



## NEW HOLLAND NEWS I, December 2008



*Amazon Expedition ready for departure*

Dear interested person, friend or donor,

As 2008 draws to a close, I would like you to join me in looking back on and ahead to the activities of the New Holland Foundation.

The foundation, of which I am the director, is concerned with the preservation of Common Cultural Heritage in Brazil. The most important project is the 'Atlas of Dutch Brazil', in which an inventory is made of built and maritime heritage (forts, houses, palaces, shipwrecks etc.) from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, and particularly from the time of Governor Johan Maurits van Nassau Siegen, nicknamed 'the Brazilian' (1637-1644). With the help of historical sources, the coastal area of Brazil from the Amazon as far as Uruguay has been archaeologically surveyed and the results mapped. The long-term project will examine each state in turn. The results can be seen on the website [www.atlasofdutchbrazil.org](http://www.atlasofdutchbrazil.org).

In 2007/2008, the expectation was that five forts would be discovered in the state of *Paraíba*. Investigation there revealed the sites of fourteen defences, including three supposedly lost forts. These first results were displayed in the 'Sweet & Salty' exhibition at the *Nederlands Vestingmuseum* in *Naarden*. In 2007, three forts from the Dutch period were located in the state of *Maranhão*, and in 2008 we hit upon the possible remains of two early forts, *Forte Orange* and *Forte Nassau*, from c. 1600-1620, in the Amazon region along the Rio Xingu. The investigation results were recently presented at conferences in Brazil and Portugal. Alongside our involvement in restoration plans for *Forte Orange* (1631) on the island of Itamaracá (PE) <see: [www.euapoiooforteorange.com.br](http://www.euapoiooforteorange.com.br)>, plans have begun to set up a museum devoted to this common cultural heritage in the *Fortaleza de Santa Catarina* in *Cabedelo* (PB).

In 2009, the emphasis will lie on the Amazon region with the states of *Maranhão*, *Pará* en *Amapá*. Prior to this, however, historical research will be carried out in the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal and Brazil. Since the roads are virtually impassable, an expedition team consisting of Dutch and Brazilian researchers will enter the area by means of typical Amazon boats (see photograph). The primary objective is to trace three supposedly lost Dutch forts. The guidelines are the yellow Dutch bricks which were carried along as ballast, the Dutch clay pipes, artefacts and coins.

Cultural cooperation between the Netherlands and Brazil has high priority with both countries. On 11 April 2008, a 'Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the field of Common Cultural Heritage' was signed during the state visit of the Brazilian president Lula da Silva to the Netherlands.

The activities of the New Holland Foundation are a centre of interest, but require a substantial financial effort. An important part of the funding comes from the Mondriaan Foundation, the Ministry of Education, Cultural Affairs and Science and the Netherlands Embassy in Brazil. In addition, the foundation depends on donors in order to continue its research and activities. We would like to bring your attention to the fact that, since 2008, the New Holland Foundation has been designated a non-profit organization (NPO) by the tax authorities. This means that contributions to the New Holland Foundation are tax deductible, for private individuals as well as corporations. For further information we refer you to our website. Of course we hope to welcome you as a New Holland Foundation donor!

Wishing everyone a *Feliz Ano Novo*, and we look forward to a year of many new discoveries.

Grande abraço, Oscar Hefting