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10. Clearing the Deck: The Diaries of Skipper Adriaan Doorneveld

Laura van Hasselt

Abstract: Amsterdam skipper Adriaan Doorneveld (1924–2003) meticulously kept a diary for nearly sixty years. The thirty notebooks resemble a ship's log with their concise, businesslike entries. Yet they provide a rare historical perspective on daily life in Amsterdam. Doorneveld lived and worked on the family barge until 1966, when he became a ferry skipper. His life revolved around the waters of Amsterdam, but he also developed a passion for exploring the city on foot and by bike. After his early retirement in 1986, he started visiting Amsterdam's many museums multiple times a week. Doorneveld's diary both served as an external memory aid and as a way to maintain control over his life, clearing life's deck at the end of each day.

Keywords: Amsterdam; towed barge; ferry; museums; routine; twentieth century

Amsterdam skipper Adriaan Doorneveld (1924–2003) kept a diary for nearly sixty years, never missing a day.[1] The diary consists of thirty systematically kept notebooks, most of which cover two years. All entries are written in red ink, with the days separated by a straight blue line. The handwriting remains neat and consistent until the last pages, where it becomes slightly shaky. The first journal begins in 1944, during World War II, and the last one concludes in 2002, shortly before his death. There is an element of the traditional ship's logbook in these diaries, as most entries are businesslike and staccato. There appear to be no literary pretensions and scarcely any

1 Dutch Diary Archive (Nederlands Dagboek Archief) 472, Diaries of Adrianus Doorneveld (1942–2002), inv. nrs. 579–83.

Rensen, Marleen, Leonieke Vermeer, Laura van Hasselt and Ernestine Hoegen, eds. *Amsterdam Diaries, Life Writing and Identity: Urban Lives*. Taylor & Francis Group, 2025.
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emotional outpourings. Yet, these diaries provide a unique insight into the daily life of an Amsterdam skipper in the twentieth century. In this chapter, I will explore Doorneveld's diary in two different ways. First, I will examine why he kept such a meticulous diary for nearly all of his adult life. Second, I will analyse the role the city of Amsterdam played in his life, based on these diaries, and how this role evolved over time.

"The diary is a trace of a life, since it records only what its author wishes."[2] Diary scholar Julie Rak reminds us that these notebooks are not to be read as the clear reflection of a life in all its complexity, however tempting that image may be. With every sentence, the diary writer chooses what to record and what to leave unsaid; what to stress and what to ignore. The author shapes his or her own history, subconsciously, more often than not. As historians we are left with only the traces of a life. As tantalizing as this may be, diaries can provide a wealth of historical information. Hidden within diary entries are traces of locations which play a role in the life of the main character. This makes the diary a very valuable, if subjective source of urban history. Doorneveld's diaries thus offer us a view not only of a life, but also of a city and its surrounding waters.

After his death in March 2003, his son Aart (a historian) donated the notebooks to the Dutch Diary Archive in Amsterdam. It is a special collection on more than one level. Firstly, because of the time span: more than half a century of daily recordings of Amsterdam life. Secondly, the journals offer us the perspective of someone from an underrepresented group in the city's historiography, namely an inland skipper. Despite the historic importance of waterborne transport in Amsterdam, little is known about the history of the people who worked in this sector.[3] These diaries offer us a historical perspective on Amsterdam life, viewed from the water. They are supplemented with an unpublished manuscript on the family history by Adriaan Doorneveld and his son Aart, which is still work in progress.[4] Evidently father and son shared the need to document the past.

2 Julie Rak, "The Hidden Genre: Diaries and Time," *European Journal of Life Writing* 7 (2018): 87.

3 Most historical publications on inland shipping in the Netherlands are focused on economic and technical developments, rather than social or urban history. See, for instance, Ruud Filarski, *Tegen de stroom in. Binnenvaart en vaarwegen vanaf 1800* (Matrijs, 2014); Harry de Groot, *Volaan vooruit. Binnenvaart van opdrukker tot duwboot* (De Alk B.V., 1989); Frits Loomeijer, *Een eeuw Nederlandse binnenvaart* (Friese Pers Boekerij, 1988). An interesting exception, about trade unions in this sector: Jojada Verrips, *Als het tij verloopt … Over binnenschippers en hun bonden 1898–1975* (Het Spinhuis, 1991). See also: www.debinnenvaart.nl and www.schuttevaer.nl.

