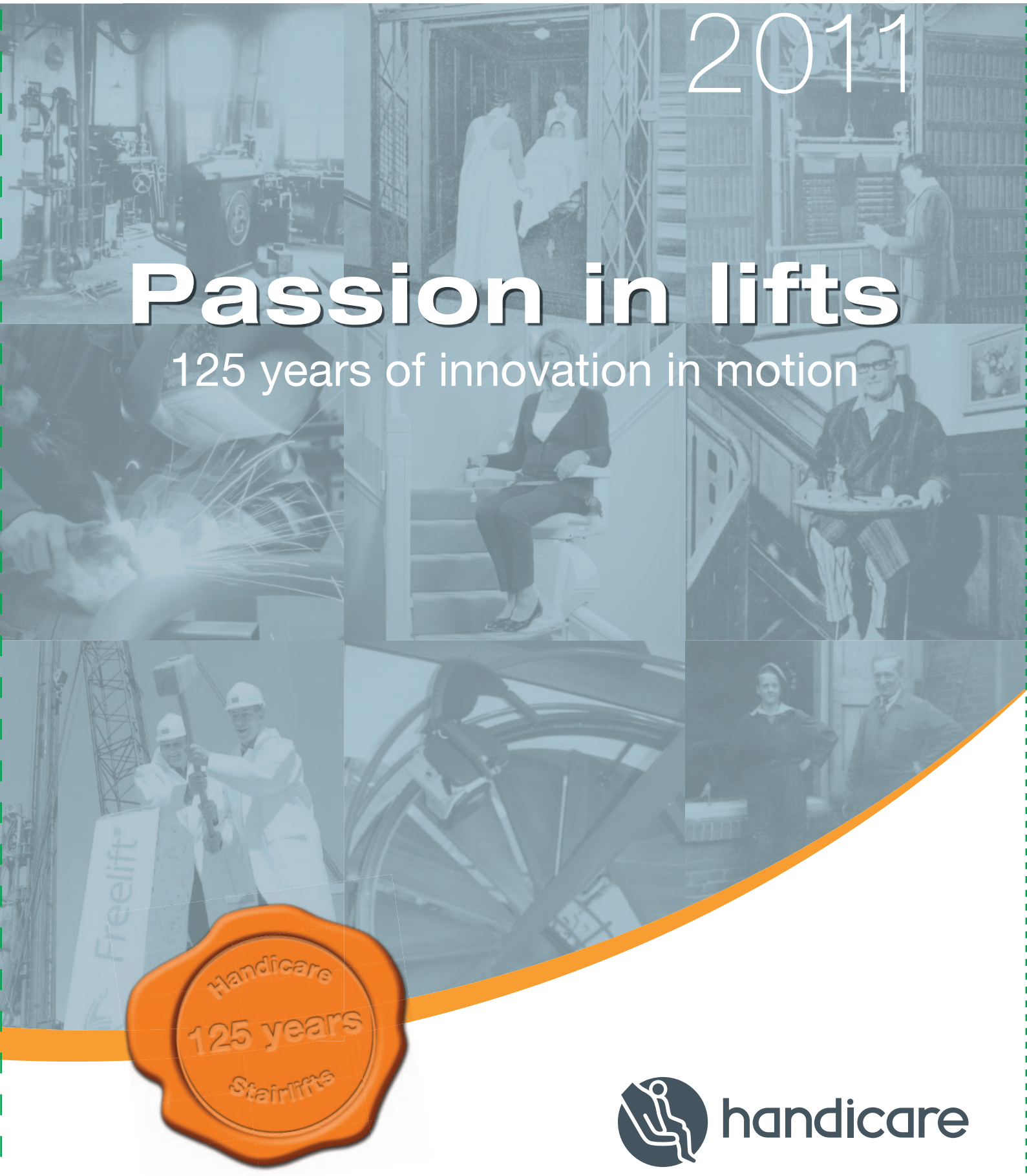
1886
2011

Passion in lifts

125 years of innovation in motion



handicare

Passion in lifts

125 years of innovation in motion

Contents

Foreword

It is with great honour that I, on behalf of our company, present this 125th anniversary book.

We are hugely proud of our successful history; from Jan Hamer's start in 1886 as the Netherlands' first lift manufacturer to becoming the global player in the stairlift industry that we are today as Handicare Accessibility.

A long history with 125 years of experience in the Dutch lift industry that we are still adding to every day.

Ever since back in the early years, both innovation and the quality of our products and services to our customers have been the basis of our success. And our way of working is basically still the same as 125 years ago; listening to the wishes of every single customer, and delivering a made-to-measure product based on solid advice, built especially for the customer. Customising lifts has been our speciality for 125 years.

