

The DUTCH AUSTRALIA HERITAGE CENTRE

The Holland Festival is a marvellous display of Dutch traditions which enrich Australia's cultural treasure.

The DAHC gives the general community an opportunity to learn about Dutch and former Dutch East Indies culture and language and shows how families moved to Victoria and lived and worked in the post World War II migration period.

The Dutch Australia Heritage Centre compiles and displays the history of Dutch migration to Australia after the war. At the Holland Festival, the DAHC exhibits items from the culture and traditions that the Dutch migrants brought with them to Australia.

The younger generations can learn about the country of origin of their Dutch parents and grandparents. Australia's cultural treasure is enriched by the Dutch traditions which the Holland Festival promotes.

The DAHC was created as a sub-committee by the Associated Netherlands Society. It was initially named the Dutch Australian Centre, but was soon changed to include the word 'Heritage' to emphasise the culture and traditions that are inherited from migrant parents and grandparents.

The Dutch/Dutch East Indies migration began with the arrival and settlement of migrants throughout Victoria. Various Dutch social clubs and organizations were soon established and the Associated Netherlands Societies in Victoria was formed as their umbrella organization. Aged care facilities such as Beatrix Village, Margriet Lodge and Avondrust were established to take care of retirement, and nursing of the elderly within the Dutch Community. Hence the now excellent DutchCare facilities.

A Heritage Centre was the logical next step undertaken by the Association. We basically collect everything that the migrants brought with them, which enables us to research the motives of their migration so we can write the history of it. We are confident that the next generation will know and understand where their parents came from and why. It is not only descendants of the Dutch who will be interested, our committee included the word Australia in our name because we are very much a part of Australia's multiculturalism.

The DAHC plans to create a Website for cultural and heritage information, promotion of Dutch community events, and to maintain a register of pioneer Dutch and former Dutch East Indies families.

Since the middle of 2009, we started building our own home. We now have a 2 storey building at the back of the Dutch Club Abel Tasman. It has reached lock-up stage, but the interior is far from complete. The challenge ahead is to realize our dreams and plans for the future and have our own building fitted out as a proper museum. We therefore continue to apply to various institutions for financial assistance and raise money with the annual DAHC Raffle.