



DEAF HISTORY International

An Association for All Interested in the Study, Preservation, and Dissemination of Deaf People's History

No. 31

The DHI Newsletter

SUMMER 2007



Still Life Paintings by Eelke Jelles Eelkema (1788–1839)

(See pages 5–6)



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Courtesy of
VSDB – Staunton



1907 GOLD MEDAL (See page 9)



The DHI Newsletter

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Notes from the Editor



WHERE HAS THE SUMMER GONE? It is now the end of August and I have just finished the summer edition of our newsletter. I hope you all had a good vacation with your families and friends.

Congratulations go out to our DHI President Douglas Bahl, who recently married Sue Kovacs in Lake Tahoe, California USA. The couple will continue to make their home in Saint Paul, Minnesota USA.

Our Swedish DHI members and friends are still busy preparing and finalizing their plans for the 2009 DHI Conference in Stockholm, Sweden. President Bahl is continuously communicating with them as a follow-up on their progress. As soon as details become available, they will appear in future issues of this newsletter. Your patience is appreciated as it will take some time before the announcement is made.

We need more articles, book reviews and photographs for possible inclusion in our newsletters. If you have anything of interest for our readers, please do not hesitate to submit it to our DHI editor for consideration. Proper credit will be given.

Our current and outdated DHI website will soon be removed from the Internet. Our webmaster since 2006, Gordon Hay (United Kingdom), has been unable to commit to updating it. He has plans to study Accounting and Law in a BA Honours program at a university in September. President Bahl has someone in mind to take over this task.

For those whose membership/subscription to this newsletter either has already expired (prior to 2006) or will expire at the end of October 2007, please use the **MEMBERSHIP FORM** (see page 12) to renew at the earliest date possible. If you have any questions regarding your membership/subscription, please do not hesitate contact Edna Sayers, our DHI Secretary/Treasurer, who will be able to inform you of your renewal status. Your dues are an important contribution to our organization and its newsletter.



The Deaf History International Newsletter welcomes Deaf History-related submissions of news, articles and essays, book and film reviews, images and photographs, newspaper clippings, conference and workshop announcements, websites, and other readings of interest for possible inclusion.

Please submit them to the editor by the following deadlines:



FOR FUTURE ISSUES

DHI ISSUES	SUBMISSION DEADLINE	DISTRIBUTION DATE
SPRING	March 15	April 15– 30
SUMMER	June 15	July 15 – August 15
FALL	September 15	October 15 – 31
WINTER	December 15	January 15 – 31



President's Column

By Douglas Bahl (USA), DHI President

WHY ARE YOU A MEMBER OF DEAF HISTORY INTERNATIONAL?

1st – to receive information from DHI newsletters.

2nd – to learn about how to research Deaf History and to share with others.

3rd – to contribute to the collection, preservation and dissemination of Deaf History information.

We are promoting the history of Deaf people in our world as evidenced by our triennial DHI conferences and we are currently publishing our conference proceedings. We continue to lead the way ourselves with our DHI members sharing their expertise, financial support and in-kind services. However, we must take a more active role in placing DHI before the public eye.

DHI needs you to come forward TODAY. We have volunteer leadership positions in need of your skills, talents and energy to expand our Deaf History. DHI challenges you to share your research, experiences and stories to show that the Deaf World can put together the pieces of a shattered and scattered past. DHI needs your help in the Deaf Community including schools, clubs, and churches so that other Deaf people can see the hope, promise and dedication. DHI needs your active involvement to continue its mission into this 21st Century and beyond!

Today, Deaf people have struggled in the world to gain recognition, rights and responsibilities. As a DHI member, you have the right to receive benefits from your membership such as the DHI newsletter and voting. As a DHI member you have the opportunity to gain recognition by presenting at the DHI Conference or writing an article for our DHI newsletter. As a DHI member you also have an awesome responsibility to ensure that the hard work, long struggle and deeply rooted faith of the past live on and prosper.

In closing, I urge you all to read this issue of DHI Newsletter and consider writing an article for future issues or presenting at the 2009 DHI Conference in Stockholm, Sweden. With our editor Clifton Carbin at the helm, our *DHI Newsletter* keeps us informed of what is happening in the Deaf World history that affects our research efforts.

SO, WHY ARE YOU A DHI MEMBER — NOW?

Oops! Your editor is red-faced!

At the front bottom right corner page of our previous *DHI Newsletter* (Spring 2007, No. 30), it showed the wrong logo representing Amsterdamse DovenHistorie (Deaf History Amsterdam). It is actually the Star of David symbol belonging to DovenShoah (Deaf Holocaust). Sorry for the mix-up. Below are their correct logos:



CALL FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Facts On File, Inc. and the advisors for the *Encyclopedia of American Disability History* are looking for contributors.

- ◆ This three-volume reference work will cover basic information on important events, issues, developments, laws, biographies, and related topics in American Disability History. Entries on significant historical themes and concepts—including civil rights, war, public policy, citizenship, media, institutions, education, and technology—will examine both practical and theoretical factors, as well as demonstrate the deeper meaning of the lived experience of disability. Each entry will illustrate the subject within an historical context, and show that while disability has existed throughout American History, disability is neither a fixed nor static concept but one whose definition and understanding have changed markedly from era to era.
- ◆ Because accessibility is a major issue in Disability History, the entries in this reference will accommodate a broad, diverse audience, from high school students to general readers, to individuals who assist people with disabilities. Clear language, accessible prose, and coherent, balanced, jargon-free interpretations are essential for every article.

