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Hello, Friends!

We're happy to be with you in the merry, merry month of May.

This month brings us school visits once again; we're very excited to be welcoming many Danbury 3rd graders to the museum this month for field trips. If you see extra traffic around the campus, don't be surprised! It's nice to be working

once again with our re-enactor and interpreter friends who cannot wait to share Danbury history with our visiting students. It's a big step, bringing us closer to the pre-pandemic museum calendar.

In addition to hosting a special sneak preview of the Ives Birthplace (read below for more!) for Savings Bank of Danbury and their team, we're busy on many other fronts.

Mark your calendars and get your lawn chairs dusted off. We are welcoming the first of our summer concert performers, guitarist [Matthew Slotkin](#), on Saturday, June 4, from 4-6 pm in the museum gardens. The event will take place rain or shine and there will be food and drinks available for purchase. Plan to arrive a little early and stroll the beautiful museum gardens maintained by the Civic Committee of the Danbury Garden Club.

Gold is at a many year high and our friend Bob Doyle is helping us with another "Sell Your Old Gold" fundraiser this month (May 20, 21, and 22)--a great opportunity to get a little extra cash for your summer holiday. See the flyer below and please tell your friends and family and share with anyone else who might be interested. The money raised benefits the Friends of the Danbury Museum.

We're pleased that John O'Donnell is joining us once again with an interesting look at Dutch explorer Adriaen Block and his impact on the foundation of Connecticut.

We'll look forward to seeing you in June, until then, happy spring, everyone!

Brigid Guertin (*Executive Director, City Historian*)

Patrick Wells (*Research Specialist, Social Media Manager*)
Michele Lee Amundsen (*Collections Manager, Newsletter Editor*)



We were thrilled to welcome Savings Bank President and CEO Martin Morgado and many Savings Bank employees plus Mayor Esposito and city and state officials to a sneak preview of the Charles Ives Birthplace on Saturday, April 30. Savings Bank of Danbury was founded in 1849 by Charles Ives's grandfather, and their commitment to our community and honoring the Ives family heritage by supporting the museum's re-opening of the house is most appreciated.

DANBURY MUSEUM

"Sell Your Old Gold" Fundraiser



**FOR THIS FUNDRAISER,
YOUR CHECKBOOK STAYS HOME...
AND THIS TIME, YOU TAKE HOME THE MONEY!!!**

Please take a moment to look through your jewelry boxes at home for:

- BROKEN GOLD CHAINS AND BRACELETS
- SINGLE EARRINGS (HALF PAIRS)
- OLD SCHOOL RINGS
- RINGS WITH MISSING STONES
- OLD BOYFRIEND/GIRLFRIEND GIFTS
- JEWELRY YOU NEVER WEAR
- GOLD NON-WORKING WATCHES
- YES, EVEN DENTAL GOLD
- STERLING SILVER JEWELRY, FLATWARE, HOLLOWWARE
- PLATINUM AND PALLADIUM

THEN BRING IT WITH YOU TO:

**THE DANBURY MUSEUM
43 Main Street
Danbury, CT
203.743.5200**

Friday	May 20th	12 Noon to 4 PM
Saturday	May 21st	10 AM to 4 PM
Sunday	May 22nd	12 Noon to 4 PM

There, our good friend, Bob the gold man, will buy your "old gold" and hand you a check. Then, after the refining process, over 60% of the profits will be donated, in your name, to The Friends of the Danbury Museum !!!

Any questions, please email: bob@libertygoldct.com





Blotius's map of his 1614 voyage, with the first appearance of the term "New Netherland." (From the Dutch National Archive.)

A Restless Dutch Explorer

by John O'Donnell

In studying the foundation history of Connecticut there are many players and factors that have to be dealt with. The study of explorers has always been a key topic in the early history of the colonies. There is a major focus on English, French, and Spanish explorers. But this is by no means the whole story. Another key group of explorers (other than Henry Hudson) is given scant attention. I am referring of course to the Dutch

explorers who are, as a whole, a neglected group. This has also affected the Dutch history of the foundation of Connecticut. This essay is an attempt to redress this neglect.