4 Adriaan Doorneveld and Aart Doorneveld, *Van schepenen tot schippers. Een geschiedenis van generaties Doorneveld* (unpublished manuscript, 2024).

Adriaan (officially Adrianus) Doorneveld spent much of his life working and living on the waters of Amsterdam. He was born on 20 December 1924 on the family barge, the *Op hoop van welvaart*, which was then moored in the IJ at De Ruyterkade, opposite the fire station. The barge was nearly thirty-six metres long and six metres wide, and it could carry 274 tons of cargo.[5] From 1947 until 1966, Doorneveld worked as an inland skipper in the Amsterdam area and lived on the family barge. Thus working and living quarters were one and the same place, except for the fact that this location was constantly moving. From 1966 until his early retirement in 1986, he worked as a ferry skipper on the IJ. In that period he lived ashore with his wife and children, in Amsterdam Noord. In his spare time, he wandered through the city for hours, as much as he could. After his retirement, having much more time on his hands, a new way of exploring the city opened itself up to Doorneveld. He continued his long walks and cycling tours, but he now also discovered Amsterdam's many museums. His hunger for knowledge about (art) history was extraordinary. For nearly twenty years, he visited several museums a week. With his combined knowledge of the waters, the streets and the museums of Amsterdam, Doorneveld must have known the city like nobody else.

Keeping Life under Control

The first entry, on 1 January 1944, is neither spectacular nor warlike: "In the afternoon a slight cold, didn't go into town. Had a drink, Frits Gerritsen came by."[6] Unlike most diarists, Doorneveld did not write on the first page why he decided to start keeping a diary. This was a few months before Dutch minister Bolkestein urged people to keep war diaries via a famous Radio Orange transmission, so this cannot have been Doorneveld's inspiration.[7] Perhaps an earlier notebook was lost during the war, or he just did not feel the need to explain himself. This leaves us to speculate about Doorneveld's motives to keep a diary, which no one else in his family did, as far as we know.[8]

5 https://www.binnenvaart.eu/sleepvrachtschip/31857-op-hoop-van-welvaart.html.

6 "'s middags lichte aanval van verkoudheid, niet meegeweest de stad in. Drank gehad, Frits Gerritsen geweest."

7 Vincent Kuitenbrouwer and Huub Wijfjes, "Inleiding. Mediaoorlog. Radio, geschreven pers en propaganda tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog," *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 125, no. 2/3 (2022): 184.

8 According to his son Adri, who did decide to keep a diary himself, after his father's example. Interview, Laura van Hasselt with Adri Doorneveld, 8 October 2024.

French diary scholar Philippe Lejeune identifies four main motives for keeping a diary: to express oneself; to reflect; to freeze time; and to take pleasure in writing.[9] Doorneveld's diaries fall primarily into the third category: freezing time, in the sense of creating a personal archive from lived experience, a kind of external memory. The diary entries are factual in tone and follow a fixed format. For example:

> Saturday, 11 May [1946]. Got up at 8. Washed and changed. Went to A'dam at 11.30. Visited A. Demage and Uncle Gerrit in the afternoon. Saw fleet review at the IJ. Saw Churchill, in a tour boat. Visited Mrs Koopmans and De Jonge in the evening. Went into town the four of us. Went to bed at 12.[10]

Doorneveld made no apparent distinction between the time he got up and the historic event of Churchill's visit to Amsterdam. This is typical of his style of writing. His diary entries follow a strict scheme: starting with the date and wake-up time, and ending with the time he went to bed. What is in between could range from peeling potatoes to picking up a load of coal, from going to the cinema to witnessing a historic event. Doorneveld's youngest son, Aart, recalls: "He really wrote his diary for himself. As a memory aid."[11] The two boys often observed their father writing his diary at the kitchen table, ruler at hand, occasionally verifying details with their mother. Publication was not his aim. His diaries were primarily a form of personal archive.

