

HISTORY

Leeuwarden City Government have been meeting at the present location since 1618, when the town magistrate took over the old *Auckamastins* (a stronghold) on this site for use as town hall. Prior this time, city government was housed, among other places, in the *Grote Hoogstraat* and in *Waltahuis*, on the corner of the streets *Nieuwestad* and *Herenwaltje*. *Auckamastins* had fallen into disrepair by 1713, when a decision was made to build a new city hall on the same location that, as a “jewel and ornament” would do justice to the “splendor and the honor of the city.”

In 1715, a new city hall was built on the foundation and cellars of the old *stins* (lit. a stone house or stronghold). Here, the river Ee had recently been enclosed by a tunnel, resulting in the creation of the spacious *Raadhuisplein* (City Hall Square). This large open space gave the new city hall the allure it deserved.

Decorative figures above and surrounding the entrance and in the facade represent core functions of the city government. The city coat of arms is in the middle of the gable, surrounded by (from left to right) Law, Justice, Wisdom and Providence. Above the entrance, the Latin words “*Pace et Justitia*”, Peace and Justice, are also represented by the figures portrayed on either side of the entrance door. On the left, Peace and Abundance are represented with olive branch and cornucopia. On the right, Justice, with a hat in the left hand, a bundle of arrows in the right, and a cat at her feet. Through the large window with grille, the city fathers would proclaim their important decisions to all who wanted to hear. The decorative carvings in natural stone were presumably made before 1690-1765 by Gerbrand van der Haven, an artist born in Leeuwarden, while the gable images were conceived and made by Pieter Nauta. Cast in 1687, by Amsterdam bell founder, Claude Fremy, the bells in the eight-sided cupola originally hung in the New Tower, on *Grote Hoogstraat*, destroyed in 1884.

City Architect, Claes Bockes Balck (1683-1748), designed and built Leeuwarden city hall, the first stone of which was laid by the three-year-old Willem Carel Hendrik Friso (1711-1751), son of the late Johan Willem Friso (1687-1711) on April 1st, 1715. The boy accomplished this feat in the presence of his mother, Princess Maria Louise van Hessen-Kassel (1688-1765), under the watchful eye of a group of city dignitaries and onlookers.

In the past 300 years, City Hall underwent several renovations. In 1760, the adjacent building at the rear was enlarged. Pieter de Swart (1709-1772) designed the rococo-style gable with its large and impressive Leeuwarden lion with the New Council Chamber on the second storey. This time, in name of Prince William V (1748-1806), the first stone was laid by Robert van Hambroick (1708-1789), Chief Steward to William’s grandmother, Princess Maria Louise.

In 1845, almost a hundred years later, the Council Chamber was moved to the *Nieuwe Zaal*, (New Hall), designed by city architect, Thomas Romein. At the same time, the facade of the city hall

underwent a metamorphosis when Romein put large empire-style frames in the windows and replaced the rounded steps by a square variant.

More recently, city hall underwent yet another, comprehensive revision and restoration in 2005. Architect Marc van Roosmalen was ordered to preserve as much as possible of the 18th-century building's allure and grandeur, while modernizing it to improve accessibility to council members and the public. The main entrance was moved to the wing added in 1760. By means of a modern glass-enclosed stairwell, city hall was connected to the nearby *Hoofdwacht*, (Guards House), built by Thomas Romein (1811-1881) in 1847, in which Van Roosmalen situated the new council chamber. Princess Margriet was the royal representative performing the grand opening ceremony of the newly-renovated city hall on May 27, 2005.

This publication tells the rich history of Leeuwarden city hall through its special wall-decorations, ornaments, paintings and furniture.

CENTRAL HALL AND OLD ENTRANCE

From the stairwell one enters through a portal into the central hall of the 1715 city hall building, with its precious white marble floor. Its beautifully plastered ceiling with the Leeuwarden coat of arms in the centre was created by the Italian plasterers Joseph Barberino and Gianbatista Albisetti in 1724. The main meeting rooms formerly bordered on this hall. As seen from the portal, on the right is the chamber of the city council and the private office of the presiding mayor. On the left is the chamber of the officers of the civic guard and the secretariat. On the walls, portraits of leading citizens, members of nobility and city patricians, and the room is decorated with a number of fine pieces of furniture.

Of special interest are the portraits of four former mayors of Leeuwarden. The oldest portrait on the upper right is of Wybe Gerrits Jelgerhuis, portrayed with a book in his hand. In the upper right corner, his family coat of arms and an inscription detailing the important functions he performed in the city government. Wybe Gerrits Jelgerhuis was born around 1460. Between 1512 and 1533 he served several times as a mayor, a duty also performed by his son, Gerrit Wybes Jelgerhuis. Public functions were often passed down within leading families in the city. This is one of the oldest known Friesian portraits, painted before 1534, the year of Jelgerhuis' death.

