

## OPENINGS SPEECH EHHF CEES VAN 'T VEEN, 26/5/2011

As the host of the 6<sup>th</sup> European Heritage Heads Forum, I would like to **welcome** you to the Netherlands, to Amsterdam, and welcome you to the Hermitage museum. This late 17<sup>th</sup> century building, situated along the river Amstel, was originally built as a Deanery Home for Old Women (1681). About two years ago, a metamorphosis took place: the nursing home was transformed into a modern museum: the Hermitage Amsterdam. In this brand new and successful museum, people are introduced to art selections from the Hermitage collection in St. Petersburg, Russia.

After a few months hard work, we managed to register 26 European countries plus the Council of Europe here in Amsterdam for the annual meeting of the European Heritage Heads Forum. A big success. It is lovely that you were able to reshuffle your agenda and come over to Amsterdam. *You* being here show that you have confidence in this network of European directors and director-generals of the state heritage agencies. As you all know, in this network we focus on **informing and inspiring one another** about today's wide set of developments in heritage management.

I especially want to welcome Bulgaria, Mrs. Uliana Maleeva, as a newcomer! They join us for the first time. And welcome to Italy. They are joining us again, since the meeting in 2006 in London. So, Mrs. Recchia, we are indeed honoured to have you here, and I am happy that you will give two presentations later on in this programme. As a matter of fact, Hungary, Malta, Rumania, Greece and at the last moment Spain could not make it to Amsterdam, for different reasons.

We have discussion in the Hermitage for the next two days.

This year's meeting was **prepared** in good harmony with the help of the UK, Germany and France.

As promised in Paris last year, the Netherlands would take the initiative to prepare an e-Newsletter. We did send it to you twice and they can still be read on the [www.ehhf.eu](http://www.ehhf.eu) site. The first letter was sent in November, the other one in March. It provided the latest information on different European developments. Germany, as our host in 2012, will take over the preparation of the next Newsletter.

At this moment I would like to mention two issues that need some discussion during this meeting. You can already start thinking about it.

First, *what is the real strategic significance of the final statement of our Forum?* Do we want this statement to be an advice for our ministers, or should it be an advice with content for specialists back home? Or do we want to change it a little? If so, how? We come back on this issue.

The second issue is about *the status and structure of the EHHF, and also about the possible influence of our Forum in Brussels*. The new Reflexion Group on Cultural Heritage will elaborate on this on Friday morning.

**About the Programme.** We did it before, but we reintroduced parallel sessions with smaller groups, this year. We hope it will give more **interaction** and encourages discussion. After the sessions the results will be presented plenary by the chairs. The three sessions are focussing roughly on archaeology, re use and depopulation in relation to rural heritage.

Today the **closing will be in time, at 16.00 hours**. This early retreat provides us with the unique opportunity to visit unofficially a new, but not yet opened museum, called the Jan Six House just opposite the Hermitage.

Thank you.

## DINNER SPEECH LA RIVE, AMSTEL HOTEL, 26-5-2011

*How is life in Amsterdam when you live in it...*

### CHANGE OF HERITAGE MANAGEMENT: FROM DOTS TO LINES

**Looking back** (today): views on rural heritage during presentations and workshops, views on art by Rembrandt, views on our capital city from the river. It makes us all look differently to topics...

I would like to mention a current **monumental change** in the Netherlands which is in line with the polder concept I mentioned this morning during my speech: Made in Holland. It is obvious, that not only objects but also areas are equally appreciated nowadays. One can define this Dutch approach on heritage as: moving **from dots to lines**.

Till 2000, Dutch heritage management was obsessed by objects, by buildings, by dots; by a system of collecting buildings as you would collect stamps.

Like the Rijksmuseum-building or the one of the most photographed sites in Amsterdam: the 'Lean Bridge' just in front of the Hermitage.

The last ten years we are looking more and more at the context of built heritage; at the lines and stripes on the map. For example, the polders, but also defence lines, like the one round Amsterdam and of course the Amsterdam Canal Zone; you witnessed this world class heritage today during the boat trip.

Bottom line is, we want to value and protect the monument in its direct surrounding and its full historical environment (Momo, cultural history as an urgent issue in urban planning).

**Before we start with our diner, please think about this question...**

### **Looking forward: FRIDAY**

In the meantime new presentations popped up: The Reflexion Group Europe, the monitoring group Baltic Sea States, European Heritage group Poland and also the ISBL of HEREIN will have the floor during this meeting.