Lejeune's first two motives for writing a diary—the expression of emotions and self-reflection—do not seem to apply to Doorneveld. Emotions are in fact strikingly absent from his diaries, but for one exception: his engagement period to his later wife, Alberta Hoorn (1928–2012), which will be discussed later. Whether the fourth motive was important to Doorneveld is hard to discern. Did he take pleasure in the activity of writing itself? There seems to be no attempt to use any literary phrases or metaphors, which is perhaps not surprising since Doorneveld had only a little schooling to build on. But these marbled notebooks do testify to a love of writing, in the physical sense of the word. The handwriting is beautifully regular and remarkably legible, always in the same red ink. The numbers of the years at the beginning of each diary are carefully drawn. There are hardly any

9 P. Lejeune, "How Do Diaries End?," *Biography* 24, no. 1 (2001), 106–7.

10 "Zaterdag, 11 mei [1946]. Om 8.- opgestaan. Gewassen en verschoond. Om 11.30 naar A: dam gegaan. 's Middags bij A. Demage en Oom Gerrit geweest. Vlootshow op het IJ. Churchill gezien, in een rondvaartboot. 's Avonds bij Mevr: Koopmans en de Jonge geweest. De stad in geweest met ons vieren. Om 12.- naar bed gegaan." All translations by the author.

11 Interview, Laura van Hasselt with Aart Doorneveld, 14 April 2023.

crossed out passages or visible corrections. Doorneveld's diaries give the impression of pleasure, even pride in the meticulous craft of writing.

In fact these notebooks look so perfect, that the reader gets rather suspicious. Isn't this too good to be true? In fact it is. The collection at the Dutch Diary Archive proves to be the second version of his diary; the draft notebooks having been thrown away. It is Doorneveld himself who gives this away, when he first mentions his "neat-diary" in 1948:

> Wednesday, 21 July. Got up at 7.20. Gathered laundry. Got first letter from Bep [twice underlined—LVH], had a haircut, went to the stock exchange. Had an afternoon nap, went to exchange, wrote up "neat-diary."[12]

The word "neat-diary" ("*net-dagboek*") reveals that we are not reading the original version of this diary. The mention of a *first* letter from Bep (Alberta Hoorn) is another clue: How could he have known at the time that there would be many more letters to come? Doorneveld's sons confirm that there were two versions of each diary. Aart remembers that his father used to buy a set of simple green notebooks at the start of each year. At the end of the year (in this case already in July) he would rewrite these into more expensive hardcover diaries, with red and black marbled boards.[13] These are the ones that ended up in the archive. Since the originals no longer exist, we will never know the differences between the two. But it is important to be aware of the fact that even these unpublished egodocuments have been edited by their author. This was his personal neat-archive; the systematic recordings of a systematic man.

This leads us to a fifth motive for keeping a diary: the diary as an instrument to keep a grip on one's life. Arianne Baggerman et al. explain the growth in autobiographical practices in the nineteenth century by an urge not to freeze, but to control time: "trying to get a grip on an ever faster changing world by writing diaries and memoirs."[14] Also in less turbulent times, there is always a performative aspect to diary keeping. The pure act of recording one's day may contribute to the writer's well-being.[15] To

12 "Woensdag, 21 juli. Om 7.20 opgestaan. Wasboel opgezocht, 1e Brief van Bep gehad [dubbel onderstreept] haar laten knippen, naar de beurs geweest. 's Middags geslapen, naar de beurs geweest, net-dagboek bijgeschreven."

13 Interview, Aart Doorneveld.

14 Arianne Baggerman, Rudolf Dekker and Michael Mascuch, eds, *Controlling Time and Shaping the Self. Developments in Autobiographical Writing since the Sixteenth Century* (Brill, 2011), 4.

15 Desirée Henderson, *How to Read a Diary: Critical Contexts and Interpretive Strategies for 21st-Century Readers* (Routledge, 2019), 160.

Doorneveld, keeping a diary was not just important *while* being a routine, but precisely *because* it was a routine. He wrote in his diary each and every night, even when he was ill or when he came home really late after a night shift. As his oldest son, Adri, says: "He was the kind of person who always does things exactly the same way. That was his way of life."[16] In a sense, keeping a diary was a routine to him no different from brushing his teeth. The day would not be complete without it.