Left and right of the doorway to the stairwell hang the important portraits of Pier Zeper and his second wife, Fenna Hesselink (1779-1848), whom he married dressed according to the fashion of their time in 1797. The paintings, made by one of Friesland's most re-

nonowned portrait painters, Willem Bartel van der Kooi (1768-1836), date from 1823 and 1826. Born in 1761, Pier Zeper and his family, owned among other things a soap factory, from which they derived their family name (meaning: soaper). After holding a number of positions in the city government in the days of Napoleon, he eventually was elected *drost* (equivalent to mayor) of Leeuwarden in 1802. Under King Willem I, he served as a city council member in 1816 and a year later as one of the four mayors. He died in 1845.

Under the portraits stand two lovely console or marble-topped wall tables, made around 1700. The bases of the tables are crafted of wood, beautifully carved with acanthus leaves, monster heads, vines and garlands. The carved wood is painted white, with gold accents. Situated on the left wall above the center hangs a painting of *jonker* (nobleman) Willem Hendrik van Hambroick van Weleveld, born in Leeuwarden in 1744. Made around 1785 by an unknown artist, Weleveld is portrayed entirely according to the fashion of the day, with a gray powdered pony-tail wig. Weleveld's father was the chief steward to Princess Maria Louise van Hessen-Kassel (1688-1765). *Jonker* Willem also occupied positions in the court of the princess and was a member of the city councils of the cities IJlst and Leeuwarden. Between 1777 and 1794, he served as a mayor of Leeuwarden and a member of the Council of the State of Friesland. Willem van Hambroick died in The Hague in 1822.

Below, left above the bench, the portrait of Jacobus Bourboom: born in 1690 in Leeuwarden, wearing a fashionably long, gray powdered wig. The portrait was painted around 1740 by Bernardus Accama (±1697-1756), who made hundreds of portraits of the nobility and the royal family. Already by 1714, Jacobus Bourboom served as a member of the City Council of Leeuwarden and after that he continued to participate in the city government in a number of capacities, including *schepen* (comparable to alderman), while fulfilling several terms in office as a mayor. He died in 1764.

The bench under the portrait of Jacobus Bourboom once stood in the house of his brother, Dr. Petrus Bourboom (1694-1780), and his wife Gerbricht Reitsma, daughter of the Chief Tax Collector of Friesland. Petrus Bourboom was a barrister and held a number of public positions, including that of Attorney General of Friesland. The upper part of the white marbled bench with beautifully carved curliques displays the alliance coat of arms of Bourboom-Reitsma. The couple married in 1723 and the bench was possibly made for the occasion. An impressive piece of furniture, it probably once stood on a prominent spot in their home. Dating back from 1700, a similar but slightly older bench, embellished with a coat of arms of an unknown family, proudly sits on the other side of the hall.

Particularly impressive is the high seat in Louis XIV style, made of walnut wood, next to the old stair case access door. The seatback bears the embroidered coat of arms of Leeuwarden, while an unknown coat of arms embellishes the seat cushion. Dating back from 1724, this ceremonial chair, was intended for the reception of

the *stadholder* (i.e. the Chief Magistrate of the United Provinces of the Netherlands). Undoubtedly, there once was a step stool that came with the high seat, so the young *stadholder* literally sat “highly exalted” on his seat.

Above the white marbled portal to the stairwell, a *grisaille* (a painting in monochrome tints, mostly gray or brown), painted in 2004 by Huub Kurvers (1940-2010) for the occasion of the restoration of the city hall building complex. Pictured is the “Peace that drives out Unrest” with the Leeuwarden coat of arms on the left. It is a restored copy of the original painting by Freerk Haijema from 1715, with an added text referring to the restoration. Haijema’s original painting, which was in a very much deteriorated condition, now is on display in the stairwell.

THE ROOMS AROUND THE CENTRAL HALL

City Council Chamber

In this room, next to the front door, the city council, a governing body elected from among the citizenry, held their meetings. The members of this council elected, usually from among their company, four mayors, the president of which occupied the adjacent president’s chamber, next to the portal. Currently, both of these rooms serve as venues for aldermen meetings.

As part of the 2005 restoration, the city council chamber received a beautifully designed wall tapestry. The marble rococo-style fireplace was possibly made in conjunction with the city hall’s enlargement in 1760. Dating from approx. 1715, the chimney painting by Freerk Haijema depicts an allegory of city government, much in keeping with the room’s earlier function. The female figure in the middle holds a staff in her right hand with a banner inscribed with the words “*iubet & prohibet*” (she commands and she prohibits). This refers to a text in Roman Law based on which the citizenry determines the laws and establishes prohibitions. In her lap, a book with the text “*in legibus salus*” referring to a Latin quotation “*in legibus salus civitatis est*” (the welfare of the state depends on laws). The cherub with club in hand is Hercules, who already from his crib slew serpents, representing the Destruction of Evil, while the cherub with the bundle of arrows represents Unity of Government.

Freerk Haijema also made the painting, now above the door, belonging to the original room furnishings offering an allegorical rendering of taciturnity (silence), by a woman holding a finger to her lips. Next to the door, a handsome 18th-century rococo-style cabinet in walnut-burl veneer.

