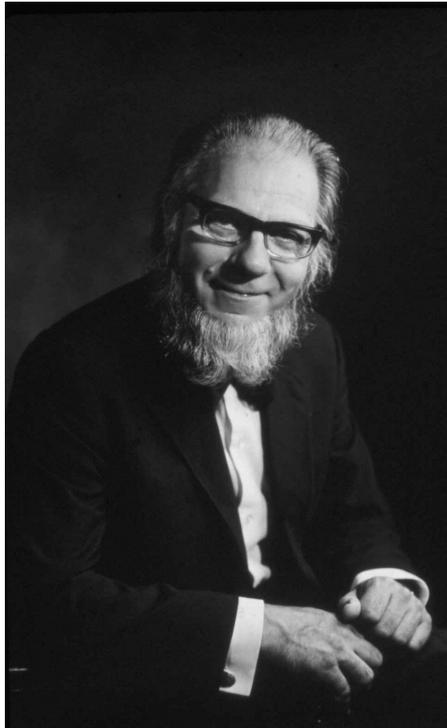


Leen 't Hart (1920-1992)

his influence on the carillon art worldwide

Presentation for the 9th Congress of the World Carillon Federation
Chambéry, France, 1994.

dr L.J. Meilink-Hoedemaker
Rotterdam, the Netherlands



Leen 't Hart

Introduction by Alfred Lesecq, president of the Guilde des Carillonneurs de France

During the preparation for this congress, many people talked to me about Leen 't Hart. He is certainly not the only person who left us since the Zutphen Congress, but several people came forward on his behalf and asked that we pay him homage. At the same time Laura Meilink offered to present a paper on Leen 't Hart. I therefor willingly accepted.

Mr President, Ladies and gentlemen

It is a pleasure and an honour to speak to you to day on the occasion of the 8th World Carillon Federation congress. In my presentation, I will summarize the work of my on going study on Leen 't Hart. Leen 't Hart himself has assisted me with this study from 1991 until his death in 1992, by giving me ample opportunity to use his archives. Subsequent to his death in 1992, his wife Rie and family have collaborated, in order to complete the study within a reasonable time.

When we speak of Leen 't Hart we are referring to an accomplished musician, who worked as a carillonneur and an organist for more than 50 years, and was responsible for the Netherlands Carillon School for 30 years. I will provide you an overview concerning the activities of Leen 't Hart and his influence world wide as a musician and teacher. In this presentation I will consider these professional activities of Leen 't Hart within the framework of the five decades, beginning in 1943, with the start of his professional career.

First decade: 1943-1953

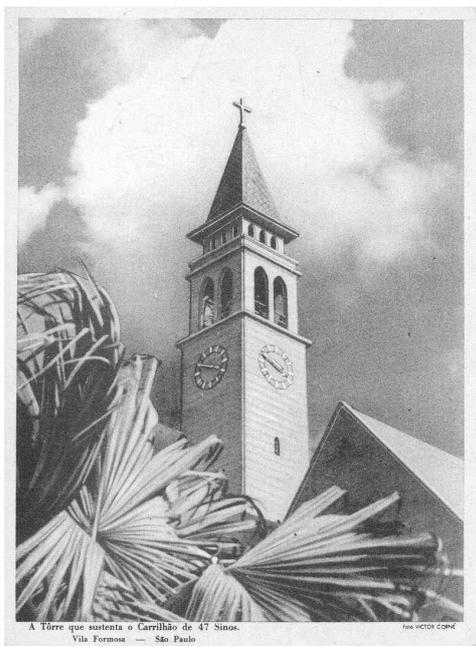
1a. Biography and career

After his study with Delft city carillonneur Jan Hendrik Storm, and his appointment in 1943 as city carillonneur of Delft with Rien Ritter, Leen 't Hart continued his studies with Ferdinand Timmermans in Rotterdam and Staf Nees in Mechelen. He won prize of Rotterdam in 1949 and got his final diploma with great distinction from the Mechelen School in 1950. In 1952, Leen 't Hart and Rien Ritter were appointed to the carillonneur's position in Leiden, after which Leen won the the national carillon contest in Utrecht in 1953. In 1953 he was appointed as city carillonneur of Amersfoort.