The words "schoon schip gemaakt" ("cleared the deck") appear more than a hundred times in his diaries. Doorneveld meant them literally: clearing the deck is a regular skipper's task. However, it is also a metaphor for cleaning up the mess from the past and making a fresh start. That is what Doorneveld did every night, when he wrote in his diary at the kitchen table: he cleared the deck of his life for the following day.

Amsterdam Seen from the Water (1945–66)

The Doorneveld family spent the last part of the Second World War in hiding, in the village of Schalkwijk near Utrecht.[17] The aim was not just to hide themselves from the Germans but also their barge, the *Op hoop van welvaart*. Like many other inland skippers, they thus tried to avoid confiscation.[18] Although the barge was eventually discovered and used as a munitions ship by the occupiers, at least Adriaan managed to escape forced labour in Germany. Shortly after Liberation Day (5 May 1945), he returned to Amsterdam. Since the barge was still missing, he had to go by bicycle, which must have taken at least three hours.

> Monday, 7 May. Got up at 6.10. Went to Amsterdam by bike, visited De Bruin, Uncle Siebe, A. Demoge and Uncle Gerrit. Told them about what happened the past nine months. Went to bed at 11.10.[19]

16 Interview, Adri Doorneveld. "Hij was zo iemand die heel precies altijd hetzelfde deed. Dat was zijn manier van leven." Translation by Laura van Hasselt.

17 History student Frederike Herkströter examined Doorneveld's war diaries for my diary course at UvA. Frederike Herkströter, "Het 'normale' leven van Adrianus Doorneveld" (paper, University of Amsterdam, 2023).

18 Rudolf Filarski, *Tegen de stroom in. Binnenvaart en vaarwegen vanaf 1800* (Matrijs, 2014), 256–57.

19 "Maandag, 7 mei. Om 6.10 opgestaan. Per fiets naar Amsterdam gegaan, bij de Bruin, Om Siebe, A. Demoge en Oom Gerrit geweest. 's Avonds de wetenswaardigheden van de afgelopen 9 maanden verteld. Om 11.10 naar bed gegaan."

Remarkably, there is not a word about the historic tragedy which happened that day in the heart of Amsterdam. A large crowd had gathered at Dam Square for a supposedly festive welcome of the Canadian troops. Instead, a small group of German marines, who were entrenched in the Groote Club at the corner of Dam Square, started randomly shooting at the masses. In the ensuing panic at least thirty-four people were killed.[20] Doorneveld stayed in Amsterdam Noord with his friends, oblivious of the shooting a few kilometres away. The omission of this important event in the history of Amsterdam reminds us of the limitations of the diary as a historical source. Like King Louis XVI, who famously wrote "Rien" ("Nothing") in his diary on 14 July 1789, the day the Bastille was stormed.[21]

After the war, it took two years for the Doorneveld family to resume work on the Amsterdam waters. They had to wait for the retrieval and repair of their barge, which had been sunk by the Germans. More generally, it took a while for the badly damaged Dutch economy to pick up after the war and the same applied to inland shipping. Adriaan did odd jobs until he got his first ship's load in September 1947. This was clearly an important moment to him, as is apparent from his underlining in the following passage in his diary: "Tuesday, 9 September. Got up at 5.50. Cleared the decks, removed junk from the hold, went to the stock exchange, accepted first trip since the war, cokes from Utrecht to Amsterdam."[22] In the following years, he and his parents transported many more loads of coke, but also sugar, cocoa, peanuts, all sorts of grain, wood, scrap iron—anything that was on offer on the Amsterdam skippers' exchange at the Beurs van Berlage. The Doornevelds worked long hours, often also in the evenings and on Saturdays. They operated in a wide area in north-western Netherlands, mostly to and from the industrial Zaan region.

Amsterdam was their home base. Doorneveld's diaries are filled with the names of the city's quays, docks and harbours: Handelskade, Javakade, Entrepotdok, Oosterdok, Houthaven, Parkhaven, etc. To inland skippers like the Doornevelds, Amsterdam was a city not of streets, but of waterways. On

20 Norbert-Jan Nuij, "Balans van een bloedbad," in *Drama op de Dam 7 mei 1945*, ed. Ludmilla van Santen and Norbert-Jan Nuij (Stichting Memorial voor Damslachtoffers 7 mei 1945, 2017), 190–91. The casualty number includes two German military personnel, but there may have been more German dead.