The editors of this encyclopedia are currently seeking contributors for a wide range of entries.

[The following is a sample list of available entries:](#)

Neuroleptics	Age Discrimination Act, 1975	<i>Little Paper Family</i>
Occupational therapy	Violence	Abbott, Jim [pitcher]
Photographers	Carpal Tunnel Syndrome	Therapeutic interventions
Deaf and Dumb [history of the term]	Newsline for the Blind	Treatment
Rare Disorders	Meagher, Frederick “Jimmy”	Gallaudet College/University
Frampton, Merle	Poster art	Dybwad, Gunnar
Stem Cell research	Radiation	
Hard of Hearing	American Foundation for the Blind	

Authors interested in contributing to this important project should contact Dr. Susan Burch for further information and details regarding the full list of entries: susanburch1917@yahoo.com

[Editor-in-Chief](#)

Susan Burch, Ph.D.

[Advisors](#)

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Portrait of Eelke Jelles Eelkema. His nephew, Cornelis Bernardus Buijs (1808–1872), painted it about 1820.

Eelke Jelles Eelkema

The Dutch Deaf Master of Still Life Painting

By Henk Betten, a born-Deaf author, researcher and volunteer-librarian
at the Royal Institute for the Deaf — ‘Effatha Guyot Group’
in Haren (The Netherlands)

Eelke Jelles Eelkema was born in Leeuwarden on the 8th of June 1788, the son of a prosperous bargeman called Jelle Eelkes. In the seventh year of his life, Eelke gradually lost his hearing, to the dismay of his family. A civil servant in Leeuwarden wrote a petition for his parents to the Institute for the Deaf in Groningen (founded by Henri Daniël Guyot) with the request that Eelke would be taken up as a pupil. The request was granted. In this way, Eelke and his mother arrived by tow-boat in Groningen in August 1799. From this moment on, Eelke's life changed dramatically. He was subjected to the 'strict' rules of the institution.

In addition to the normal classes, Eelke and some of his schoolmates received drawing-lessons at school from the Flemish refugee Gerard van San, who was appointed for this purpose by Guyot. It soon turned out that Guyot had rightly seen the potential of this kind of education. For in 1801, Elzenerus Helmigh, one of the pupils, was awarded a prize for his work by the Groningen Drawing-school. He was the first to accomplish this in Dutch Deaf History. Some years after, Eelkema followed his example, by winning a prize from the same college for the excellent imitation of a plastered nude figure.

When Eelkema had passed the age of 20, he left the Institute to return to his parental house. In an advertisement in the *Leeuwarder Courant*, a local newspaper, from the year 1808, we can read how he recommends himself as a painter:

The painter and draughtsman E. Jelles advertises; that he presently gives lessons in the art of drawing, to which end he has the finest capacity in his house at the Kelders (the Cellars) above the silversmith Buys, recommending himself to each man's favour, promising to offer thorough education, and furthermore recommending himself as a painter.

In the year 1812, Eelkema made one of his earliest paintings, that of a speedskating match in Leeuwarden.

Eelkema never forgot Guyot, his teacher and 'father' at the Institute for the Deaf. He also kept in touch with his old classmates, probably because of the lack of communication in Leeuwarden with his hearing environment. When King William the First and his wife paid a visit to the city of Groningen and the Institute for the Deaf in 1814, Eelkema was present at the request of his master. Much to his surprise, Eelkema received a scholarship from the king to capacitate himself further in the art of painting. He did not hesitate in choosing a way to use it. Elzenerus Helmigh, a former schoolmate of Eelkema's and later to become a famous miniature painter, had spent some time in Paris in 1803 at the expenses of the Institute, to complete his apprenticeship in painting. Eelkema had the wish to do the same.

In 1815, Eelkema's mother died. This was a great shock to the Eelkema-family. The widow had worked hard to make a living, running a cakes and candy store. She taught Eelke how to keep his ground in the hearing society. And she did well, as appears from the obituary he placed in the newspaper on behalf of his elder and younger brothers and sisters, and himself.

At last the die was cast, in 1816 the scholarship from the king was finally granted, and Eelkema was able to travel to Paris. The first thing Eelkema did was to study the works of famous artists, which were abundantly present in the Louvre. He was allowed to copy the still life by Jan van Huysum, a well-known artist from the 18th century. In the meantime, he frequently visited the school for the Deaf of the Abbé de l'Épée at the Rue Saint Jaques in Paris. In one of his letters, which sometimes were written in French, Eelkema tells about the assignments he got from Guyot, his former master. He complains about the constant absence of Mr. Jean Massieu, who he nevertheless considered to be a very friendly man. He also mentions meetings with famous men like Bébien, Salvan and Sicard. It was from Massieu that Eelkema learned about the plan of Laurent Clerc to go to the United States to co-operate in founding a new school for the Deaf. He also writes Guyot about the conditions Sicard made: Clerc was only to stay for two or three years and then to return. It seems that the education of the Deaf in Paris could not do without him.