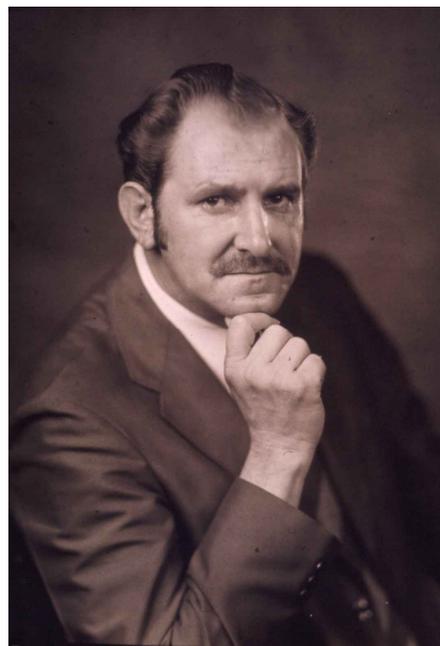
1b. International

Internationally Leen 't Hart was making an impact as well. In 1951 he traveled to Brasil, to inaugurate the carillon of Vila Formosa, and to teach local carillonneur Adacir Ferrari.

This first decade can be considered as a basis for his career as a recitalist and as a familyman.



Bell-tower of Vila Formosa



Acadir Ferrari

Second decade: 1953-1963

2a. Biography and career

Soon after his appointment in 1953 as city carillonneur of Amersfoort, Leen 't Hart was invited to become the teacher of the recently founded carillon class of the Toonkunst Muziekschool of Amersfoort. In 1956 the carillon class of Amersfoort became a self supporting foundation of which Leen became director. He held this position until his retirement in 1984. In 1957, Leen 't Hart succeeded Ferdinand Timmermans as city carillonneur of Rotterdam, his fourth position as city carillonneur.



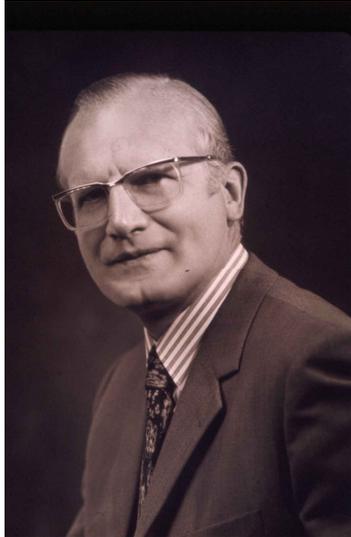
Amersfoort - Carillon-school - 1957



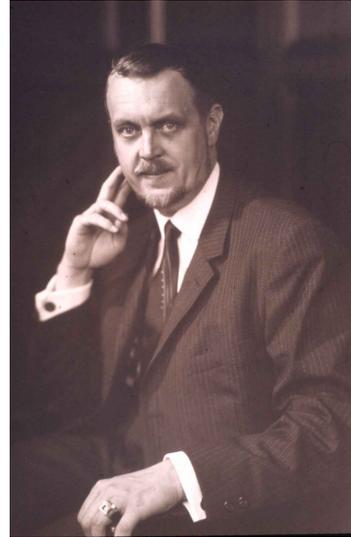
Amersfoort - Tower of prisoners - 1957

2b. International

In this decade Leen 't Hart had some personal contacts with people from Sweden, including several visits and lessons. Including in this listing are bellfounder Lars Bergholz from Sigtuna, Hugo Melin, Par Ahlblom, Lars Magnus Holmback from Visby and his successor Lars Hernquist. He inspected the bells for the carillon of Västerås. In Denmark there were contacts in Odense, Faaborg and Svendborg with Johannes Sørensen. In 1957 Leen 't Hart inspected and played the carillon for Kassel, Germany, at the foundry of Schilling at Heidelberg. Following the installation of this carillon at Kassel, he played the inauguration recital at Easter of that year. As a result of Leen 't Hart's efforts at Kassel, more cities in Germany got interested in the carillon. Consequently carillons in Frankfurt am Main, Hannover, and Heidelberg, all by Schilling, were inaugurated by Leen 't Hart. He came into contact with Johann Baumann from Hannover, Manfred Bägel from Ibbenbüren, Marie-Louise Fürer from Kassel and Gerhard Holzner from Frankfurt am Main. In 1961 Leen 't Hart gave the first lessons to Deacenesses Lore and Barbara. Reinhardt Menger came for lessons to Amersfoort where he got his diploma in 1962. Karl-Friedrich Waack from Hannover came for the first time for lessons to Amersfoort in 1963.