21 Philippe Lejeune, "'Rien.' Journaux du 14 juillet 1789," in *Le bonheur de la littérature*, ed. Christine Montalbetti and Jacques Neefs (Presses Universitaires de France, 2005): 277–84.

22 "Dinsdag, 9 september. Om 5.50 opgestaan. Schoon schip gemaakt, rommel uit 't ruim gehaald, naar de beurs geweest, ik de eerste reis aangenomen na de oorlog, cocus van Utrecht naar Amsterdam."

and from these waters they made a living. Some people called them "water gypsies."[23] They were wanderers, always on the move. Home was where the barge was, which could be anywhere. And yet they always knew where to find each other. The *Op hoop van welvaart* was usually moored at Houthaven, where it lay next to many other barges. This was one of the most important places for inland waterway skippers to meet. The Beurs van Berlage was another important meeting place, often mentioned in Doorneveld's diaries. He also recorded going to the yearly Skippers' Christmas, first held at the Nieuwezijdskapel at Rokin,[24] later at the Nassaukerk at De Wittenkade, both Protestant churches.

Doorneveld first mentioned Bep Hoorn on 23 April 1948, when he recorded calling her on the phone. She, too, came from an inland skipper's family; they met at the skippers' youth club. After their first phone call, they met regularly and on 3 May 1948 Doorneveld wrote in his diary: "in the evening brought flowers to American Hotel." This still is a well-known hotel on the Leidseplein where Bep worked as a chambermaid.[25] Later that year, she got a job as a cleaning lady at the Binnengasthuis hospital. Doorneveld brought her to work many times. Whenever they could, they went for long walks in Vondelpark or one of Amsterdam's many other parks. Since they both still lived with their parents, it was hard to find any privacy. Public parks were the ideal meeting place for a young couple without a place of their own.

After many walks in the park, Adriaan and Bep got engaged on 6 June 1949, exactly five years after D-Day. Contrary to his habit, Doorneveld included the year in his diary entry, underlined. It signifies how important the engagement day was to him; he knew he was writing history. The diary entry is also exceptional in another sense. After years of seemingly emotionless entries, Doorneveld now showed himself overwhelmed by love and joy, which is not only evident from his choice of words and underlinings, but also from the atypical use of exclamation marks.

> Monday, 6 June. 2nd Pentecost Day 1949. Got up at 8.45. Went to "my Bepske," walked together and went to Westerpark. There got engaged at 11.15!! This was the best moment in our lives until now!!! [underlined thrice—LVH].[26]

23 Interview, Aart Doorneveld.

24 Since 2005 the Amsterdam Dungeon has been situated in a former church.

25 "'s Avonds bloemen naar American-hotel gebracht." Aart confirmed that his mother used to work there.

26 "Maandag, 6 juni. 2e Pinksterdag 1949. Om 8.45 opgestaan. Naar "mijn Bepske," gegaan, samen gewandeld en naar Westerpark gegaan. Daar ons om 11.15 verloofd!! Dit was tot nog toe het mooiste ogenblik in ons leven!!!"

In the years leading up to their marriage, there are recurring lyrical passages about Bep in the diary. Paradoxically, Doorneveld became both more candid and at the same time more secretive when he wrote about his beloved. Many of these passages include one or several crosses, for instance on Saturday, 22 April 1950: "In the evening went to Vondelpark with my sweetheart 'my Beppekind', had xxx for a while with my dearest" [underlined by Doorneveld].[27] The use of symbols in diaries is not uncommon; usually they function as a code for bodily or erotic information.[28] In Doorneveld's diary, the crosses probably refer to some kind of romantic engagement, as he only wrote them down after having spent a happy evening with his fiancée.

