

# Feels Like ... Home

Last December I traveled with my family to California. I had been there several times before and it was great being back. I have always had a weak spot for the USA, a love that was undoubtedly passed on to me by my father and grandmother who always shared their fond memories of their times in the Los Angeles area with me.

**T**hey moved there in the sixties, like so many other Indos. But they returned to the Netherlands, always being a little homesick for Whittier.

This time I not only went to California to enjoy the beautiful national parks and cities with my children, but also to attend the SoCal Indo kumpulan organized by Michael Passage. He had invited me to speak at the event about *Moesson* and the *Indo International*, about the history behind the publications and about sharing stories. I felt honored to attend the event and was happy to speak about the magazine my grandfather started. I really hadn't known what to expect of the event. Would there be many people? Would anyone want to listen to this Dutch woman talking about Indo heritage?

Upon arrival I have to admit that the brightly lit conference room at the Indonesian embassy felt a little cold and too big. But it didn't take much time before a comfortable and familiar feeling spread the room. People started pouring in, greeting and hugging each other warmly, sharing smiles and laughter. Familiar Indo Dutch phrases - *Ló, jij ook hier? Adoeh zo lekker, tjendoll!* - coming from all directions, be it that the Dutch was mixed with an American accent.

Whatever I may have expected, I had never expected it to feel this comfortable and so welcome. It felt like home. Which is amazing, considering the many miles between Los Angeles and The Hague. Considering that I am a Dutch Indo, born and raised

in the Netherlands, and that most attendees were American Indos, or had grown to be American Indos. But there you have it, that common denominator: we are all Indos. And no matter where we live now, be it Australia, Canada, Taiwan, the Netherlands or the USA, we all share the same history and have all been passed on, in some degree or other, the same *Indische* values and traditions by our grandparents and parents. And that binds us and creates a beautiful sense of belonging.

It's something to be proud of, something to cherish.

Vinam





- REPORT -

# An interrupted *life*

Countless Moluccans and Indo-Dutch people who came to the Netherlands in the 1950s suffered from tuberculosis. Many were already distributed among Dutch sanatoriums before their arrival, others soon after. There, they often spent years in quarantine and that was hard on them. Especially for the mothers who had to miss their children all that time.

By Anton van Renssen

**W**hat are you still doing here, you should have been dead a

long time ago', a TB doctor at the Bergen Bosch sanatorium near Bilthoven said to Frans Kayatoo, who had been repatriated from Indonesia. 'Your lungs are full of holes.' Thanks to the good care in the Netherlands, Frans survived. In Indonesia, his chances would have been nil. Tuberculosis is the deadliest infectious disease in the world, with 1.5 million victims every year. In the 1950s, the survival rate in the Netherlands was much higher than in Indonesia. TB was largely under control there, although many sanatoriums for so-called lung sufferers had not yet been closed.

For example, Ineke Leidelmeijer from Oosterhout



*Entrance Sanatorium Dekkerswald, archive Fam. Leidelmeijer.*

arrived in the Netherlands with her parents on the Johan van Oldenbarnevelt in 1955. During the crossing, the then seven-year-old Ineke had her own cabin with her father, brothers, and sister, while her mother lay in the sick-barracks with tuberculosis.

The children were kept ignorant of the latter. Otherwise, they would want to go to see her all the time. After arriving in Amsterdam, Mother Leidelmeijer immediately left for the Catholic sanatorium Dekkerswald near Nijmegen. The children went to Grandma, while Father went to work. Less than two months later, Ineke and her two-year-old brother Alex also ended up in Dekkerswald as TB patients. Ineke lived in the girls' ward separately from her mother, who was in the women's ward, and from her



# 'What are you doing here? You should have been dead a long time ago. Your lungs are full of holes'

little brother, who lived in the boys' ward. In sanatoriums, patients were categorized according to age and gender. 'I ended up in a ward for girls up to the age of 14', says Ineke. 'I was one of two Indo children there.' Philip Manuhua was also separated from his parents and brothers and sisters when the entire family was admitted to sanatorium Oranje Nassau's Oord in 1960. The family came from the Moluccan Camp Overbroek near Ochten.

