia Union College (now Washington Adventist University). The link with Newbold remained, but in later years the relationship with Columbia Union College was no longer needed as Newbold College could offer its own academic degrees.⁴

In addition to the theological course a secondary program was established—the initial reason being that some prospective theology students did not have a completed secondary education. In 1973, when the Dutch educational system was thoroughly overhauled, Oud Zandbergen began to offer a "fuller secondary program," for which it received government recognition (albeit without funding). This secondary program gave entrance to higher professional education. Maintaining this program became too costly and in 1979 the secondary program was discontinued. The theology department continued until 1995, when it was decided it would be more cost-effective and in the interest of the students to let prospective Dutch pastors take their entire theological training at Newbold College.

Since 1995 the main building of Oud Zandbergen has been used as the office for the Netherlands Union (now Netherlands Union of Churches Conference). The grounds, which have been further reduced to about 25 acres (10 hectares), are regularly used for youth and scouting activities. The chapel is utilized by the local congregation of about 150 members, and the former boys' dormitory has been fully refurbished and presently serves as a conference center.

Principals

C. P. de Ruyter (1948); P. P. Schuil. (1948-1953); A. C. Schmutzler (1953-1959); N. Heykoop (1959-1968); P. Sol (1968-1971); R. Bruinsma (1971-974); G. W. Mandemaker (1975-1982); P. Sol (1982-1995).

SOURCES

Bruinsma, R. *Ontstaan en Groei van de Adventbeweging*. The Hague: Boekenhuis "Veritas," n.d.

Sol, P. "Een eigen theologische opleiding." *40 Jaar Oud Zandbergen*. Bosch en Duin: Advent Pers, 1988.

van Rijn, H. G. "Jaspar Schade van Westrum." *40 Jaar Oud Zandbergen*. Bosch en Duin: Advent Pers, 1988.

van Rijn, H. G. "Ons Duitse Erfgoed." *Adventbode*. November/December 1986, and January 1987.

NOTES

1. H. G. van Rijn, "Jaspar Schade van Westrum," *40 Jaar Oud Zandbergen* (Bosch en Duin: Advent Pers, 1988), 16, 17.
2. R. Bruinsma, *Ontstaan en Groei van de Adventbeweging* (The Hague: Boekenhuis "Veritas", n.d.), 85.
3. H. G. van Rijn, "Ons Duitse Erfgoed," *Adventbode*, November/December 1986, and January 1987.
4. P. Sol, "Een eigen theologische opleiding," *40 Jaar Oud Zandbergen* (Bosch en Duin: Advent Pers, 1988), 9-12.

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