The engagement lasted nearly five years, probably due to financial reasons. Both Adriaan and Bep lived with their parents aboard their family barges (respectively, the *Op hoop van welvaart* and the *Disponibel*). It was only after Adriaan's parents had moved to a house in Amsterdam Noord (Urkstraat 39) in March 1953 that he and Bep were able to get married. The wedding ceremony was on 17 March 1953 in Nieuwe Kerk at Dam Square, after which Bep could finally join Adriaan on the *Op hoop van welvaart*.[29] From that day, the lyrical passages and x's abruptly disappear from the diary. But Adriaan stayed deeply in love with Bep, according to their son.[30] He just didn't need an outlet for his romantic feelings anymore, since the object of his love was now every day at his side.

The couple had two sons: Adri in 1956 and Aart in 1961. The family spent most of their time on the water, Bep often standing behind the steering wheel. She was a more confident skipper than Adriaan, who was sometimes nervous about the weather conditions.[31] Maritime historian Ruud Filarski notes that traditional gender patterns did not always apply aboard barges: "Skipper's wives were in many respects more emancipated than their sisters onshore." Not only did they help steer the barge, but many of them also did the financial administration.[32] In addition, male skippers were also more emancipated than their counterparts on land. In our case, Bep did the cooking, but Adriaan participated in maintaining the household in all

27 "'s Avonds samen met mijn schattebout 'mijn Beppekind' naar Vondelpark geweest, nog fijn even xxx gehad met mijn liefste."

28 On the use of symbols in diaries for self-tracking, see: Leonieke Vermeer, "From Diaries to Data Doubles: Self-Tracking in Dutch Diaries (1780–1940)," *Life Writing* 19, no. 2 (2022): 215–40, https://doi.org/10.1080/14484528.2021.1971057.

29 Doorneveld and Doorneveld, *Van schepenen tot schippers*, 110.

30 Interview, Aart Doorneveld.

31 Interviews, Aart and Adri Doorneveld.

32 Filarski, *Tegen de stroom in*, 245.

sorts of ways, as is, for instance, shown by this enumeration in his diary on 16 February 1962: "peeled potatoes, slept, made everything storm-proof, sewed buttons on clothes, made rug around steering seat, got groceries, beat out rugs, pasted in cigar bands for Adri."[33] According to his diary, he must have peeled thousands of potatoes over the years.

Wandering the Streets (1966–2002)

When the barge was docked in Amsterdam, their eldest son, Adri, attended a school for skippers' children.[34] Adriaan, Bep and young Aart usually stayed on the barge, except for weekend outings to the cinema and occasional visits to the Bijenkorf department store at Dam Square. This routine drastically changed in 1966, when the *Op hoop van welvaart* was sold. The family moved to a house at Nigellestraat 84, near Florapark in Amsterdam Noord.[35] Adriaan began working at the Amsterdam ferry. In 1980, he was interviewed by the weekly magazine *Nieuwe Revu* for a short article titled "Three Hundred Times Back and Forth Every Week." In the interview, Doorneveld explained his career change because of his youngest son's allergies.[36] The boy would often have breathing difficulties on the barge, especially when it was transporting a load of dusty grain.[37]

There is no reference in his diary to this or any other motivation to leave the *Op hoop van welvaart*. What does become clear from the diaries is that Doorneveld transported far fewer loads in the early 1960s than in the 1950s. It was a hard time economically for inland shipping throughout the Netherlands, particularly for towed barges. During the harsh winter of 1962–63, Doorneveld had to rely on welfare because many waterways were frozen.[38] Spring brought some relief, but not much. Traditional towed barges such as the *Op hoop van welvaart*, which had no motor of their own and were dependent on tug boats, suffered from the rapidly increasing competition with both truck transport and motorized cargo ships. By 1966, the traditional

33 "aardappelen geschild, geslapen, alles stormvast gezet, knopen aan kleren gezet, kleedje om stuurstoel gemaakt, boodschappen gedaan, kleedjes geklopt, sigarenbandjes ingeplakt voor Adri."

34 At 1e Nassaustraat. Interview, Adri Doorneveld.

35 In 2014, Florapark and Volewijkspark were joined and renamed Noorderpark.

36 "Elke week driehonderd keer op en neer," *Nieuwe Revu* 51, 19 December 1980.