## Social work

Because TB is extremely contagious, the government in The Hague paid a lot of attention to the reception and care of infected returnees. Sometimes, doctors and social workers would already distribute TB sufferers among sanatoriums during the crossing. As harsh as it may sound, the arrival of new patients did temporarily generate more income for many sanatoriums that were largely becoming vacant. The distribution was mostly based on religious affiliation. For example, many Catholics went to Dekkerswald, Protestants to sanatorium Sonnevancik near Harderwijk, or the Protestant Volkssanatorium in Hellendoorn. A two-year-old girl was admitted to Maria Auxiliatrix near Venlo, which catered to Catholic children. Other Catholic children went to the Roman Catholic sanatorium Emma Oord in Zevenaar, between Arnhem and Doetinchem, and many adult Catholic men ended up in the sanato-

rium Kalorama in Beek, near Nijmegen. This was also the case for twelve men who arrived on June 11, 1958, on the Johan van Oldenbarnevelt. Rosalie Peperzak and widow Julia Roquas were among the many patients. Both were Catholic and ended up in neutral Oranje Nassau's Oord near Renkum. Julia Roquas boarded De Grote Beer in Surabaya in 1951 with her husband and seven sons. A month later, she arrived in the Netherlands as a widow and was diagnosed with tuberculosis. Therefore, she stayed in hospitals until 1958. For the past three years, this has been in the sanatorium Oranje Nas-

sau's Oord in the municipality of Wageningen. All those years she hardly saw her children. Four sons ended up in Sint Aloysius, a Catholic home for school-age and working boys in Amsterdam; her youngest son was only a 4-year-old toddler in 1951 and ended up with a foster family in Haarlem. Once patients arrived, community

social workers played an important role. One of them was the young Corrie Verburg, who started working for the municipality of Wageningen in October 1957 at the age of 21. She had to take care of Moluccan and Indo TB patients in Oranje Nassau's Oord. Corrie put her heart and soul into caring for them; even right down to the hefty quarrel with the distinguished medical director. 'I had an argument with that man', she says, 'and do you know why?



*A trip by bus, on the grounds of Oranje Nassau's Oord.  
Archive Family. Moal.*



- REPORT -

# Djarisah,

an outstanding Javanese midwife

Djarisah (1880-1971) was not only a professional midwife but a woman with modern, emancipated ideas about the position of indigenous women.

This, in a nutshell, was the essence of her working life: women were to elevate themselves through education.

She herself was a shining example of what she preached.

By Liesbeth Hesselink

**D**jarisah was born in Modjowarno (East Java) on February 11, 1880. Modjowarno was a Christian community. The mission sought not just to convert the indigenous population to Christianity; far beyond that aim, it aspired to provide education and healthcare. Both boys and girls growing up in this Christian community received education, and Djarisah was no exception. In those days, only 0.1 % Javanese women received some form of education; almost all these girls belonged to the nobility (*priyayi*).

Indonesians had few if any opportunities for further education, and girls had none, but around the time that Djarisah had finished school, the government developed a new follow-up training course exclusively



*Midwives and a Dukun Bayi (1930).  
Photo: courtesy of Charlotte Borggreve.*

meant for indigenous girls: the midwifery training. In 1897 Djarisah started her training to be a midwife.

## Dukun bayi

European physicians in the Indies were almost without exception very negative about the knowledge and the skills of the *dukun bayi* (traditional

midwives); and as early as 1817, the Dutch colonial government attempted to replace the *dukun bayi* with indigenous women who were trained as midwives. The idea was that they would make the *dukun bayi* redundant. In actual practice, however, they never managed to establish a foothold: the indigenous population continued to prefer their trusted *dukun bayi*. The photo, although from a much later date, 1930, shows the marked difference between the *dukun bayi* (on the right) and the midwives (on the left) which





*Modjowarno on East Java marked on a map in 1908*

would also have been apparent in the late nineteenth century. The *dukun* is an elderly woman, dressed as a village woman with her instruments (herbs, rice, an egg) on the table in front of her. The midwives, in contrast, are young, wear white uniforms and display their 'more modern' instruments (obstetric stethoscope and white, hygienic towels).

Towards the end of the nineteenth century a mere two physicians on Java, missionary doctor H. Bervoets in Modjowarno and civil physician in Kediri (East Java) H.B. van Buuren, each trained four young women to become midwives. Two of Van Buuren's students were from Modjowarno, one of whom was Djarisah. The distance between Modjowarno and Kediri, 40 kilometres, may not seem very great to modern people like us. Yet in those times, it was a huge step for a single, young woman to leave her birthplace and parental home. Indigenous young women almost always stayed at home with their parents until they married.

### **Djarisah's career as a midwife**

Two years later, in 1899, all four of Van Buuren's students passed the exam. Having passed her exam, Djarisah continued to work with her tutor in Kediri. After Kediri, Djarisah set up as a midwife in Cheribon (West Java). Van Buuren kept in touch with her, and in one of his publications, he described thirty-nine childbirths from her practice, praising her expertise very highly.

In 1907, Djarisah moved to Bandoeng. Having an independent practice, Djarisah advertised her business on a regular basis. The advertisements targeted her clientele: European, Chinese and Eurasian women, who could afford to pay her a fee and who could read her advertisements. She built up a flourishing practice that earned her good money. She had a servant and her furniture, and the way she had fitted out her house, indicated a certain measure of prosperity. An inventory of her possessions, which included baby scales, suggests that she mainly worked from home.