My thanks go out to Marcel Bloemraad and Dick Beerepoot for their hard work. They have, with great dedication, worked on this wonderful book for two and a half years, mainly in their own time, to record our rich history.

And finally, I would like to stress that our company's strength not only lies in our innovative stairlifts and modern machinery. It is the Handicare workforce that makes the difference every day. Together we are making our customers' everyday lives easier. With a keen eye for quality and the wishes of our customers, we at Handicare build fantastic stairlifts for our customers every day.

I hope you enjoy reading this book.

Kind regards,

Jeroen Meier
Managing Director
Handicare Accessibility B.V.

1886
1920


JAN HAMER
Heerengracht 583, bij de Utrecht
AMSTERDAM.
Amerik. Lucht- en
Wing's Pa
Voor het verwijderen van wa
stof, stoom, gassen, enz. Voor
in fabrieken van verschillenden aard.
In tal van fabrieken en voor verschillende
te lande in gebruik.
7 Vlamingstraat. Den H
Groote sorteering:
LIFT
JAN HAMER. — AMSTERDAM.
Kantoor: Marnixstraat 402, bij het Leidscheplein.
GEBOUW PERMANENTE TENTOONSTELLING VAN DE MAATSCHAPPIJ TOT BEVORDERING DER BOUWKUNST.
Vertegenwoordigt F. WITTE, Berlijn.
OUDSTE FABRIEK VOOR HYDRAULISCHE en HANDLIFTEN.
Alleen in Duitschland meer dan 1000 Liften geplaatst.
LIFTEN voor Stoom, Hand- en Waterkracht.
voor Personen, Goederen, Spijzen, enz. enz.
Adresser van hier te lande geplaatste Personen- en anderen Liften worden op aanvrage verstrekt. Modellen voorhanden.
KELLEY & Co., Londen.
Geschilderd en gebrand Glas, geschilderde Tegels enz. enz.
Monsters voorhanden
BOYLE's Ventilator's MILDE's Telephonen.
CARRE's Warmleidingen voor gebouwen enz. enz.
JAN VAN DER POT

INTRODUCTION

The story of the stairlift

A lift is an ideal means of transporting people and objects vertically. The idea of a lift dates as far back as the ancient Greeks and Roman times. In the year 236 BC, Archimedes designed the first lift system with ropes and pulleys, and lifts were also in use at the Colosseum in Rome to hoist gladiators and wild animals up to the arena floor.

Transportation along stairs has become increasingly important over the centuries. Story has it that it was King Henry VIII who, after a fall off his horse had impaired him, had the first ever stairlift installed in 1540. This 'stairlift throne' was powered by servants hoisting the king up and down the stairs using a system of pulleys and ropes. Mind you - at 190 kilos, Henry VIII was hardly a lightweight. King Louis XV of France also had a passenger stairlift built at his Versailles palace in 1743. This rope-based mechanism was equipped with a counterweight and hidden away in a chimney. As soon as the order came, servants had to get into the chimney to operate the mechanism and transport the king along the stairs in his 'flying chair'. It allowed the king to discreetly visit his mistress, who lived one floor up.

The first non-manual stairlifts appeared in the late 19th century. Although the principle was the same, industrialisation did still change a lot in the execution. Servants were replaced by electric powering, and lift installations can now basically be installed anywhere.

Our company was born when Jan Hamer, a young travelling salesman from Zutphen in the Netherlands, started his own company in 1886.

1. The Colosseum in Rome
2. Henry VIII, the first stairlift owner
3. Archimedes showing his lift
4. Jan Hamer & Co stairlift powered by hydraulic pressure
5 and 6. Manual winch stairlifts by Jan Hamer & Co
7. Medieval passenger lift

1886

John Pemberton invented Coca-Cola

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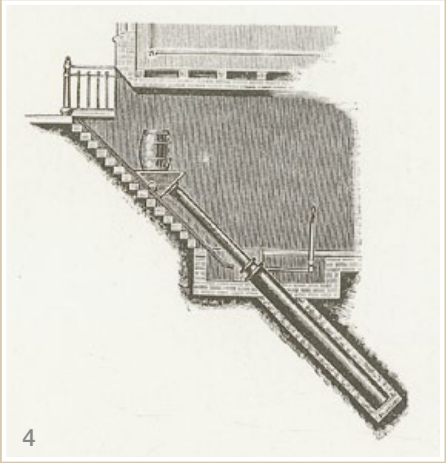