President’s Chamber

The President’s Chamber retains few characteristic original features, but houses a number of nice paintings from the municipal collection. Above the fireplace, *De jacht op het everzwijn* (The Wild Boar Hunt) by painter Juriaen Jacobs (1624-1685), who specialized in painting

hunting scenes. Originally from Hamburg, he successfully worked in the second half of the 17th Century as a court painter for stadtholder Hendrik Casimir II van Nassau-Dietz (1657-1696). The wild boar hunt, and specifically the killing of the mythical Caledonian boar, forms a frequent subject of 17th-century prints and paintings.

Left and right of the fireplace, two examples of the painting style of the Leeuwarden painter Wytze de Haan (1804-1848) dating back from 1834. De Haan was a true genre painter, primarily painting scenes of daily life. The one painting depicts a man plucking a fowl and the other a nursing mother, a theme popular among *genre painters* from the end of the 18th Century and the beginning of the 19th Century. The role of the mother in the family became increasingly important with motherhood being idealized, however, women's social position remained largely limited to this role.

On the wall, a painting from 1712, depicting a rare harbor scene, made by Rinse Verzijl. The italianized landscape with the remains of a Roman temple and the classic statue breathes an exotic atmosphere. Such italianized scenes were highly prized in the 17th and 18th centuries. Little is known about Rinse Verzijl. Born in Leeuwarden in 1690, his name does not appear in any city archives after 1720.

The rooms on the other side of the hall contain no original features, noteworthy paintings, or furniture. The room in the front, the former civil guard chamber, received a modern face-lift as part of the 2005 restoration.

STAIRWELL AND CELLARS

The massive oak stairway with its handsome ballisters was made by the sculptors Benjamin Dijkstra en Pieter Nauta, who also made the sculpted figures on the triangular facade above the city hall entrance. On the first landing, the stairs first lead to the council hall of 1760 and then to the so-called *Blanke Ruim* (originally a room with an unpainted floor in bare boards) situated above the central hall. The stairwell walls are decorated with various paintings from the collections of the city and from the Fries Museum.

Below, on the staircase to the cellars, the wall features a late 18th-century wood carving depicting an allegorical representation of the history of Leeuwarden, made by the Leeuwarden sculptor Jacob Sijdses Bruinsma (1698-1763). He learned the craft from Pieter Nauta and from his mother's half-brother, Berend Storm, who was the municipal stonecutter from 1710. Following in the footsteps of his uncle before him, Bruinsma later became the municipal stonecutter and sculptor.

The bearded figure in the middle is probably the god Poseidon, or Neptune, with the broken trident. By his side, the nude woman with the vessel of flowing water represents a river nymph. Symbolically,

Neptune represents sea navigation while the river nymph possibly stands for the river *Ee* which formerly flowed past the old *Aukemastins* (the Aukema family castle) on this location. Neptune sits upon a cornucopia, a reference to abundance.

On the lower right, a swan with a neck band and left a *rocaille*, a rococo ornament, embellished with the coat of arms of Leeuwarden, a rampant lion. Behind Neptune and the nymph, to the right the goddess Minerva or Athena with helmet, breastplate and spear symbolizing Wisdom and the Arts, but also War. To the left, a pair of cherubs floating in a cloud, one of them holding a mirror with a serpent wrapped around it. This is the Mirror of Wisdom, while the serpent symbolizes Caution. In the air floats Hermes, or Mercury, symbolizing Commerce. The entire allegorical image symbolizes trade, navigation and agriculture: the historical pillars of Leeuwarden's prosperity.

The vaulted cellars of the Auckamastins (the Aukema family castle), upon which the city hall was built in 1715, have largely been preserved and presently serve as great reception venues. There are also three cells on display where for centuries those convicted of theft or battery were confined for days on bread and water. Criminals often ended up in the pillory setup outside in front of the city hall. In the local vernacular, these underground cells were collectively referred to as "*Hondegat*" (the dog hole).

Back to the stairwell. The large painting in the stairwell, painted in 1742 by Rienk Keijert, yet depicts another allegorical representation of the city of Leeuwarden. The young woman with exposed bosom in the middle portrays the city patroness, in her hand a staff on which rests a so-called Frygian cap symbolizing Freedom. On her left, Hercules, symbolizing Courage and Strength. To the right of the patroness, another bare-breasted woman with mirror in hand and a serpent wrapped around her arm, symbolizing Prudence, the essence of Wisdom and Caution.

The three cherubs also bear symbols: a bundle of arrows as emblem of the mutual municipal authority, a scourge or whip pointing to the administration of justice with the accompanying punishments, as well as the voting medallions used in the election of city mayors. At the feet of the city patroness is the blue velvet vote bag bearing the likeness of the Leeuwarden coat of arms, which also refers to voting practices.

Rienk Keijert (1709-1775) made a number of paintings for the city government, including those for the new council hall of 1760 (presently the Orangezaal). His portraits of stadtholders, originally on display in the hall, disappeared during the Napoleonic era (1795-1813) but the grisailles placed above them are still present. As many artists in his day, he had a number of side occupations: he was sergeant-at-arms for the States of Friesland and member of the Leeuwarden city council. It is likely that the painting in the stairwell once occupied a prominent place in the home of a city government official. This painting of great interest for Leeuwarden was purchased by the Fries Museum at an auction in New York in 1974.