One assignment from Guyot was the purchase of a bust of De l'Épée from a Parisian sculptor to be placed in the school in Groningen. The price of such a bust varied in 1818 from 45 French francs (plastered) to between 500 and 2000 French francs (made in marble). Eelkema asked Guyot to make his choice. Nothing more is known about the bust that was to be sent to Groningen. It is not even certain that it ever reached the Institute.

Two years later, in 1818, Eelkema made his second tour to Paris at his own expense because he did not receive the grant he expected. From there, he travelled to the heart of France, the Auvergne. By way of Martigny in Switzerland, he went to Turin, where he learned how the Italian masters worked. After a while, Eelkema returned to Martigny, where he finished the mountainous landscape. As far as I can tell, the three people which are visible are signing with each other. After this tour, he returned to Leeuwarden, where he rendered his impressions in some other landscapes.

In the Netherlands, Eelkema painted indoors as well as outdoors. Sometimes he would sit for hours behind his easel at a beautiful spot such as the country seat of the baron Collot d'Escury in Minnertsga in the province of Friesland. This baron was a well-known administrator and art collector, and as an influential patron of arts he invited Eelkema to come and work on his estate. In return, Eelkema made him three still life paintings with fruits and flowers. Unfortunately, the baron did not enjoy them for very long, because he died after a number of years and the paintings were sold during an auction in 1831, together with many other works of art.

When Eelkema had passed the age of 30 and was still unmarried, he started to feel restless. He speaks in his letters about the little he can do in Leeuwarden. So he left once more, this time to Haarlem. The manifold flowers in the big garden of Van Eeden, a famous florist, brought new inspiration in him. That was probably the place where he made one of his four most appreciated still life paintings, which are now in the possession of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. At that time, he also had the honour of being appointed to complete a still life by Brandt, who had just passed away. This work is to be seen in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam as well.

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One day, when he was with his family, Eelkema received a written request by the Franeker Grammar school. Franeker is a town at about fifteen kilometres from Leeuwarden. The school asked him if he would like to be the new drawing-master. Eelkema saw no problem with this, because he had earlier been teaching in his birthplace Leeuwarden. In the autumn of the year 1821, he started this honourable mastership. Eelkema was the first Deaf man to occupy this post for the Dutch government. It costed him much effort to do this because of his deafness. Some of his students had trouble understanding him. After a while, this problem diminished. Eelkema taught two times a week, usually in autumn and sometimes in winter. When there was enough ice, he skated from his house in Leeuwarden to the school and vice versa.

Eventually, our artist made a sea-journey to England in 1823. The meeting between a renowned Dutch writer and him on that trip has been recorded in a book by the former. In London, Eelkema learned from Mr. Matron, the president of the London school for the Deaf, that Sicard, Massieu, and Laurent Clerc had stayed with him for some time. In January 1824, Eelkema wrote about this in one of his letters to Guyot. He was full of praise about the Institute in London, which educated 200 students in two large rooms. In 1829, Eelkema was forced to resign his occupation at the Franeker Grammar school. The distance and the ongoing difficulties in communication were the reasons for his decision.

The next year, Eelkema published his first book: *A through education in the arts of drawing and painting, especially miniature drawing, for young artists*, which was a translation of a French book by Manson in Dutch. It explained various aspects of the art such as the polishing of ivory, miniature painting s and different ways of oil-painting. Another example of his activities in these years is the beautiful manual alphabet he drew in 1833, which was used solely by the Deaf in those days. He had it printed and published by Lambert Schierbeek, his brother-in-law. Three years later, Eelkema published a second book: *A manual for the knowledge and practice of the arts of drawing and painting, partly according to the fourth edition in French by L. Libert*.

I would like now to interrupt my narrative for a short remark. A conclusion can perhaps be drawn from the foregoing with respect to the ongoing struggle in the education of the Deaf between the methods of sign language and oralism. At any rate in the Netherlands, enthusiasm and spirit of enterprise can be found among the young Deaf who were educated in Groningen from around 1790. This was due in my opinion to the pleasant and inspiring atmosphere at the Institute, caused by the free use of sign language. They were offered the possibility to develop themselves in art and some of the Deaf pupils became teachers of the Deaf themselves. This is not solely because of the efforts of H.D. Guyot. The same

accomplishments can be found at the same time in Paris. People like Jean Massieu and Laurent Clerc have done tremendous work for the education of the Deaf. But with the advent of oralism in the second half of the nineteenth century, all this talent, creativity and potency in the Deaf seems to have melted away suddenly. The coincidence of these two events cannot be ascribed to pure chance. In my view, the rise of oralism as the method of education has been the prime cause in the silencing and loss of self-confidence of Deaf pupils.

But that was not my main subject, let us follow the story of this Deaf achiever to the end. Eelkema lived and worked alternately in Haarlem and Amsterdam until 1837. That year turned out to be a year of disaster; he became blind. He was forced to move back to his family in Leeuwarden, where he remained, deprived of his hearing and the light in his eyes. On 27 November 1839, death relieved him of his brave and silent suffering.