37 Interview, Adri Doorneveld.

38 In January and February 1963, Doorneveld frequently mentions going to "Soc: Zaken" (Social Affairs) to get money.

towing trade was rapidly disappearing from the Dutch waters.[39] Meanwhile, the city of Amsterdam was investing in its harbour industry, and the ferry services were expanding. Thus, Doorneveld's career shift seems economically motivated, besides the health of his youngest son.[40]

Unfortunately, just after the municipal transport company (GVB) had hired several new skippers, including Doorneveld, the tide turned for the Amsterdam ferry services. The opening of the Coentunnel in the summer of 1966, followed by the IJtunnel in 1968, greatly reduced the demand for transport of cars across the IJ by ferry.[41] For Adriaan Doorneveld, this meant he had to wait for no less than twelve years before he was allowed to sail a ferry on his own.[42] On Tuesday 25 April 1978 he could finally write in his diary: "This was the first time I officially sailed as skipper!"[43] Until then, he had sold tickets on the ferry and helped maintain the ferryboats. Having navigated all waters in the wide Amsterdam area, the job was hardly challenging. On the positive side: working conditions at GVB were relatively good, so he had more money to spend and a lot more free time.

Limited to the fixed ferry routes, Doorneveld found new ways to satisfy his wanderlust. He started going for long cycling tours and walks through the city, for hours on end, sometimes with Bep or a friend but usually alone. This was mostly on weekends, and sometimes in the afternoon after a night shift on the ferry. For instance, on Tuesday 6 July 1967, he wrote: "in the afternoon cycled by myself along Piet-Hein, -Handels, -Java, -Sumatra, Erts, -Panama—and Borneoquay, Verbindingsdam, Zeeburgerquay, IJdijk en Orange Locks"[44] This particular cycling route indicates nostalgia for his former life on the water, but his wanderings through the city were far from limited to the waterfront. He explored all the city parks, not just those in the north of Amsterdam, and generally roamed the city wherever and whenever he could. Some of these walks were organized, like in 1975, when the city celebrated its seven-hundredth birthday. Saturday, 19 April: "From

39 Harry de Groot, *Volaan vooruit. Binnenvaart van opdrukker tot duwboot* (De Alk B.V., 1989), 68.

40 Doeko Bosscher, "De oude en de nieuwe stad," in *Geschiedenis van Amsterdam 1900–2000. Tweestrijd om de hoofdstad,* ed, Piet de Rooy (SUN, 2007): 348–51.

41 P. H. Kiers, *Een Eeuw Gemeenteveren* (Stichting Amsterdams Openbaar Vervoer Museum, 1999), 29.

42 D. Bosch, "Amsterdamse gemeenteveren bestaan 100 jaar. 'Soms was het net de marine,'" *De Stem,* 19 December 1997, A2.

43 "Dit was de eerste keer dat ik officieel als schipper gevaren heb!"

44 "'s middags alleen langs de o.a. de Piet-Hein, -Handels, -Java, -Sumatra, Erts, -Panama, – en Borneokade, Verbindingsdam, Zeeburgerkade, IJdijk en Oranjesluizen gefietst" [interpunction Doorneveld].

11. until 15.30 went on a city walk with Lammert v/d Veen, in the context of: 'Amsterdam-700.'"[45]

This was not the first time Doorneveld showed an interest in the city's history. In fact, his bookshelves were filled with history books.[46] As a boy, he did not have the opportunity to attend secondary school. He began working at his parents' barge after primary school, at the age of twelve or thirteen. However, unlike most skippers of his generation, he became an avid reader and he creatively pursued his own higher education, whenever possible.[47] He had broad interests, but most of all the history of Amsterdam. In October 1967, he started an evening course in local history ("A:dam Heemkennis") at the renowned Vossius Gymnasium.[48] Soon after, he subscribed to *Ons Amsterdam*, the monthly local historical magazine. He regularly had the issues bound—organized as he was.[49]