The easiest way to do this is to look at the career of Adriaen Block which will give us an insightful look into how important the Dutch influence was in the foundation of Connecticut. Block (1567-1627) was a Dutch trader, privateer, and master mariner. He was not only important in the settlement of Connecticut, but also in New York and Rhode Island as well. He is noteworthy for exploring the coastal river valley areas between New Jersey and Massachusetts during four voyages from 1611 to 1614. Prior to these voyages he was active in the shipping trade and was a privateer as well. He became wealthy as a result of these activities. We will concentrate on the 1614 voyage which was crucial in the settlement of Connecticut.

The 1614 voyage of Adriaen Block was a spectacular feat of exploration. Block had a ship named the *Tyger* which accidentally burned while moored in Manhattan. He and his crew built a new vessel fittingly named *Orrust* (Dutch for restless). The vessel had a very small draft which enabled it to navigate waters too shallow for Henry Hudson's *Half Moon*. Block used the craft to explore much of the Connecticut and Long Island coastlines, leading some to call it America's first research vessel.

The Connecticut phase of the voyage was of utmost importance to the subsequent history of the colony. Prior to arriving in Connecticut, Block and his crew explored the East River, The Hellgate, and Long Island Sound. Traveling along the Sound they explored the Housatonic River (which Block called the River of Red Hills). Of greater importance was his

trip of about sixty miles into the river that the Algonquians called Quinnetukut or the Place of the Long Water. Block travelled up to the current site of Hartford and named the river the Versche meaning fresh. We know it as the Connecticut River. He was the first European to probe this mighty river and thereby launch a subsequent fifty year period of colonial rivalry primarily with the English, forever changing the river and its people.

Leaving the Sound he charted Block Island (named in his honor) and Narragansett Bay. On Cape Cod he rendezvoused with one of his other ships from his expedition and left the *Onrust* behind before returning to Europe. He never returned to the New World. Block was rewarded by the States General of the Netherlands (with twelve other merchants) exclusive trading privileges (for three years) for the areas that he had explored. Their company was called the New Netherland Company. In addition to this venture, Block made a map of his voyage. This map was the first one to use the name New Netherland to describe the area between English Virginia and French Canada. Contemporaneously with the publication of the Block map Captain John Smith also published a map in England of his voyages exploring the coast of New England.

Comparing the two maps which laid claim to the same geographic region is a worthwhile exercise. Block's map was a trader's map which emphasized rivers as highways to the interior and its fur trade (which Block had participated in). He focused on the longest rivers such as the Hudson and the Connecticut. He named the tribes along these rivers and indicated their relative power. Smith's map was a colonizer's map. It hugged the shore and paid hardly any attention to the tribes. It was a promoter's map. So here we have an indication

of the next fifty years of struggle between the Dutch and the English. Traders versus colonists. And caught right in the middle of this conflict were the people along the Connecticut River which Block had first navigated.

From this brief introduction to the career of Adriaen Block we can see that the Dutch were going to be formidable opponents to the English. Block was a man of many talents and successes. He was a mariner of the first order, a man who by his map making was instrumental in the eventual colonization of Connecticut. Block's restlessness was a huge spur to his countrymen to oppose the efforts of England to challenge and subdue the Dutch. It is an effort that certainly deserves more historical attention.

John O'Donnell first became a history devotee while in elementary school. He was raised in Brooklyn and frequently went to Prospect Park which has a Revolutionary War monument. He was hooked!



Ives is thriving once again thanks to our friends at Savings

Bank of Danbury! Beginning on Friday, June 24, the Charles Ives Birthplace will be open for guided tours on Fridays and Saturdays. The cost will be a discounted \$10 per person this summer and **all tours must be booked in advance** via our [Eventbrite listing](#).



Celebrate 80 Years of the Danbury Museum With Us!

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**We'll keep in touch, and we hope you will, too. Be well,
take care of yourselves, and we'll look forward to meeting
here again soon.**



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