In his entire career, Eelkema produced about 45 paintings and over 100 drawings. Much of his work can be seen in the Frisian Museum in Leeuwarden and in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. Two works by Eelkema are also found in the Dorotheum in Vienna, Austria. In conclusion, one can say Eelkema had two ambitions in his life. The one was painting, the other teaching. And he has achieved much in both of them.



Editor's Note: If you search the Internet under Eelkema's full name, you will learn more about him and also view many of his beautiful portraits similar to the above and on the front page of this newsletter.



— COMING UP IN FUTURE ISSUES —

EDUARD FÜRSTENBERG (1827–1885)
by Jochen Muhs (Germany)

FIRST CANADIAN SCHOOL for the DEAF
by Clifton F. Carbin (Canada)

EDUCATION of the DEAF in the NETHERLANDS
by Corrie Tijsseling (Netherlands)

**100th ANNIVERSARY:
FINNISH MUSEUM OF THE DEAF**
by Tiina Naukkarinen (Finland)

**Do you have something to submit for
inclusion in our newsletter?**



ONGEHOORD VERLEDEN (Unheard Past) Flemish Deaf History Congress

by

Ingeborg Scheiris, Staff Member / Researcher at Fevlado-Diversus (Gent, Belgium)

In the Flemish Deaf Community, 2006 will be remembered for a couple of highlights. Everyone of course recalls April 26th, D-day for Flemish Sign Language recognition. Now another date can be added to the short list of legendary events in Deaf History. On December 16th, around 250 visitors were drawn to *Unheard Past — Deaf Awareness in Historical Perspective*, the first Flemish Deaf History congress ever. The immediate cause was the long-awaited presentation of the results of a research project that, during four years, had dug into the roots of the Flemish Deaf Community and tried to track the first traces of Deaf rights advocacy.

In 2002, Fevlado-Diversus, a non-profit organisation that focuses on Deaf Culture and Flemish Sign Language, submitted a project-application to the local provincial authorities of East-Flanders (located in the northern and Dutch-speaking part of Belgium). That initiative developed out of a concern for the preservation of the Flemish Deaf heritage, because up until then, no one had ever plunged into the past of deaf rights advocacy. Not on Flemish territory, anyway. Of course, there is some literature available on deaf-related topics, but nearly all books and articles cover educational issues, such as the founding of deaf schools and teaching methods. Moreover, those contributions usually came from people 'in the field' like teachers and friars, which provided only a one-dimensional glance at the past.

In other words, this project was unique in every sense. Not only did it set foot on virgin territory by exploring the very first attempts of establishing a national Deaf federation in 1901; by interviewing numerous witnesses, it also gave a voice to those people whose stories had never been recorded before: elderly deaf sign language users.

The Unheard Past – project aimed at finding an answer to the questions if and how, back in the old days, deaf people organised themselves in order to defend their position in the larger hearing society. My research colleague Liesje Raemdonck and I tracked down official archives, neglected depositories and hidden treasure-houses in the attics of private individuals. After analysing the materials, we confronted first and second hand witnesses with our findings, this in

close collaboration with our Deaf interviewer Theo Soetemans. In doing so, we tried to take the principles of the 'oral history' methodology as much as possible into account.

Oral history – not the most appropriate phrase considering the context of sign language users – wants to help reconstruct the past by means of interviews and prescribes how to do so in a sound and critical-historical manner. In the academic world, there used to be a lot of reservations towards this rather new research methodology. The memory of humans is fallible, it was said, and therefore the truthfulness of their accounts should be questioned. However, a lot of written sources are not free of failing memories and subjectivity either: just think of autobiographies, personal letters and individual reports. The oral history approach gained interest over the past decades and the gathering of recollections and personal experiences is now considered to be a valuable asset to historical research. It is then up to the historian to compare and test the autobiographical memory to the other available sources.

Oral history is cut out for the Deaf Community, because it allows to confront the collective memory – often the memory of the ideological or cultural dominant group of a society – with the recollections of individuals and minority groups. This approach permit Deaf sign language users to recount past experiences in their mother tongue and it gives them the chance to participate in their own historiography. The interviews covered a wide range of topics, from questions about everyday situations to more profound subjects such as life as a board member of the national Deaf federation. The results of this project led to a congress that not only wanted to inform, but also aimed at rousing deaf people's interest in their own cultural heritage. Therefore, eight lecturers came to present their views on one or more aspects of Deaf History.

There was a clear geographical division between the lectures that took place in the morning and those of the afternoon. From 9 till 12 am, the floor was given to Belgian speakers, whereas the second half of the day welcomed three lecturers from abroad.

The Belgian delegates focused on the Flemish-Walloon situation. A wide variety of themes were passed in review: *'oral' history as a research methodology in the Deaf Community* (Ingeborg Scheiris and Theo Soetemans), *Belgian*

Deaf initiatives during the first decennium of the 20th century (Liesje Raemdonck), *the archives of the Flemish Deaf Community* (Bram Beelaert) and *the Walloon archives at Centre Robert Dresse* (Bernard le Maire). The foreign guests talked about *the origins of the American Deaf-World; migration of Deaf families to Maine* (Harlan Lane, USA), *understanding Deaf lives through history* (Joe Murray, USA) and *the founding, developing and running a museum of the Deaf* (Tiina Naukkarinen, Finland).