Further proceeding up the stairs, two *grisailles* next to each other with allegorical representations, also from the hand of Rienk Keijert. The one portrays the triumph of Freedom and Peace, the other of Love and Faith. Both *grisailles* depict two female figures between whom stands a trumpeting angel, depicting triumph being proclaimed to ordinary people. Freedom is pictured by a woman with a freedom hat on a staff, similar to that seen earlier in the allegory with the city patroness. The woman next to her represents Peace, the swan stands for prosperity and the elephant for strength.

On the other *grisaille* one of the women, the personification of Love, holding a globe of the world in her hand, while pointing to her heart with her other hand. The other woman, rests on a lion, a symbol of power, bearing a crown on her head. In her right hand she holds a chain, thus representing Faith or Hope.

Further on, yet another painting by Rienk Keijert, picturing King Solomon's idolatry, painted in 1757. The kneeling man in the ermine robe is Solomon, swaying a censor of incense in his hands. The women surrounding him are presenting flowers as an offering before the image of the pagan goddess Astarte. The men in the background look on with disapproval. At the end of his life, Solomon, possibly under the influence of the many "pagan" women in his harem, fell into idolatry, much to the horror of upright Jews.

The floral still-life was painted in 1778 by Sytse Roelofs Nicolai. Made up of flowers from different times of the year, the bouquet includes a peony, daffodils and chrysanthemums. Artists made use of previously-made studies or example books when composing their bouquets. The birds add an exotic element to the painting. The painting contains a trick of the eye. On a flat surface, the artist has tried to create a three-dimensional picture of a niche with the bouquet dangling in front of it on a ribbon.

Born in 1736, in Drogeham, Sytse Roelofs Nicolai became a citizen of Leeuwarden in 1764 and is also named in the archives as a decorator of carriages. He was probably quite wealthy, since his name appears in public records as the purchaser of substantial properties. He died in 1779 in Leeuwarden "very suddenly of German measles, leaving behind a widow with six children and a seventh on the way." The painter was most likely commissioned to paint this still-life for display above the fireplace in a house on *Kruisstraat* in Leeuwarden.

THE BLANKE RUIM

Exiting the stairwell, one enters the *Blanke Ruim* (Light or White Room) located above the central hall, named for its light oak floor. Doors on the right lead to the former *Vertrekkamer* (now secretariat) and the Council Chamber (now the mayor's office), located on the front side. Doors on the left lead to the *Nieuwe Zaal* (New Hall) built in 1847. The *Blanke Ruim* contains self-portraits of Frisian painters from earlier centuries, as well as portraits of members of Friesian nobility, taken from the city collections and from the Fries Museum.

On the right wall above center, the 1825 self-portrait of Tjeerd Andringa, with pencil in hand and seated in front of an easel, he shows himself to be an artist. This is also demonstrated by the plaster figurine in the background. Such figurines were often used in teaching drawing and painting techniques to students.

Born in 1806 in Leeuwarden, Tjeerd Andringa studied the craft with Willem Bartel van der Kooi (1768-1836) and subsequently in Amsterdam with Cornelis Kruseman (1797-1857). His tutors were among the finest portrait painters of his time. Andringa was recognized as a very promising artist, but died young of tuberculosis in Amsterdam in 1827.

By the window, the self-portrait of Dirk Jacobs Ploegsma, yet another promising artist who died young. A close friend of artist Willem Bartel van der Kooi (1768-1836), when Ploegsma died in 1791 aged 22, Van der Kooi painted a double-portrait, depicting himself pointing at his late friend's portrait as his shining example in the art of painting (Collection of the Fries Museum). Ploegsma portrayed himself with a white cap on his head, his left hand raised as if in a speaking gesture. He finished this self-portrait shortly before his own death.

Between the doors on the right side, a self-portrait of painter Jan Hendrik Heijmans from 1852, portrayed confidently seated in an armchair with the thumb of his left hand hooked in his vest. Born in 1806 in Leeuwarden, Heijmans worked in Dresden, Germany, as well as in Zwolle and Leeuwarden in the Netherlands. He made this particular painting in the year of his departure to Arnhem, Netherlands, where he died in 1888. One of his best works dating from 1829, depicts an unknown girl in blue with Friesian headdress, seen on the opposite side by the window.

Left of the door to the *Blanke Ruim*, the 17th-century portraits of two sisters: next to the rear wall, Trijn van Walta, and between the doors, Wick van Walta, born around 1600. They were painted around 1620 by an unknown artist in oil paint on oak panels. Both are dressed in the fashion of the day: Trijn has a lace Elizabethan collar and Wick an impressive pinkish red ensemble with an erect lace collar. Evidently, these are wealthy women, judging by the jewelry they are wearing. Wick is even wearing a five-strand golden necklace that hangs from her shoulders to her waist. The family coats of arms of their parents, Sijbren van Walta and Tjets van Holdinga, are

reproduced on both of the paintings.