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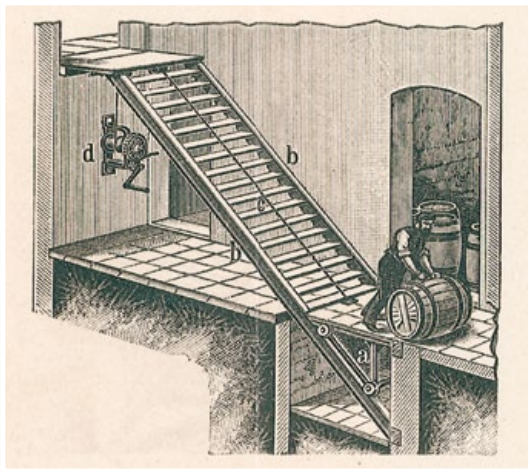

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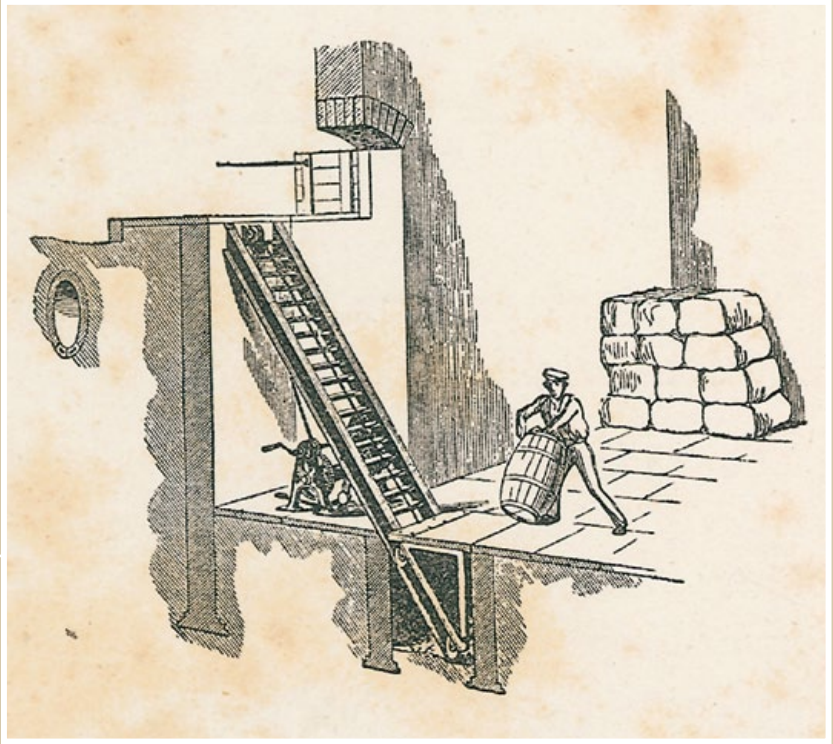

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Jan Hamer foresaw a great future for modernities

In 1886, travelling salesman Jan Hamer set up a technical trading company at Kerkstraat 286 in Amsterdam: the Jan Hamer company. He was far ahead of his time, and had a knack of finding promising applications of technical modernities. On top of that, he spoke both English and German, and showed great interest in emerging industry in countries surrounding the Netherlands. His company soon became an agent for a number of major international companies.

Among the products Jan Hamer sold were air pump fans and fan hoods by Robert Boyle, air pressure reservoirs by Carré, painted and stained glass by Kelley, and powdered milk. He also sold telephones made by CH. Mildé Fils & Co in Paris for 15 guilders a piece. Anyone interested in these products could go and view a number of them in a small exposition Jan Hamer had laid out at the 'Gebouw der Maatschappij ter Bevordering van de Bouwkunst' (building of the Dutch Association of Architects).

Who was Jan Hamer?

Jan Hamer was born on 26 March 1861 on the Beukerstraat in Zutphen, in the east of the Netherlands. Being the son of a carpenter, he was introduced to technology at a young age in his dad's workshop. At school, and during his years at university in Leiden and Groningen, he not only developed his technical knowledge, he also studied various languages. This knowledge and his technical skills soon brought Jan Hamer the opportunity to turn selling new technological products into his profession. In his adult years, his registry entry first listed him as a 'travelling salesman' and later as a 'machine manufacturer'. His work involved a lot of travelling abroad. In 1909, he wed Geertruida Alida Ploos van Amstel Hollman. Jan Hamer passed away in Amsterdam on 11 October 1919 at the age of 58.