The first lecture on oral history argued that it is not sufficient to apply the 'hearing methodology' to the sign language society; it demands a specific approach. You often have to deal with circumstances that are typical of the Deaf Community, such as the fact that interviews not only have to be transcribed, but also translated, in our case into written Dutch. Or, what if the interviewer himself is an active member of that small community and shares a past with his interviewee? These and other questions were under discussion during the kick-off speech on December 16th.

Next up was Liesje Raemdonck with her talk on the establishing of the first Belgian deaf federation in 1901. When deaf people were confronted with the growing impact of oralism at the end of the 19th century, some of them decided to undertake action. Inspired by the events abroad and making use of the deaf national network that had already formed during the decennia before that, they united themselves in a nationwide association. Aim was to enforce arguments concerning deaf related issues. United they stood, but divided they fell, because already one year after the foundation, the federation moaned under domestic quarrels. Nevertheless, congress reports, correspondence and an own magazine suggested that, by the turn of the century, Deaf Belgium started to voice its opinions loud and clear.

The following talk by Bram Beelaert, archivist of Fevlado-Diversus, addressed the importance of Deaf legacy conservation and how it can be made accessible to the public. Starting point was a definition of the field, resulting from the different interpretations of the concept of deafness – religious, medical, social and cultural. Archives are part of our scientific and cultural heritage, therefore archival initiatives imply the recognition of a certain cultural property.

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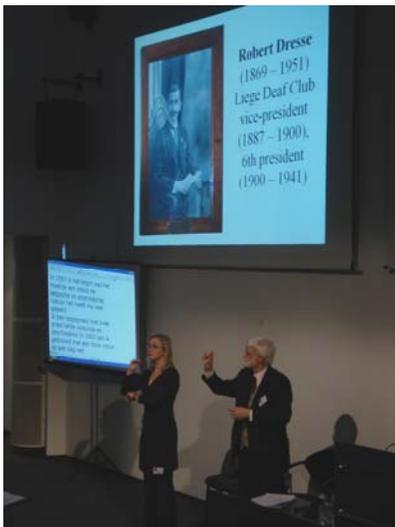
(Continued from page 7)

Fevlado-Diversus occupies itself with the historical developed network of deaf clubs where deaf people seek company and recreation, clubs that give shape to the beating heart of their deaf rights advocacy. The speech was concluded by a presentation of that Flemish network, an outline of which archives were discovered during the recent project and a comparison of those records with oral sources.

Harlan Lane set the ball rolling in the afternoon. He dived into Deaf ethnicity and early kinship relations between Deaf families, focussing on the migration from the island of Martha's Vineyard to central Maine in the second half of the 18th century.

His fellow-countryman Joe Murray took us back to the Europe and America of the late 19th century and concentrated on the idea of co-equality, "a belief in the need to participate in larger society as well as the creation and maintenance of a cultural community of one's own." This was presented in a larger international context, wherein deaf people from different countries exchanged ideas and principles. The congress was skilfully concluded by Tiina Naukkarinen, who gave us a virtual tour of the Finnish Museum of the Deaf and informed us on its history. She looked into several questions, such as: which collection policy is required? How can a museum respond to the customer's needs? And, "since all research on the history of a minority is based on 'evidence' of events in the past," which role should a museum play?

This, in a nutshell, was the content of a long, but very interesting trip down memory lane. Fevlado-Diversus is pleased to see that the *Unheard Past*-initiative was widely applauded by a lot of members of the Flemish Deaf Community. The congress was a first step into consciousness-raising on the importance of preserving Deaf Heritage for future generations, because there is no future without a past.



A presentation given by Bernard le Maire (Belgium)

Historical Summary of Deaf Education in Germany

by Helmut Vogel (Germany), Deaf Historian



Before the 18th century, Deaf people generally lived alone in feudal societies and were regionally distributed. There is not much to research and consequently, little information is available. For the first time in the late 16th century, well-known European prejudices against Deaf people, mainly that they are "deaf and dumb" and "not capable of being educated," were refuted. Deaf people from Spain acquired extensive knowledge through the classes of Pedro Ponce de Léon (1510–1584), a hearing monk. Etienne de Fay (1669–1746), who was a deaf monk from Amisiens, France, also educated deaf children and taught them the Christian religion by using sign language.

Until the early 18th century, before the founding and improvement of schools by modern states, which were based on the ideas of the enlightenment, there was no education for much of society. From 1760 on, deaf education gained momentum through the founding of schools in France, England, Germany and other countries. The Deaf community was able to develop due to the fact that deaf children and adults were mixed together in their own deaf and residential schools and afterwards, they remained in contact.

The first Deaf School in the world was founded in 1760 in Paris, France and was led by the hearing Abbé Charles Michel de l'Épée (1712–1789). He founded the school based on the national sign language and written language and thus developed the "manual" method. Additionally, he developed methodical signs for his classes, which are similar to the current "speech accompanying" sign language.

Around the same time, Samuel Heinicke (1727–1790), a hearing man, was working in Germany. He started his work in 1769 in Eppendorf near Hamburg and, starting in 1778, directed the first German Deaf School in Leipzig. Like some of the other people before him, Heinicke used the "oral method," which was based on spoken language, and used signs as an aid. He demanded, however, for the first time in the theory of deaf pedagogics, that Deaf people should think and speak in oral language like hearing people.