Next to the rear wall of the *Blanke Ruim* stands in addition a Renaissance *keefkast* dating back from the middle of the 17th Century. It is a two-door chest of oak wood with details made of ebony wood. The intricate carvings on the cabinet door panels consist of pilasters and garlands with masks, leafy vines and images of small children, a form of decoration typical for the Friesian *keefkast*. Etymologically, the name *keefkast* is derived from Old Friesian, perhaps from the word *kievit* (lapwing), a bird that surely once embellished such a chest.

THE ROOMS AROUND THE *BLANKE* ***RUIM***

The Council Chamber

The Council Chamber, currently the Mayor' Office, was once the most important room in the city hall, where the city council and the magistrate, consisting of four mayors, six aldermen and two architects, gathered. Currently, the room is a comprehensive work of art, with a decorated ceiling, a marble fireplace with chimney painting and tapestry-covered walls. The room's design may probably be attributed to the French architect Anthony Coulon (1681/1684-1753), who specialised in the so-called *Marot style*, named after Daniël Marot (1661-1752). This architect fled France and introduced the Baroque Louis XIV style in Leeuwarden. The services of Coulon and Marot were engaged for royal building projects in The Netherlands, including the enlargement of *Huis ten Bosch* palace in The Hague in 1735.

The paintings in the Council Chamber are from the hands of Freerk Haijema, constituting his most important contribution to the city hall. With the balustrade rendered in perspective around the sides of the ceiling, Haijema created a strong spatial effect. The allegorical representation on the ceiling depicts the Covenant of the Union, or the Union of Utrecht, (1579), in which the Seven Dutch Provinces agreed to resist Spain with additional stipulations concerning defense, taxes and religion. The Covenant forms the basis for the subsequent Republic of the Seven United Netherlands, the present Netherlands. The *grisailles* in the corners are symbolic representations of virtues, such as Taciturnity, Virtue and Love. Above the surrounding balustrade, the playing children in the midst of flowers and fruit constitute symbols of prosperity.

The chimney painting is also an allegory of good government. The crowned woman in the center personifies the Republic, the bundle of arrows in her hand representing Unity. Beside her stands Athena or Minerva, goddess of arts and sciences, while the man on the other side possibly symbolises the Dutch. All figures are connected by a ribbon, a further token of unity. A floral still-life in the woodwork

above the door possibly also indicates the unity resulting from a good government.

The walls are covered in *gobelins* (tapestries), representing the four parts of the world: Europe, Asia, Africa and America. Although Australia was indeed known as a continent at the time, but it did not play much of a significant role. The continents depicted on these tapestries represent the global state of affairs of which the Republic of the Seven Netherlands, including Leeuwarden, were a part.

Depicted in the corner on the left, the continent of Africa. People are pictured in a opulent and exotic landscape. In the middle, a woman seated next to a lion. She carries a sceptre as a queen and wears a feathered headdress. Standing behind her, a dark-skinned woman is depicted with a turtle in her left hand and a sheaf of grain, a symbol of agriculture and fruitfulness, in her right. Wearing an elephant mask on her head, she personifies the African continent. To the right, an old man resting on a pitcher from which proceeds a flow of water, perhaps this image represents a river god or a symbol of the Nile River.

The large tapestry represents Europe. Once again, an opulent view of a landscape with many human figures. The picture is divided into three parts. In the middle, a classic canopy covering three women holding a sceptre. Flanked on the left, by a horse with a winged rider (herald) and on the right by the personification of a river, the crowned woman is an allegorical representation of Europe. The crowns at her feet are not only a general reference to lands or powers, but – in the context of this tapestry – very probably also a reference to the Republic of the Seven United Netherlands. In the foreground, a spread of various objects and attributes, such as a globe of the world (showing India), books, tools (a compass, ruler and chisel), musical instruments, an artist's palette and a portrait bust, symbolizing the arts and sciences while simultaneously emphasizing Europe's elevated position compared to other parts of the world. On the far left, a woman with a breastplate and a world globe with the text *omnibus unus* (one for all), representing world-wide unity. The right-hand part of the tapestry depicts classical Rome as the example and basis of Europe.

The tapestry left of the door represents the Americas. The decor is once again a luxuriant landscape with human figures. A woman with a fluttering coat, in her right hand a feathered headdress and an arrow pointing downward. At her feet lies a large crocodile. Right from her stands a man with a feathered headdress and a bow. Left on the tapestry sits another man, darker-skinned, dressed in feathers with a bow and a parrot. Behind the two men can be seen the stern of a ship bearing the name "Fortuna" and the year 1718, the year in which the tapestries were delivered. To the right stand women dressed in feathers and wearing jewelry. In the foreground are plants and exotic seashells and living creatures (snake, turtle). All of the human and animal figures, as well as the ship, have reference to North and South America.

The tapestry to the right of the door represents Asia. It also pictures a landscape with all kinds of figures. On the right one sees a building with a canopy and next to it an obelisk. Under the canopy stands a group of women and men in regal attire with regalia such as a sceptre and attributes such as a diadem, a lance or an ensign. In the foreground is a sort of cornucopia with a trophy of arms and flowers and fruit. To the left lies a camel in the midst of three women, one of whom is sitting on the animal, crowned with a wreath of flowers and holding in her left hand a censer. The other women are pictured standing and holding a parasol sheltering the sitting woman and a drinking cup shaped as a seashell. The sitting woman possibly represents Flora, the goddess of plants, flowers and fertility. The camel and exotic figures symbolize Asia. Made in the studio of Alexander Baart in Amsterdam, these tapestries are possibly based on designs of painter Lodewijk van Schoor of Antwerp.