After his early retirement (*vervroegd uittreden*, VUT) in 1986, Doorneveld started a remarkable new phase in his self-education. He developed a great interest in art history, particularly the Dutch masters of the seventeenth century.[50] Before his retirement, he rarely visited a museum. However, as a pensioner, visiting museums in Amsterdam became one of his favourite pastimes. He did not take half measures. The word "museum" is mentioned 983 times in his diaries; the word "*tentoonstelling*" ("exhibition") 883 times—not counting museum visits elsewhere on holiday. In the 1990s he visited at least three exhibitions a week in different Amsterdam museums, sometimes even three a day. He also attended countless lectures in museums and community centres. The topics of these lectures were not exclusively historical: they ranged from Anatolia to Amsterdam's former police stations.[51] Doorneveld was not picky in his choice of museums, either; he must have been inside every museum of Amsterdam, small or big. His favourites, according to the number of mentions in his diary, were the Amsterdam Historical Museum[52]

45 "Vanaf 11.00 tot 15.30 hebben Lammert v/d Veen en ik een wandeling door de stad gemaakt, in het kader van: 'Amsterdam–700.'" Lammert van der Veen was his cousin and good friend.

46 Both sons remember their father reading a lot and owning hundreds of books. Interviews, Adri and Aart Doorneveld.

47 Filarski, *Tegen de stroom in*, 244.

48 He first mentioned this course on 25 October 1967. The final lecture was on 24 April 1968, according to his diary.

49 First mentioned 21 February 1972.

50 Interviews, Adri and Aart Doorneveld.

51 Respectively, 20 January 1992, at the Ons Huis community centre (Mosveld), and 1 December 1993, at the De Gouwe community centre (Beemsterstraat).

52 He first mentions the museum 25 September 1971, when he visited the exhibition *Amsterdamse Stadsportretten*.

and the Rijksmuseum.[53] Just another day in the pensioner's life of Adriaan Doorneveld, Thursday, 27 May 1999:

> Visited Amsterdam Historical Museum, a.o. the exhibition: '*A Cathedral on the Y*' (St Nicolaas Church). After that visited R.M. [Rijksmuseum], the exhibitions:
> '*The 1899 Peace Conference*,' '7 Year Old Children' (photo's), 'The Sea in Pocket Size' (nautical models from the 19th century) [...]. After visited Rembrandt House, saw the exhibition: "Goethe and Rembrandt" (drawings). Then looked up several things in the city, related to: 'Local *History* – Ons Amsterdam.'[54]

This is a typical Doorneveld diary entry: short, factual recordings; no emotions or value judgements. However, the sheer enumeration is impressive, especially considering the fact that it comes from a seventy-four-year-old retired skipper.

"Did Not Get Any Further"

Having read these thirty notebooks, one thing is evident: Doorneveld was constantly on the move in and around Amsterdam, either on the water or on land. Yet his diary kept the same format, for nearly sixty years. Doorneveld was a systematic man. His diary primarily served as an external memory aid, but it was more than that. Writing in his diary was an instrument to keep a grip on life, clearing the deck at the end of each day. On the one hand, he was a restless wanderer and, on the other hand, a man of habits. And he was an Amsterdammer through and through. Doorneveld's Amsterdam evolved from a city of water, to a city of streets and parks, to a city of history and museums. The city always played a central part in his life, and his curiosity to get to know it better never ceased.

The last entry in Doorneveld's diary is of Friday 4 October, 2002, five months before his death. He was already suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

53 First mentioned on 10 April 1950.

54 "Het Amsterdams Historisch Museum bezocht, o.a. de tentoonstelling: 'Een kathedraal a/h Y' (de St Nicolaaskerk) bezocht. Daarna het R.M. bezocht, de tentoonstellingen: 'De vredesconferentie van 1899,' 'Kinderen van 7 jaar' (foto's), 'De zee op zakformaat' (Nautische modellen uit de 19e eeuw). [...] Hierna het Rembrandthuis bezocht, de tentoonstelling: 'Goethe en Rembrandt' (tekeningen) bekeken. Toen in de stad diverse dingen opgezocht, die betrekking hebbende op: 'Heemkennis-Ons Amsterdam.'"

His handwriting, although still neat, had become slightly shaky. But he still used the same red pen as always, writing: "Got up 9.10. Did various things." And then, after a blank: "did not get any further."[55]

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55 "om 9.10 opgestaan. Div. dingen gedaan. niet verder gekomen" (underlined by Doorneveld).

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