A quarrel about methods of teaching deaf children developed during correspondence between de l'Épée and Heinicke, whereby de l'Épée requested opinions from experts of different academies, (e.g., Zurich, Leipzig, Vienna, and St. Petersburg). Most of the opinions supported de l'Épée's method, because at that time his method was deemed to be more credible rather than Heinicke's method. The manual method became widely used in Europe and was in some areas added to oral and written language forming the "combined method."

Ernst Adolf Eschke (1766–1811), a hearing man, founded the Deaf School in Berlin in 1788 after training with Heinicke, his father-in-law. While working with deaf students, he abandoned the oral method and turned towards the combined method. Consequently, the combined method succeeded in Berlin long after the middle of the 19th century.

Ludwig Habermaß (1783–1862), a Deaf man, was a follower of Eschke. He worked as a teacher from 1803 until his death and occasionally, headed training seminars for future teachers. Later, Daniel Heinrich Senß (1800–1868) and Carl Wilke (1800–1876), both Deaf, also worked as teachers in Berlin. Wilke spent almost his entire life in the Deaf School, 54 years of them as a teacher.

Karl Wilhelm Teuscher (1803–1835), Karl Arnold Teuscher (1815–1864), Ferdinand Rasch (1831–1885) and Karl Max Löwe (1834–1893) attended the Deaf School in Leipzig, remaining there as teachers. In Leipzig, the combined method was also influential for a long time.

Freiherr Hugo von Schütz (1780–1847), also Deaf, attended the Deaf School in Vienna from 1788 to 1797. After that time, he gave private lessons for deaf children in his hometown of Bad Camberg using the manual method. During a trip through Europe, he made contact with many uneducated Deaf people and decided to establish a private school in Bad Camberg. It opened in 1818 and became a public school in 1820. He was eventually honoured as a court counsellor and remained headmaster until 1828.

Margaretha Hüttmann (1789–1854), who was Deaf, and Jean Jacques Turretin (1778–1858) worked as teachers at the Deaf School in Kiel from 1805 to 1830 and 1829 to 1858 respectively. This school was founded in 1799 and later transferred to Schleswig in 1810.

(Continued on page 9)

Perhaps the best known teacher in Germany was Otto Friedrich Kruse (1801–1880). He attended the Kiev/Schleswig School and then devoted himself to the teaching profession for a total of 55 years. First, he worked in Schleswig, then in Altona, Bremen and finally again in Schleswig. He wrote many pedagogical articles and he contributed often to the newspaper “Organ of the Deaf-and-Dumb and Blind Institutions,” which was first published in 1855. He also wrote articles about discussions on manual, combined, oral and pure oral methods. He was honoured with four significant decorations by different kings, and in 1878, he received an honorary doctorate from the National Deaf-Mute College (later known as Gallaudet College in 1894) in Washington DC., USA. Shortly before his death in 1880, he wrote an autobiography about his life and work as a teacher.

Three Deaf Parisians— Jean Massieu (1772–1846), Laurent Clerc (1785–1869) and Ferdinand Berthier (1803–1886) — are remembered as the best known teachers from France. In 1817, Clerc co-founded the first permanent Deaf School in the United States at Hartford, Connecticut, together with two hearing men, Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet (1787–1851) and Mason Fitch Cogswell (1761–1830). In 1838, Berthier established the world’s first Deaf Society in Paris. Edward Miner Gallaudet (1837–1917), a hearing son of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, was later the headmaster of the National Deaf-Mute College / Gallaudet College in Washington, DC., which is internationally known today as Gallaudet University.

Until the late 19th century, many other Deaf people in Europe and America contributed to the development of Deaf Schools as founders and/or as teachers. Because of this development, Deaf communities worldwide became diverse.

The German Deaf movement began in 1848 when the first society for Deaf people was founded in Berlin by a Deaf man named Eduard Fürstenberg (1827–1885). As an initiator, he continued to organize church celebrations in Berlin from 1855 and congresses in other cities from 1873.



The principles of the oral method were brought up for discussion again by Karl Gottlob Reich (1782–1852), a hearing headmaster of a school for Deaf people in Leipzig, who in practice generally used the combined method. In particular, the numerous articles by Moritz Hill (1805–1874), a hearing teacher from Weidenfels, helped the oral method to break through.

Around 1850, a negative view towards sign language started to spread through European education centres for Deaf people. In various countries, Deaf Schools were founded during that time, and their newly appointed hearing teachers showed little interest in the national sign language. Oral

language prevailed above other languages (such as sign language or written language) as the tool and method for teaching deaf children because the value of language teaching was considered equal to the value of oral language instruction. Because of this, the so-called German method developed into a pure oral method and polarized itself in opposition to the so-called French method, which was a strict manual one.

Through his 1869 publication entitled “To Mediate the Extremes of the So-Called German and French Methods of Deaf-and-Dumb Education,” Kruse tried to ensure that the positive parts of each method would not disappear. He defended the value of the sign language and the combined method. Nevertheless, Kruse couldn’t do anything in the wake of oralism.