Vertrekkamer

The *Vertrekkamer* (lit. meeting room) was originally intended for meetings of council committees. Now it houses the mayor's secretariat. Visually, the room is dominated by the enormous mural of painter Harmen Wouters Beekkerk (1756-1796), dating from 1788. Beekkerk painted Moses with outstretched arms facing a group of Israelites in the desert. The center of the foreground depicts a young man with a red toga and an old man with a beard and a turban, while the background shows the tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant with a pillar of smoke over it.

The work of art illustrates an episode from the life of Moses, who, during the wanderings through the wilderness, comes to the end of his patience with the grumbling people and says that the burden of responsibility is too heavy for him. According to the Bible, God responds to him, saying "Assemble for me seventy men out of the elders of Israel, of those whom you know to be elders of the people and officers, and bring them before the tent of meeting and they shall present themselves with you there" (Bible book of Numbers, chapter 11).

The mural probably symbolizes the city council listening to the citizenry. Beekkerk drew his inspiration from the gigantic painting of Moses and the seventy elders in the city council chamber of Amsterdam city hall, painted in 1735 by Jacob de Wit (1695-1754). A work of Freerk Haijema, dating back from around 1720, the allegorical chimney painting above the fireplace depicts Wisdom represented by Athena or Minerva, the goddess of the arts.

Nieuwe Zaal

Across from the Council Chamber and the *Vertrekkamer* lies the *Nieuwe Zaal* (lit. New Hall). City Architect Thomas Romein was commissioned in 1847 to create in this space a council chamber. He made a design in Empire style with much of the walls and plasterwork painted in imitation marble, a technique also found in many princely buildings and city halls dating back from the same period. The ceiling plasterwork was made by Jan Mertens of Leeuwarden.

Today, the *Nieuwe Zaal* serves as the meeting room for the College of Mayor and Aldermen. The room is decorated with various portraits of the royal family: above the fireplace, a portrait of Princess Beatrix (1938), painted in 1982 by Koosje van Keulen (1940-). The portrait faces a portrait of Beatrix' grandmother, Queen Wilhelmina (1880-1962), based on a photograph, painted by Leeuwarden artist Dick Osinga (1913-1997) in 1948.

Also in the room, the portraits of the first three rulers from the house of Orange, namely those of King Willem I (1772-1843), King Willem II (1792-1849) and King Willem III (1817-1890). Based on portraits by other artists, all three were painted by Johan Joeke Gabriël van Wicheren (1808-1897) around 1860.

The attic (third storey)

At the top of the impressive staircase is the attic, where the municipal archive resided until 1970, when it was transferred to a building on the *Grote Kerkstraat*. However, since 2007, the municipal archive is established under the name of Historic Center of Leeuwarden (HCL) on *Groeneweg*.

In the attic, a reminder of the municipal archive remains in the form of the built-in chest of drawers in the room straight ahead to the right.

The chest's construction was commissioned in 1838 by Wopke Eekhoff (1809-1880), the first paid municipal archivist in the Netherlands. Archived items were stored in the many drawers, while the chest could only be opened with two separate keys kept by two beadles (minor city officials).

On the wall in the room, the pen-and-ink portraits of all mayors of Leeuwarden since 1824. Two exceptional paintings of Leeuwarden city scenes may also be seen.

A view of the Chancellery (1862) on the *Turfmarkt* (lit. Peat Market, a square in Leeuwarden), painted by Kasparus Karsen, (1810-1896), showing a romanticised picture of the Chancellery is located between the windows. Pictured on the right, the 16th-century *Landschapshuis* (lit. landscape house) was destroyed around 1850 and replaced by the Ritske Boelema Guest House, demolished in 1984, to make room for an apartment complex.

The Chancellery itself was built in the period of 1566-1571, supposedly at the expense of the Spanish King Phillip II, as the seat of the Court of Friesland, the highest institute of justice of the region. On the right, a painting view of the Leeuwarden Fish Market which in earlier days used to be organized on *Voorstreek*. Probably painted around 1835 by artist Otto de Boer (1797-1856), the foreground depicts the market's bustling activity, while the background depicts a view down *Koningsstraat* to the Chancellery. The Fish Market stands were demolished in the course of the 19th Century when the market was moved to *Oosterkade*. The two-door cabinet left of the entrance dates from the middle of the 17th Century.