1. Jan Hamer's first advertisement from February 1887
2. Boyle's chimney fan
3. Office at Kerkstraat 286
4. Advertisement for Mildé telephones
5. Stanlock heating and ventilation system
6. Carré water supply system
7. Telephone by the CH. Mildé Fils & Co company

1886

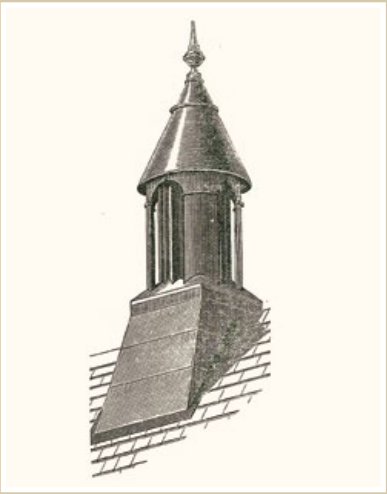
Carl Benz introduced the first petrol-driven motor vehicle, which later came to be known as the car

1

JAN HAMER,
Amsterdam. Kerkstraat 286.
3726

Vertegenwoordigt
ROBERT BOYLE & SON, Lim. Londen.
VENTILATIE EN VERWARMING.

BOYLE'S Luchtpomp-Ventilators, Patent 1882,
BOYLE'S Schoorsteen-Ventilators,
vereischen geen toezicht, hebben geen beweegbare deelen, geven geen terugslag in den koker; zijn van solide constructie bij billijken prijs.
In alle voorname plaatsen zijn modellen te bezichtigen.
Uitgebreide geïllustreerde catalogus op aanvrage gratis en franco.



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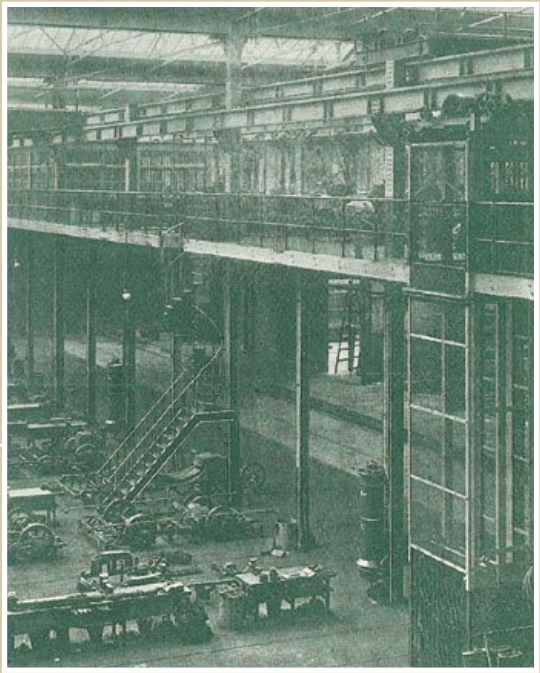
JAN HAMER. — AMSTERDAM.
Kerkstraat 286.
Vertegenwoordigt
CH. MILDÉ Fils & Co. Parijs.
DE MICRO-TELEPHOON. Gen. Porte Montre.
PRIJS 15 Gulden.

Gemaakt van Notenhout met nickel montuur zeer sierlijk; om aan den muur of de schrijftafel te bevestigen. Twee toestellen op voet, waaraan zij verbonden zijn door middel van een zacht zijden koord, schelinrich ting, 40 meter kabel met electrische batterij. Compleet f 45.—

In werking te zien te Amsterdam, in het *Gebouw der Maatschappij tot bevordering der Bouwkunst*, Marnixstraat 402, bij *De Erven H. van Munster & Zoon*, Heerengracht 246, en bij den Heer *D. H. van de Kamer*, Galerij 26, Paleis voor Volksvlijt.

3779

4



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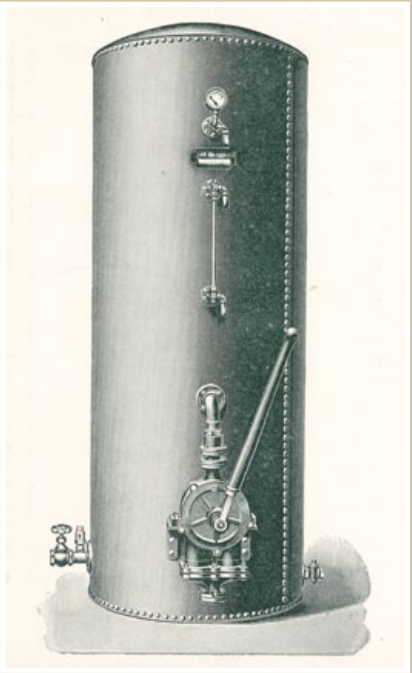