Starting about 1870, oralism began to win the upper hand in deaf education in Germany. The 1880 Milan Congress, which brought together educators of the deaf, was notorious in the whole world as the decisive turning point in Europe. Except for two Deaf teachers, one each from USA and France, a predominant number of selected hearing teachers from Italy and France participated and decided that the pure oral method was the best for teaching the deaf. Thereafter, sign language in Deaf schools was supplanted and Deaf teachers in Europe, and later on in America, were forced to give up their teaching positions.

“The Deaf-and-Dumb and His Language” (1889) and “A Desperate Scream of the Deaf-and-Dumb” (1891) books by Johannes Heidsiek (1855–1942), a hearing teacher from Breslau, caused a stir among teachers and Deaf people because these books, for the first time in the modern Era, pointed out that the pure oral method was impracticable and demanded a return to the combined method.

Critical voices inside deaf education circles and confrontation with the Deaf movement (e.g., the mass petition of Deaf people to the German emperor in 1891 and protests at “the German Deaf-and-Dumb Congress” in 1892) achieved the claim that exclusivity of the pure oral method was no longer supported after about 1900. This meant that in addition to the pure oral method, other methods could also be established (e.g., oral method, written language method).

Mandatory education for deaf children in Germany became law in 1911, so that deaf children could be instructed in Deaf schools. Previously, without any legal backing, not all deaf children could be registered in the schools.

The demands of the German Deaf movement, which included the replacement of the combined method in Deaf Schools (comparable with the modern bilingual method), Deaf teachers, integration into hearing society as well as Deaf peoples society etc., were not taken seriously until around 1980. Consequently, the ideas of German hearing pedagogues for Deaf people, including the pure oral method, no Deaf teachers, little interest in Deaf communities, one-sided adaptation to hearing society etc., have been extremely influential in deaf education to this day.

A 1907 GOLD MEDAL

by Michael Marzolf (USA), Retired Deaf Teacher, VSDB

Colony under the British rule. For the exhibition, the boys in the cabinet making and carpentry class under Reuben S. Weaver, a Deaf teacher, made a massive colonial dollhouse which was built with thin pieces of wood and stood as tall as an average person. The blind girls made miniature furniture, rugs and draperies. Also for the exhibition, a deaf student made a cedar hope chest and another deaf student made a large wooden railroad engine. The projects stayed at the Jamestown Exposition for several months and were judged in the competition for craftsmanship. It was announced that the VSDB won a gold medal and a blue ribbon for the best craftsmanship of all the projects shown at the exposition.

Writer’s comments — the said projects and gold medal are now in VSDB’s Deaf History Museum which is enjoyed by many visitors from all over the country. In April of this year, as part of the 400th anniversary celebration of the Jamestown founding, the museum committee presented a program of this exposition to the students in an assembly with a PowerPoint show and the gold medal which was taken from a vault safe. Following the program, the students browsed in the museum and studied the giant dollhouse with miniature furniture inside and the railroad engine. The hope chest was sold to a Staunton citizen soon after the 1907 exposition and its whereabouts are still unknown. The opportunity for the deaf and blind students to participate in the 1907 exposition was successfully initiated by the school superintendent, Dr. William Anderson Bowles, who was a friend of one of the members of the Board of Trustees at Gallaudet College (now Gallaudet University) in Washington, D.C. USA. For more information, contact the writer, Michael (Mike) Marzolf, at his e-mail address which is marzolf@comcast.net.

In 1907, a group of deaf and blind students at the **Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind** (VSDB) in Staunton, Virginia USA participated in the 300th Anniversary Exposition in Jamestown, Virginia with projects they had made at the school. Jamestown was the first English settlement founded in 1607 in the United States of America and was also the capital of the Virginia



Colonial Doll House Built by VSDB

BOOK REVIEW

The Avenue: A History of the Claremont Institution.

Rachel Pollard (2006), *The Avenue: A History of the Claremont Institution*.

Dun Laoghaire Co. Dublin, Ireland: Denzille Press. Softcover, 325 + xviii pages. Illustrated.

ISBN 0-9553239-0-8 (From January 1, 2007, ISBN 978-0-9553239-0-4)

Reviewed by

Edna Edith Sayers, Professor, English Department, Gallaudet University (USA). She is the editor of *Deaf World: A Historical Reader and Primary Sourcebook* (New York University Press, 2001).

Rachel Pollard's history of the Claremont Institution in Dublin is typical of much Deaf history published today: it is an amateur effort by an intelligent and scrupulous researcher with personal ties to her subject but, unfortunately, no guidance in producing a book would be both

reader-friendly and have some "value added" analysis of the data and anecdotes she has collected. Historians interested in Claremont who do not have access to the school's Annual Reports and other archival material will want to own the book for reference. Other readers will

likely be disappointed by its lack of any explanation for what all this data might mean. They will also be frustrated with the bumpy organization that not only fails to connect the dots but also results in a great deal of repetition.