THE ORANJEZAAL

In the stairwell, double doors lead up the second set of steps to the majestic *Orangezaal* (hall devoted to House of Orange), designed by court architect Pieter de Swart (1700-1772). This room was re-purposed as a council chamber, as part of the city hall's renovation and enlargement in 1760. The new council chamber is decorated in woodwork in rococo style, in which large spaces were left open to accommodate portraits of the seven Frisian *stadtholders*, of which only six are currently on display. The spaces on either side of the monumental fireplace were replaced by large windows in the 19th Century. Above each portrait and above the four sets of double doors the room is decorated with *grisailles*, with symbolic representations from the hand of Rienk Keijert (1709-1775) who made the paintings above the doors together with Rienk Jelgerhuis (1729-1806). Rienk Keijert was the major decorator during the city hall's enlargement of 1760, just as Freerk Haijema was of the original construction of 1715. The symbolic representations of the *grisailles* all reflect the idea of good government. Patriots removed Keijert's portraits of the *stadtholders* from the city hall and burned these in 1795. Fortunately, the *grisailles* were spared.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, the resulting empty spaces were gradually filled with portraits of successive Dutch rulers painted by prominent Friesian artists of their respective times.

Above the fireplace shines a copy of a portrait of Princess Maria Louise van Hessen-Kassel (1688-1765), painted by Willem Bartel van der Kooi (1768-1836). It was made in 1836 based on a portrait by Friesian painter Matthijs Accama (1702-1783) dating from about 1760, showing the princess in mourning. Her husband, Prince Johan Willem Friso (1687-1711), drowned near the Dutch town of Moerdijk during a violent storm on *Hollands Diep*. After her husband's death, Maria Louise temporarily stepped in, governing as a substitute for their son Willem Karel Hendrik Friso (1711-1751), the later Willem IV, who eventually became a *stadthouder* in 1731. Maria Louise was much loved by the local populace, who called her *Marijke Meu* (dear little aunt Maria).

Beside the fireplace, the portrait of King Willem I (1772-1843), painted in 1832 by the same Willem Bartel van der Kooi. Just as with all of the following royal portraits, he is pictured in a standing pose. The king standing in front of a chair on a dais, is soberly attired in a military uniform decorated with shoulder epaulettes and an order badge on the breast.

The *grisaille* above the king, painted by Rienk Keijert, is an allegorical portrayal of various virtues, represented by female figures on clouds: on the left Fortitude (Strength), with armor and clubs and on the right the Virtue of Love, pointing to her heart and with a laurel wreath and a spear.

Between the doors, the portrait of King Willem II (1792-1849) painted around 1865 by Johan Joeke Gabriël van Wicheren (1808-1897). It is a copy of an older portrait from 1841 by Jan Adam Kruseman (1804-1862), who was a celebrated portrait painter of Dutch society. Willem II is also attired in a uniform with large epaulettes. Yet, unlike his father, he proudly presents a whole series of decorations on his breast while pictured with the symbols of his regency: an ermine robe, a crown and a sceptre.

The *grisaille* above his portrait points to the power and alertness of the Seven United Netherlands. Two female figures sit on clouds with a medallion between them in the form of a laurel wreath. The woman on the left has a helmet, spear and sword with a serpent in her hands, attributes belonging to Minerva, illustrating Fortitude (Strength). The woman on the right has a mirror in her hand and a diadem on her head, representing Prudence, whose standard attributes are a mirror and a serpent. The wreath is a laurel victor's crown with, in its middle, among other things, a trophy with seven ensigns representing the seven provinces of the Republic.

Next to the window, the portrait of King Willem III (1817-1890), who just as his father is pictured with all of the symbols of his regency. This portrait was also painted around 1865 by Johan Joeke Gabriël van Wicheren, who made it as a copy of an 1856 state portrait by Nicolaas Pieneman (1809-1860). The *grisaille* above it portrays the symbolic representation of Wisdom and Taciturnity. Taciturnity holds a finger to her mouth and Wisdom, with bared bosom, an offering platter. They represent reverence or generosity and adherence to the statutes of the Republic of the Seven Netherlands.

To the right of the fireplace, the portraits respectively of the Dutch Queens: Wilhelmina, Juliana and Emma. Queen Wilhelmina (1880-1962) was painted in 1906 by the artist and professor at the Amsterdam *Rijksacademie* Johannes Hendricus Jurrens (1875-1946), a native from Leeuwarden. Just like her father and grandfather, she is pictured with the royal regalia. Above her head, the *grisaille* representing Victory and Destiny or, specifically the victorious Republic of the Seven United Netherlands, and her threat, which is Impermanence or Fate.

Again, two seated female figures with a medallion between them in the form of a laurel wreath. The female on the left probably represents the goddess Nike, with a laurel wreath and mistletoe or olive branch, a symbol of Victory. The female on the right has a bird (dove or raven) sitting on her hand and a star above her head, probably illustrating Fate. In the centre of the wreath is a trophy and above it an eye (in a cloud), beneath which are a sword, a laurel branch and a scroll. In general, an eye in a cloud or a triangle symbolizes the all-seeing divine eye as well as the Trinity: Here probably indicating the unity of the Republic.

The portrait of Queen Juliana (1909-2004), painted by Piet van der Hem (1885-1961) in 1949, depicts her standing on a dais in front of a chair, with her only royal attribute: the ermine robe. Her portrait is noticeably lighter in tone than the other royalty portraits. Above the

portrait again the *grisaille* with the symbolic representation of Freedom (woman with freedom cap) and Religion and the saying “*Je maintiendrai*” (I will maintain). The hand of God is shown in the medallion, pointing to religious freedom in the Republic and its perpetuation under the authority of the house of Orange.