Karl-Friedrich Waack from Hanovre



Jacques Lannoy from Northern France

In Belgium Leen 't Hart gave a number of recitals and he inspected some new carillons for cities such as Genk and Tongerlo, at the request of the Dutch bellfounders. From 1957 Leen 't Hart and his French colleague, Jacques Lannoy, regularly traveled to and fro for recitals in Rotterdam and Saint Amand les Eaux.

The Dutch government invited Leen 't Hart to participate in the carillon festival of Cobh, Ireland, in 1958, where he was awarded in all three categories of a carillon contest, being interpretation, arranging and improvising. In 1962 and 1963 Leen 't Hart played a travelling carillon at the summer Festival of Scarborough, England, but as this was mainly a commercial more than an artistic event, he did not accept further invitations.

After Percival Price's article on Leen 't Hart in the GCNA Bulletin of January 1955, Leen 't Hart drew attention in the United States of America. Daniel Robins from Chicago was the first American who came for lessons to Leen 't Hart. In the beginning these lessons were given in Delft. In 1961 Leen 't Hart and Romke de Waard inspected the bells for the carillon of Springfield, Illinois; and along with Arthur Bigelow and Staf Nees, he inaugurated this carillon in 1962.

In 1959 Leen 't Hart travelled again to South America, this time to inaugurate the carillon of the Cathedral of São Paulo, Brasil. The contacts with Adacir Ferrari were renewed.

This second decade can be considered as important for the founding of the Carillon School. Students from abroad, mainly from Scandinavia and Germany, came for lessons to Amersfoort. The first contacts with carillonneurs in North America were established.

Third decade: 1963-1973

3a. Biography and career

In 1968 Leen 't Hart celebrated his 25 years as city carillonneur of Delft. In this same year he suffered and survived from a heart attack. After a period of recovery he was forced to stop playing the carillon by 1973. The reason for this was mainly the climbing of stairs.

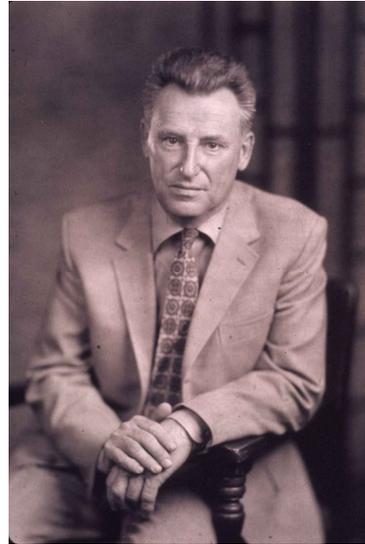
3b. International

Meanwhile there were still incidental contacts with people from Sweden, concurrent with meetings with people in Danmark. Leen 't Hart visited cities such as Varde, Faaborg, Silkeborg, Aalborg and Copenhagen, ending up in Holstebro and Løgumkloster in 1973. Gradually these cities renewed Dutch carillons, which Leen 't Hart inaugurated. Leen 't Hart was invited to teach Danish musicians Aksel Anderson and Ib Morup the basics of carillon instruction. He gave a masterclass in Aalborg. The existing contacts with friends in Germany were intensified and Karl Friedrich Waack from Hannover graduated from the Amersfoort School in 1968.

Of course there were the regular contacts with Belgian colleagues Staf Nees and later with Piet van den Broek. In 1972 there were the consecutive congresses in Mechelen and Rotterdam. In France, Leen 't Hart had regular contact with Jacques Lannoy and in Switzerland Walter Meierhans started his activities with the Albert Schweitzer Carillon of Libingen. Incidentally there were concerts in England, for example in 1970 in Loughborough. Maria Dolores Coll from Barcelona, Spain, took her first lessons in Amersfoort in the late sixties.



Piet van de Broek from Mechelen, Belgium



Walter Meierhans from Switzerland

In the United States of America, former student Lowell Smith got an appointment in Riverside, California, and he invited Leen 't Hart in 1968 to give a masterclass. In 1971 former student Dick Hudson Ladd, who was appointed at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, was able to form a class where a bachelor's and master's degree in carillon performing were possible. Later, Dick Ladd made a translation of 't Hart's book on campanology and published it. Dick Ladd was the first American carillonneur to obtain the Prix d'Excellence for carillon performance, in 1972.