The Claremont Institution was founded in 1816 by Charles Orpen, a Protestant born in majority-Catholic County Cork who became a physician. He also had a keen amateur interest in what he saw as mistranslations in the Irish Bible, although it is not clear what his expertise in the Irish language may have been. As a young doctor, he selected some deaf boys from a founding hospital in Dublin and took them to his bachelor home to experiment with teaching them. He decided to found a school after achieving some success with one of these boys, Tom Collins, whom he taught to count to 100 and exhibited around Dublin. Orpen seems never to have learned to sign let alone to have taught at the school. In his 50s, he emigrated to South Africa, had himself ordained an Anglican priest, and spent the rest of his life bemoaning the fact that he could find no deaf servants. The "Kaffirs" (a disparaging term for black Africans) were too independent to function as house servants. Few readers will see Orpen as "a warm-hearted Christian philanthropist" (22) or understand why Pollard dedicates the book to the memory of this man.

During its earliest years, Claremont was run by a childhood friend of Orpen's, a Quaker named Joseph Humphreys, whom Orpen sent to be trained in deaf education at Edinburgh. Pollard says that Humphreys was well liked by

pupils, who often commented on his excellent signing. In other passages, she reports that Humphreys and his family were "insulted and threatened by some of the pupils" and that girls "beat and struck their teachers and could not be controlled" (68). It would certainly have been interesting to get Pollard's educated guess about what was going on here, violent school children being virtually impossible to imagine in the early 1800s. Whatever problems Humphreys may have had, however, he was finally asked to leave because he was a Quaker.

The next headmaster, James Cook, lasted three years. He banned signing, used "damaged" Bibles to light fires, and cut a female pupil's neck and face before moving on to Edinburgh. During the nineteenth century, girls and boys were kept completely apart, even at meals and outdoor recesses. The girls received many hours fewer of instruction than boys, for reasons never explained. The headmasters also took on private pupils, whom they boarded at their own table and provided with flush toilets, and whose tuition they personally pocketed. Female teachers were not hired because it was thought that signing was too strenuous for women. A deaf messenger employed by the school was "insolent to a gentleman riding along the road," wasted bread, and gave the boys bad haircuts (89). At one point, two teachers were using two distinct sign languages, causing confusion among the pupils. And so on and on.

As the narrative tumbles into the twentieth century, we meet a teacher named Walter Newburn, who complained that his rooms were too damp. Later, a bicycle is found with its tire punctured. "On 5 February, the bicycle was sent for inspection to Mr. Gamage, Cycling Outfitters, in Grafton Street, Dublin, and his findings were that the tube of the tyre had been maliciously punctured with a penknife or scissors" (101). An inquiry into Mr. Newburn's conduct was consequently conducted, resulting in his resignation. In this vignette, as elsewhere in the book, cause and effect are not clearly established: did Mr. Newburn slash somebody's bicycle tires because his rooms were damp? Or was he framed because he complained? Much more importantly, critical events in the history of the Irish nation are seen only in the trivial reflections they had on the Claremont Institution: the Easter Rising of 1916, a six-day revolution that served as the opening act of the Irish war of independence from the British government., is mentioned in passing as having

caused the cancellation of the Institution's Annual meeting that year.

The Claremont Institution seems to have been a Church of Ireland (Anglican Communion) establishment although it is not clear to what extent it maintained ties either to that church or to the British administration of Ireland. Pollard reports that Catholic clergy "intimidated" (82) and "bribed" (185) parents into withdrawing their deaf children from Claremont and enrolling them in the Catholic deaf school at Cabra. This suggests nefarious popish motives, but the fact that when some former pupils returned to their Catholic families they refused to go to mass or give up their Church of Ireland Irish Bibles (185) does indeed suggest that the Institution was guilty of religious indoctrination.

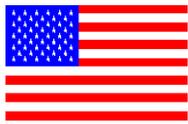
The book is illustrated lavishly, but not well, with pictures from a sort of pictorial dictionary for deaf pupils and with photos that are often of poor quality. The bibliography is "select," meaning that a great many references are not given in full but only in shortened form in the notes. This is enormously depressing to friends of Deaf history. Amateur historians are the lifeblood of Deaf history, but before their collecting work goes to press, two things are needed.

One is academic training in history. Once the dates, names, locations, events, and anecdotes are collected, how are they best presented as Deaf history? *The Avenue* is jam-packed with facts, from Irish Bibles to bicycle tires, but I would be hard-pressed to say whether, at any given period, Claremont was a signing school or an oral school. The forest is missed in a minute, but essentially uncritical, examination of each tree.

Second, even experienced, academically-trained historians need publishers who give advice on organization and who employ professional copy editors. Because the chances of finding such a publisher for a work on Deaf history are slim even in the USA and close to nil elsewhere, Deaf historians must come to understand that employing a professional copy editor at one's own expense is well worth the money in terms of how widely and favorably the book will be reviewed and cited in subsequent studies.

Rachel Pollard has collected an immense basketful of information on the Claremont Institution. What it adds up to, or shakes down as, is anyone's guess.

DHI CONFERENCES: Past and Future



First-Ever International Conference on Deaf History

Washington, D.C., USA / June 20–23, 1991



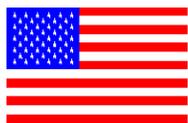
Second DHI Conference

Hamburg, Germany / October 8–11, 1994



Third DHI Conference

Trondheim, Norway / September 10–14, 1997



Fourth DHI Conference

Washington, D.C., USA / June 27–30, 2000



Fifth DHI Conference

Paris, France / June 30–July 4, 2003



Sixth DHI Conference

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