Finally, by the window in the front gable, a portrait of Queen / Regentess Emma (1858-1934), painted by Christoffel Bisschop (1828-1904) in the year 1893. He stands out as one of the leading painters of his time, specialising in large ostentatious still-life paintings in the 17th-century tradition. Born in Leeuwarden, just as Piet van der Hem, Bisschop portrayed the queen standing on a dais dressed in a black ensemble with a train. The only accent is provided by the red curtain.

Above her portrait, an allegorical representation of the government of city and state. Here again, two female figures with between them a medallion on which the woman with exposed bosom symbolizes the city patroness, as well as the patroness of The Netherlands. The bundle of arrows indicates the unity existing among the provinces in the Republic.

Beside the portrait of King Willem I, the painting by Keijert and Jelgerhuis portraying a woman with a helmet and in her right hand palm branches wrapped in a ribbon on which is written in Latin “*Pro lege et grege fidelis*” (faithful for the law and the people).

Other symbols support the same notion, such as the scale of justice. In between the Kings Willem II and Willem III, the representation of a woman with an olive branch in one hand and in the other a sceptre wrapped in a scroll on which is written “*Juste Regendo*” (In order to reign well). In her lap lies an open Bible and she sits at the helm of a ship with a compass and shackles beside her. She is being offered a crown of honor. She is the personification of Peace and Justice.

The painting next to Queen Wilhelmina is an allegory of Safety, Strength and Order represented by all kinds of symbols (lion, handcuffs, etc.) and emphasized by the ribbon inscribed “*Securitas publica*” (Public safety).

Finally, between Queens Juliana and Emma an allegory of Abundance and Unity, in which Abundance is represented by cornucopias filled with treasures and fruit while Unity is represented by, among other items, the bundle of arrows. The ribbon with the inscription “*Antiqua virtute et fide*” (Through the old virtue and faithfulness) once again emphasizes the allegory’s message.

In the corners of the beautiful plastered ceiling are representations emphasizing the program for good government of city and state. We notice symbols repeated elsewhere in the building, including Prudence with mirror and serpent, Justice with a balance scale, Abundance and Love and Faith with her hand on her heart. The plasterwork is made by John Baptist Singer who also worked on the city halls of Sneek, Workum and Franeker elsewhere in the Province of Friesland.

In the restoration of 2005 the council chamber was rechristened as the *Orangezaal*. It is a favorite location for weddings and also fre-

quently used for other festive occasions.

STAIRWELL

Upon leaving the *Orangezaal*, one enters the stairwell realized in the restoration of the city hall complex in 2005, serving as a connection between the old council chamber and the new one in the *Hoofdwacht*. The stairwell with its elevator shaft is of a light steel construction enclosed in glass, situated in the old interior courtyard. The sanitary facilities are housed in the tilted wooden cube on legs.

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER

On exiting the stairwell one enters the council chamber with its modern meeting arrangement, consisting of three oval rings and offering a spacious seating area for the public. The new council chamber was cleverly integrated into the *Hoofdwacht* located next to the old city hall. The *Hoofdwacht* facade in the neo-classic style of architect Thomas Romein stands out because of its stuccoed facades, columns and arched windows.

Although this building dates from 1845, a guardhouse had already been located here since 1688, to accommodate the royal guard charged with the responsibility of guarding the nearby royal palace. In later times, the building served among other things as magistrate's court, a police station, as well as a municipal services office. In addition to the new council chamber, the *Hoofdwacht* is home to a few political party offices, other office areas and meeting rooms.

WELL-KNOWN LEEUWARDERS IN THE ENTRY HALL

The city hall entrance is located in the side wing built in Louis XV or rococo style in 1760. The design was conceived by royal architect Pieter de Swart (1709-1772), also responsible for the construction of the palace *Paleis Lange Voorhout* (presently *Museum Escher in Het Paleis*) and the *Koninklijke Schouwburg* (royal theatre) in the Hague. Municipal builder Jan Nootboom (1734-1812) was commissioned with the execution and made some small changes in the design.

Twenty-eight portraits of famous Leeuwarden citizens are on display on the entry hall ceiling. Here, in addition to the portraits of various Friesian *stadtholders*, the portraits of Saskia van Uylenburgh (1612-1642), of the prematurely deceased wife of Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669) and of the infamous Mata Hari are on display. Born as Margaretha Geertruida Zelle in Leeuwarden in 1876, Mata Hari, as she called herself in later life, was executed by a firing squad in Vincennes near Paris as a suspected spy in 1917.

In addition, the painters Lourens Alma Tadema (1836-1912) and Gerrit Benner (1897-1981) are pictured on the ceiling, along with the writers Jan Jacob Slauerhoff (1898-1936) and Sjoukje Bokma de Boer, the pseudonym of Nienke van Hichtum (1860-1939), wife of the politician Pieter Jelles Troelstra (1860-1930), also a native of Leeuwarden. The ceiling panels were designed by Berber van den Brink of the firm *Loft Webdesign en Grafische Vormgeving*.

Colofon

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