# Bringing People Together

In January the Indo International was proud to feature Daniel Ungerer on the cover. His portrait in black and white was shot by photographer Andrea Matthies for her series Indische Family names in black and white. On social media, many followers immediately recognized 'Oom Daan', each one referring to him in loving terms. So we asked Andrea to visit Oom Daan and write down his life story.

Text and photographs: Andrea Matthies

**J**ozef Daniel Ungerer, known as Daniel or Daan, was a teenager when the Japanese occupation of the former Dutch East Indies began. Born in on February 28, 1928 in West Sumatra in the town of Fort deKock (now known as Bukittinggi) to Jozef Carl Willem Ungerer and Charlotte Frederika Maria Lindeman, he was one of nine children. One died before the war as a newborn, and another died during the war.

When the Japanese occupation of the Dutch East Indies began, in Daniel's town, the Japanese began imprisoning all people with 50% or more Dutch blood, and as time went on, all Dutch and Dutch Indos were imprisoned regardless of percentage, except for



Daniel's family. You see, his father was head of public works and he controlled the water, the fire department, the zoo, and so on. Fort DeKock was a hilly town, and the General of the Japanese stationed there lived in a part where the water had to be specially diverted to be of use. They needed Daniel's father to help control the flow and direct

it, so he was kept out of prison camp, and still was able to earn half of his regular 500 guilder salary. Daniel recalls that his family never went hungry and that the Japanese supported them by sending bags of rice. They were somehow grateful to Jozef, that he was diverting the water towards their residences. Little do they know that he would also divert water to different places of town. Daniel does recall however, that his



# 'Daniel would climb to the top and change the local time to Japanese time'

father was once taken and was badly beaten as they suspected that he was being sympathetic with the townspeople. All in all, and contrary to most stories I've heard of life during the war, Daniel says he was never personally treated poorly during the war.

At a certain point, the Japanese heard about Jozef's son Daniel and they wanted to put him to work. The Japanese mayor of the town at that time requested that Daniel work for them as a blacksmith. So, at the young age of 15, Daniel learned the trade of blacksmithing. He began by being an assistant blacksmith learning to work on the lathe, the mill, and to heat many different metal substrates. Along with learning that trade, Daniel studied the Japanese language for two of the three years of the occupation. Daniel proved useful to the Japanese because he excelled in his craft. His ability to read the books on blacksmithing that were sent to his father by the Japanese enabled him to constantly improve his skills. One of his jobs was to maintain the performance of the town's giant clock tower. Daniel would climb to the top and change the local time to Japanese time for the soldiers occupying the town which made it easier for communications with their mainland of Japan.

At the end of the Japanese Occupation, and at the start of the Bersiap time, Daniel and his family were relocated to 'protection' camp in Padang with his family which is the capital of Sumatra on the west coast. They stayed there until 1946 when his mother fell ill with stomach cancer. The family was then sent by hospital ship to Batavia (now known as Jakarta) so that she could receive care. Despite the efforts to keep



her alive, she unfortunately passed away in 1947. Daniel's father was then sent to the Netherlands for a vacation by his boss. They stayed for a year, and when it was time to go back to Indonesia, Daniel stayed in the Netherlands to go to HBS. His father returned to Indonesia with 4 of Daniel's siblings and became director of public works for Padang, and stayed

there through the 1950's.

Daniel finished HBS and attended technical school for some time before meeting his wife Gerdy 'Meity' Ungerer. He left technical school and never did get a degree. He would have the title of Instrument maker in future jobs, and not as an Engineer. Although he did possess the skills of an Engineer, the lack of certification would prevent him from being hired as one.

While living in the Netherlands in Den Haag, with his wife, Daniel had jobs working in assembly at a sewing factory, and later as an instrument maker working on machines which would later help him how to teach these skills to others. At a certain point in time, he started a driving school with a partner called 'Djempol'. He would eventually split from his partner to start his own school called 'Bigini'. Both of these terms used as names for their driving schools were different Indonesian words for hitchhiking, so they used the thumbs up symbol for the original logo, and when Daniel split off on his own he was still able to use the logo with the new name. Throughout the five years of running the driving school he taught well over one hundred people how to drive.



# Jakarta

Many of our readers long to visit Indonesia and its capitol Jakarta -  
some for the first time, some to return home.

To get a taste Photographer Wibowo Wibisono roamed Jakarta  
and captured his favorite spots on camera.







Taman Fatahillah is named after the prince who drove the Portuguese out of Sunda Kelapa and renamed it Jayakarta on June 22, 1527. The square was laid out in the seventeenth century as the town hall square of Batavia. Every day, the popular square in front of the Museum Sejarah Jakarta attracts thousands of visitors.



Colonial buildings along the Kali Besar. This canal was built in the seventeenth century to connect Sunda Kelapa with Batavia. Hundreds of boats carrying goods pass through the canal every day.



Long traffic jams as commuters leave central Jakarta and return to their homes in the suburbs.