In 1973 Leen 't Hart gave a masterclass in Bloomington, Indiana, with students of Arie Abbenes, then resident carillonneur, and in Ann Arbor with students of Dick Hudson Ladd and Beverly Buchanan. At the end of the tour of 1973 Leen 't Hart gave some private lessons in Charlotte in the state of North Carolina. He was involved in a discussion on keyboard standards and he was an advisor for the renovation of the Netherlands Carillon in Arlington, Virginia. From 1964 until 1976, Leen 't Hart performed almost every year at the Springfield Festival. In addition, he tried to attend the annual meeting of the GCNA. Exception is 1966, when the examinations of the school in Amersfoort were scheduled in the same period as the Springfield Festival. At the GCNA meetings, Leen 't Hart heard the advancement recitals of American students and he selected some of them for further studies in Amersfoort. In 1968 Marjorie Tibbets and Margot Halsted came to Leen's attention. Janet Dundore came in 1971 for lessons to the Netherlands. And it was in the class of 1973 in Indianapolis, that Leen 't Hart got into contact with Todd Fair en William Austin. Herman Bergink from Victoria BC Canada came in 1968 for lessons to Amersfoort. In 1969 Leen 't Hart gave the first of many recitals in Victoria. Leen made a grammophone record in Victoria for fundraising purposes.

This third decade saw the development of the Amersfoort School and the basis for 't Hart's influence on the carillon art in the USA, mainly via his former students Dick Ladd and Lowell Smith. In his report of November 1972 to the board of the school Leen 't Hart says proudly: 'The system of auditions in the USA, the masterclasses and the final lessons in Amersfoort is good.' Indeed, three of his American students were awarded the Prix d' Excellence. Dick Hudson Ladd, Larry Weinstein and Timothy Hurd. In this same decade, however, the heart attack of 1968 is a marking point in his career. It drew his attention from performing towards teaching, but at the same time he focused his attention from Europe to the United States.

Fourth decade. 1973-1983

4a. Biography and career

Leen 't Hart developed hypertension, which forced him to retire in 1974 as an active carillonneur, and thus as a city carillonneur, from his various positions. In 1981 he underwent a coronary bypass operation.

4b. International

In 1974 Leen 't Hart gave private lessons in the United States to the students of Ann Arbor, Michigan. He wrote the Ann Arbor Suite for them. In 1975 he was invited for a masterclass in Riverside, California, and again for private lessons in Ann Arbor and in Charlotte. When he became a member of the Advancement Recital Committee of the GCNA, he introduced his guidelines for carillon playing in the United States. An English version by Lowell Smith, of his book on improvising did not become a reality, but 'Carillon playing' was published.

Unfortunately the class of Ann Arbor deteriorated rapidly, due to lack of interest of Dick Ladd. But other former pupils taught their own students now. From now on members of a new generation of Dutch carillonneurs went to the States, Jacques Maassen, Bernard Winsemius and Arie Abbenes being the first among them.

The 1980 inauguration of the Berkeley carillon was a special happening. The Berkeley Suite is connected to this event. Although the contacts with the carillonneurs of the USA are most eye catching for those who stayed in The Netherlands, there were important developments in Canada, Australia and in Europe too.



Richard Hudson Ladd of Michigan - USA



Janet Dundore of Philadelphia - USA

The two deaconesses from Hannover came again for lessons as did Barbara Tanner and Walter Meierhans, both from Switzerland, and Maria Dolores Coll from Spain. Leen 't Hart played the inauguration recital in Barcelona at Christmas 1976. Carillons were installed in Holstebro, Vejle and Kolding and students from Scandinavian countries came to The Netherlands for lessons, among them Peter Moller from Logumkloster, Grethe Stuhr from Holstebro, Ulla Laage from Copenhagen, Hans Mollerup from Svendborg, Otto Kobke from Holbaek and Jane Lauridsen Ostergaard from Kolding. These activities in Scandinavia culminated in the Logumkloster congress of 1982. As this was the year after the bypass operation, Leen 't Hart just participated and did not play an active role.

From Canada Herman Bergink from Victoria B.C. came for lessons to Amersfoort in 1975 and 1978, as did John Shepherd from Loughborough, Great Britain, in 1977 and John Barrett from Canberra in 1975 and 1978. In return Leen 't Hart gave in 1979 a masterclass in Sydney and in Canberra, Australia, to Paul Innes, Suzanne Magassey, Reginald Walker and others.

