

THE PROTESTANT CHURCH OF OOSTHUIZEN

A brick cruciform building with heavy buttresses, which was probably completed in 1518. The open hexagonal tower with its pear-shaped crown had sagged but was restored to its proper position in 1745. The bell was cast in 1511 by GERHARDUS VAN WOU.

The main entrance in the western facade has been renewed. Over it is mounted a late 18th century sun dial bearing the inscription FUGIT HORA (time flies) at the top, and OOSTWOUD in the scroll at the right hand bottom. The disused door in the north-western wall is remarkable for its construction. The vaults are made of wood, with ribs carried by wall pillars. Perhaps originally it had been the intention to provide stone vaults instead of wooden ones.

Beyond the main entrance is the beautifully ornamented portal dating back to 1648, with a carved frieze. Over it is the organ loft, which was screened off in 1871 by an ugly parapet. The organ case with shutters ends in three pinnacles, the tops of which were modified early in the 17th century. Just as the large amount of oak woodwork elsewhere in the church, organ case and shutters are painted.

The organ, probably dating from 1521 and certainly the oldest in the country, even in Europe has crooked pipes, a narrow key board with 38 keys and 7 stops that are pressed down to admit wind to the pipes. It has several times been examined and described by experts. A photo and a specification of the organ were sent to Professor Albert Schweitzer at his request.

Opposite the organ is the chancel partitioned off by a middle 16th century screen with a parapet consisting of simple panel work. Against the main balusters are placed candelabra-shaped colonnettes. The other uprights are of a similar shape and end in fishes composed of acanthus leaves. The simple oak pulpit dating from 1664 and bearing the initials L.V.B. is placed against the chancel screen. Support and pulpit steps are of much more recent construction.

The baptismal screen dates back to the last part of the 18th century. It is surmounted by a cast bronze arch with the arms of OOSTHUIZEN in an escutcheon supported by 2 lions and bearing the legend:

SIGILLUM OOSTHUYSEN IN HOLLANDIA (i.e. the seal of Oosthuizen in Holland)

Furthermore, there is a brass lectern ending in a claw supporting the arms of Oosthuizen, with the inscription "OOST Ao. 1690". Next to it, a bronze lamp holder.

The Lord's pew, obliquely opposite to the pulpit, is late 17th century. On the canopy, carried by spiral columns, stand two pinnacles. In the southern wing of the church we find a tomb of white, grey and black marble, sacred to the eternal memory of FRANÇOIS VAN BREDEHOFF, born April 4th 1648, died May 14th 1721, Lord of Oosthuizen from 1688 (by purchase).

The monument was sculptured in 1723 by VAN BAURSCHEIT, native of Antwerp, at the price of Fl. 5.000,-- plus a new hat if the work delivered was found satisfactory.

The central figure on the tomb is a helmeted Minerva of white marble, holding in her left hand a medallion with the portrait of François Van Bredehoff wearing a pigtail wig. The statue is crowned with the family arms supported by two griffins and is surrounded by abundant ornamental work.

To the right of the organ.

1761 died December 9th.
1783 died January 23rd.
1773 died May 24th.
1748 died April 29th.
1748 died January 31st.

On either side on the monument.

1720		1681
died Oct. 6th.		died Febr. 11th.
1751	Monu-	1686
died Oct. 1st.	ment.	died Aug. 14th.
1771		1721
died Aug. 14th.		died Oct. 25th.
	1785	
	died Aug. 4th.	

In the floor of the church are many gravestones, most of which only bear a mark. One stone, with the name of J. SALAMANDER, is remarkable for its whorls and flourishes. Of the stained glass windows few fragments are left. Part of the church was restored in 1923 by the National Society for Preserving Ancient Monuments. During the restoration work the covering slab of a small altar was found. This now rest on a brickwork support in the chancel.

In 1958 it was decided to restore the church completely. The restoration was made possible thanks to the financial aid given by the State, the Provincial Authority, the Municipality of Oosthuizen and the Congregation. The work was completed in 1964 and the total cost amounted to Fl. 553.851,52. Owing to the excellent co-operation, also financial, between the various authorities participating in the enterprise, this splendid and monumental church has now been preserved for posterity.

In the Dutch Travel Book of Art the following is written about the Oosthuizen church:

"Protestant Church. Late Gothic one-aisle building, whose chancel transept and nave are approximately of equal length.
Chancel and transept date from 1511, nave from 1518.
Chancel screen with carved balusters in early Renaissance style. Pulpit, portal under organ and seats are 17th century and beautifully ornamented. Pompous marble memorial tomb for François van Bredehoff, 1723 sculptured by J.P. Baurscheit Jr. Furthermore, there is a range of decorative memorial cases."

ABOUT THE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

Of the 17th century: fragments of armorial devices-1659.
Of the 18th century: fragments of a window, made in 1730, representing escutcheons with motives taken from trade and profession, in replacement of family arms and alternating with "telling" arms, such as a pair of compasses in an escutcheon belonging to a family named Pasman. The escutcheons, surrounded by palmlike ornaments, were made by Jan Jansz.Hob. The church was re-opened on Saturday April 24th. 1965 by the Governor for the Province of North-Holland.

The organ, probably built by Jan van Kovelén of Amsterdam, has one keyboard comparing from F.G.A. to g2, a2, with a broken octave, since F sharp, G sharp in the bottom octave and G sharp in the octave are absent. This is a so-called early octave. No pedal.

The specification is as follows:

Bourdon 16', Praestant 8', Octave 4', Quint 2-2/3', Mixture 2-3ranks 1-1/3', Sesquialtera 2-2/3' discant 2 ranks. Tremulant.

The stops must be pushed in instead of pulled out.