

The many lives of Prins Hendrikkade 142

Annemarie de Wildt

Conservator Amsterdam Museum

The building that will offer de Appel a new home has an eventful history full of tobacco, sailors' stories, socialist militancy, drugs, mysticism and music. It is located on the Waal Island, which was filled up in 1644. The quay with the townhouses and office buildings on the side of the IJ used to be called the Buitenkant [Outside]. The quay was liked among wealthy merchants. The interiors of their houses were on a par with those that were newly built on the Keizersgracht and Herengracht.

Jan Agges Scholten, Lord of Aschat (1690–1772) was a wealthy tobacco producer. His factory was located on the Buitenkant, now the Prins Hendrikkade, between the Schippersstraat and the Kalkmarkt. Around 1728 he bought the building next to his house and had both buildings transformed into the imposing mansion Scholtenburg.

From the salon at the front the family Scholten had a wonderful view onto the IJ, which was a lot wilder then than it is now, as it was still connected to the Zuiderzee and the Oosterdoksdiijk and Westerdoksdiijk weren't built yet. Think away the Central Station, the OBA (Public Library Amsterdam), the Muziekgebouw (Music Building) and Nemo (Science Centre) and add hundreds of smaller and larger ships. 's Lands Zeemagazijn, now the Maritime Museum, had been there since 1656. The Zeemagazijn [Sea Warehouse] was filled with sailing equipment and weapons for the Admiralty's war fleet, which had to protect the VOC [United East India Company]. Scholten became governor of the VOC in 1751. His tobacco came from Brazil and the West Indies. Scholten was one of Amsterdam's entrepreneurial tobacco merchants who mixed expensive tobacco from South America with cheap, indigenous tobacco from Utrecht or Gelderland. He experimented with growing tobacco at his country home, the Aschat Manor near Leusden.

Lord Aschat had married the Jewish Pieterella Hoogenberg from the Breestraat (later known as the Jodenbreestraat) in 1711. Pieterella also hailed from a wealthy family. Prince William IV appointed Jan Agges Scholten as governor in the city council of Amsterdam in 1948. The prince was godfather to Christian, Jan and Pieterell's oldest son. Father and son were vigorous supporters of the Oranjes. The

old families of Amsterdam regents looked down on Jan Agges Scholten as someone who was after a prestigious job and had acquired a council role following the Doelisten riot of 1748.

At the back of the main floor was a dining room with a view onto the garden, which was also used as a reception room. It was entirely decorated in Louis XIV style, according to the fashion of the time: the room had green wall panelling with gilded detailing. It is possible that the house's (unknown) architect also designed the room. In its centre was a fireplace with a red and grey marble mantelpiece, with above it a so-called 'grauwtje' by Jacob de Wit, an allegory of the autumn.

These imitations of sculpture, painted in grey tones, were called grisailles or 'grauwtjes'. Scholten hadn't hired just any painter. Jacob the Wit was *the* specialist and therefore his grisailles were often called 'witjes'. Museum Willet-Holhuysen has another 'witje' from Scholtenburg, an allegory of the hunt. Maybe Lord Aschat used to go hunting at his country manor to then offer the game shot to his guests in this sophisticated dining room. Another memory that refers to the tobacco merchant is the attic with the braces (a particular way of constructing) and the large hoisting wheel. The attic now houses the offices of De Appel's employees.

Following Jan Agges Scholten's death, the house had various residents. The building's next life started when in 1828 College Zeemanshoop made it its headquarters. Zeemanshoop offered sailors a meeting place ashore and provided grants for seamen's widows, orphans and disabled sailors. An anchor, symbol of hope, was put up above the entrance. Architect T.F. Suys designed a large meeting room with a tall ceiling and a balcony from which captains could overlook the harbour front. They told each other tall stories about shipwrecks and organised stockfish dinners. A monumental staircase was installed between the front and the back of the house, which made room for a vide in the last refurbishment.

College Zeemanshoop moved to Dam square in 1864, to be replaced by master Hinze's school. The large meeting room was divided into four classrooms. Although it was a respectable school, with a name, not a number, the Lodewijk XIV panelling in the back room wasn't safe. The city council decided in 1899 to move fragments of the interior to the Stedelijk Museum to ensure their preservation. The Green Room became one of the style rooms in the museum that had opened in 1895. Mannequins

of a mother and a midwife turned the display of the room into an 'old Dutch nursery'. Currently the panelling is stored at the Amsterdam Museum.

The dividers that had created the classrooms disappeared again in 1931. The Amsterdam branch of the AJC, the Workers' Youth Association, moved into number 142. The AJC members called their building The Anchor. The aim of the organisation, which was founded in 1918, was to train youths from the working classes to prepare them for participation in the battle for socialism. The building was taken on in 1938 as part of the labour provision scheme: the old 'sekreten' (wooden toilets) vanished and water closets were installed.

The building started another new life in 1968. The AJC had transformed in the Stichting Ankerclubhuiswerk. At the start of 1967 Central Station youths made the news. The clubhuiswerk made the basement of the building available to this group. Fantasio was to become one of the most important venues in the underground and youth culture in the Netherlands. An article from the communist daily *De Waarheid* of 2 January 1969 describes a discussion evening about whether the use of cannabis leads to the use of opium and heroin. The proposition by the clubhuis leader to be able to legally sell soft drugs in Fantasio would, according to *De Waarheid*, 'justifiably lead to a lot of opposition'. Jan Agges Scholten would have turned in his grave if he had known that on Queen's day 1969 a group carrying an orange coffin would leave from Prins Hendrikkade 142 to 'go and bury Oranje'. The coffin was seized. The Kritiese Universiteit [Critical University] was also located in the building, as was the Maoist Red Youth, led by the docker Willem Oskam. The Union for Conscript (BVD) was based in the attic. But the building was transformed again in the spring of 1969, into meditation centre The Kosmos. It became the spiritual and new age centre of the Netherlands. Downstairs was a sauna. The neighbours put a sign up over the fence: 'Please limit the screeching. Thanks. The Neighbours.' The sounds from the rebirthing sessions in the room upstairs were luckily muffled by the excellent sound insulation. The key words in The Kosmos' archive, now at the I.I.S.G. give an insight in the centre's activities: broadening of awareness, drugs, meditation centres, nature conservation, spiritual centres, therapies, yoga, youth tourism, youth culture, mysticism, underground, video. The archive also contains documents about the internal battles in The Kosmos in 1971 between those in favour of meditation, as

opposed to those who wanted more 'action'. The worldwide battle for the legalisation of drugs would continue from The Kosmos. The International Cannabis Alliance was founded there.

The city council of Amsterdam decided to stop the support for The Kosmos in March 1984 and to spend the means now freed up on a new problem group, the so-called Rembrandtplein youth. The Kosmos was privatised. The Bibiotheca Philosophica Hermetica and the Dutch Jung association used it for symposiums. There was a holistic health festival and a school for pregnancy support. Eventually The Kosmos went bankrupt in 1992.

The subsequent resident was the National Pop Institute, which aimed to stimulate the development of Dutch pop music, from pop to rock, to hip hop and world music. The Tilburg based Rock Academy opened an office in the building and the garden, the former cooling down area for the sauna, was adorned with planters in the shape of the letters P O P. The NPI merged with the Music Centre the Netherlands in 2008 and its director Jaap van Beusekom transferred the Pop Institute's archive to the National Archive. Prins Hendrikkade was refurbished once more by denieuwebeneratie and ADP, and found a new resident in De Appel arts centre.

Nice image of the small pool in the garden:

http://www.dekosmos.net/kosmosarchive/main.php?g2_itemId=2342