In 1973, Leen 't Hart did some brainstorming on an international carillon organization with Milford Myhre, sitting in Beverly Buchanan's garden in Michigan. He had initialized these plans in 1972 in Rotterdam and worked out with Jacques Lannoy in Douai in 1974. In 1977 and he 1978 he did not tour

the United States as he needed a lot of time for the preparations of the congress of Amersfoort in 1978. Here in his own city the World Carillon Federation (WCF) should become a reality. He did not manage to have his 'Dictionary on carillon terminology' ready for presentation then. This fourth decade can be characterized by greater concert tours, by friendship links with the families Ladd and Dundore and with a lot of teaching activities. Moreover a World Carillon Federation was established.

Fifth decade. 1983-1993

5a. Biography and career

On the 21th of January 1984 Leen 't Hart retired as a director of the Netherlands Carillon School, just two days after the celebration of 40 years of marriage, which was not known to most of us in the Netherlands.

5b. International.

As Rie underwent surgery for a hernia, in 1984, Leen had to cancel his tour throughout the United States, but he managed to travel to Chateaufort for a visit to Meierhans and for a holiday and recitals in Spain. Thanks from informal contact with Louis Samaranich, then President of Cataluna, Leen managed to have Maria Dolores Coll organize monthly recitals in Barcelona. He performed a number of these concerts in Spain himself. He visited Danmark in 1983 incidentally. The concert tour through the USA, connected to the WCF Congress of 1986 in Ann Arbor, Michigan, was his last performance tour.



Burton Tower in Michigan Ann Arbor

From now on, he concentrated on composition and publishing. His dictionary however was rejected by the WCF, so he published it privately in 1990. Leen retired more and more. He did not participate in the 1990 WCF congress of Zutphen, the Netherlands. His last great composition was the Whitemarsh Suite of 1992, commissioned by Janet Dundore, and completed one month before his death.



M-D Coll, Leen 't Hart and A-M Reverté - Barcelona



't Hart teaches A-M Reverté - Barcelona

Summary

This overview of the life of Leen 't Hart was focused on his influence on carillon activities all over the world. I will finish this presentation by quoting one of his most devoted students, Janet Dundore, as she wrote in 1984: There has never been, or ever will be, a greater teacher or a truer, more trusted friend.

Sources

From the archives of Leen 't Hart himself:

- diaries
- correspondence on concert tours
- collection of news paper clippings
- annual reports to the board of the Carillon School

Programme booklets of the city of Rotterdam

Reviews in local newspapers of the cities of Rotterdam and of Delft

Archives of bell foundries

Minutes of the Board Meetings of the Guild of Carillonneurs in North America

Leen 't Harts books Handbook, Carillon Playing and Campanology

Discussion

Arie Abbenes: It was very friendly of you to mention that Leen 't Hart was invited to Bloomington during my stay there but I cannot remember it. I never did that invitation.

The second remark I want to make is that it is also very friendly that I was mentioned as one of the first Dutchmen who went to the United States in that certain period but I was not a student of Leen 't Hart. I was a student of Peter Bakker and Piet van den Broek.

Laura Meilink: You are completely right about that last but I did not mention you as a student but I said 'a new generation of Dutch carillonneurs'. So in the book it will be correct.

Anna Maria Reverté: I would like to mention our fond memory of Leen 't Hart as teacher, musician and man, and also to congratulate Laura Meilink on her exposé, since I think that Leen 't Hart was someone who helped a lot in campanology's development. I would also like to make a small correction. I think that the inauguration (of the carillon in Barcelona) took place in 1976, not in 1979.

Laura Meilink: Maria Dolores Coll told me that, but I can change it in the final text.

Anna Maria Reveré: It was only a small correction. I really wanted you to know how warmly we remember him. I think I speak for several others amongst us. Thank you.

Alfred Leseq: Thank you Laura Meilink.

Slides from the Leen 't Hart archives

After the recitals in Springfield, Illinois, USA performers were sent to a photographer's studio for a portrait to be taken. Leen 't Hart received a set of these portraits, dating from 1964 up to 1974. Some of the artists of 20 years ago are present today at the Chambéry Congress. The slides are incorporated in this text.