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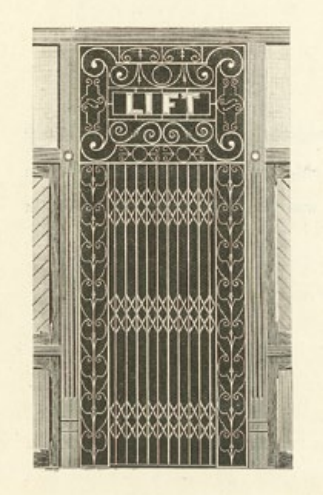
7

The first lifts

His interest in new inventions regularly drew Jan Hamer to trade fairs and expositions across the Netherlands and other European countries. It is quite conceivable that it was at one of these trade fairs that he stumbled upon the lift. Jan Hamer saw good prospects for this mode of transportation and made selling lift systems his core business. In 1887, he became the official importer of lifts built by German lift manufacturer F. Witte in Berlin. Hamer placed his first ever ad for 'Steam-Powered, Hand-Powered and Hydro-Powered Lifts' in the 2 April 1887 issue of the trade journal 'Bouwkundig Weekblad' (Architects' Weekly).

Being one of the first lift vendors in the Netherlands meant things were not easy for Jan Hamer. In a publication from the year 1900 he wrote the following: *"The company introduced these lifts in a time when these kinds of installations were still relatively unknown, which initially made it hard to generate interest in them, as a result of which we only received the first order after fourteen months of going into business."*



A varied assortment

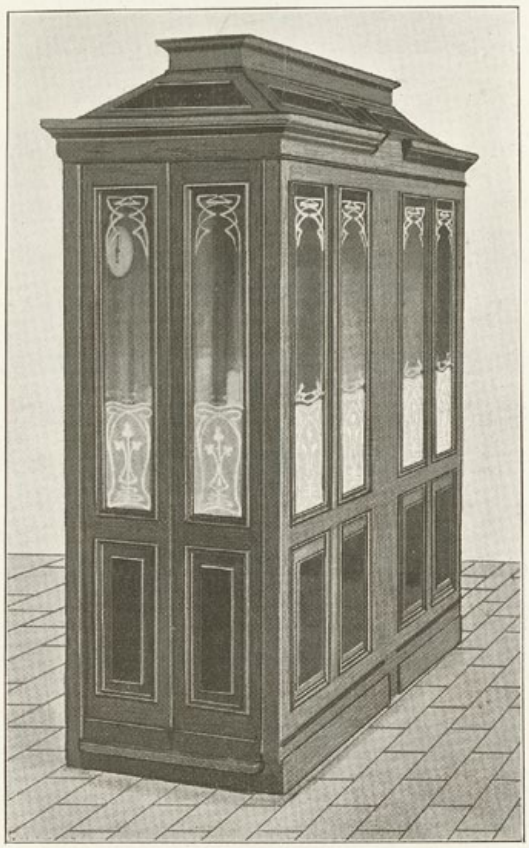
Jan Hamer introduced more products, other than lifts, to the Netherlands. The Jan Hamer company was also the place to go for extractor fans and vacuum cleaners that incorporated the Wing's patent. These were available in fourteen different sizes, ranging from 30 centimetres to 3 metres. Apart from that, Jan Hamer also installed galleys in ships, water pipes in private villas and industrial installations at factories.

1. Luxury wooden lift cages
2. Advertisement for 'Carré' water supply system
3. Advertisement for Witte's lifts
4. Advertising drawing of a food lift

1887

Emile Berliner patented the gramophone record

LIFTKOOIEN. — CABINES. — LIFTPLATEAUX.



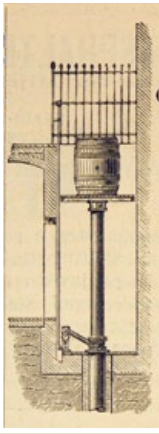
Eikenhout met gepolijst notenhouten vullingen (paneelen).

Handwiel-stuurinrichting en etage-wijzerplaat.

1

JAN HAMER. — AMSTERDAM.
Kerkstraat 286.
3762
Levert met veel succes
LUCHTDRUK WATERRESERVOIRS Systeem Carré
EN
RESERVOIR WATERFILTERS met luchtdruk.
(Systeem Chanoit.)
Eere-Diploma te Parijs, Gouden Medaille te Brussel, Le Mans, Ant. enz.
Voor het oppersen, filtreeren en verdeelen van water in gebouwen, ter vervanging van de Hoogwaterreservoirs.
Liften voor Stoom- Hand- en Waterkracht:
— Vraag prijzen en inlichtingen. —

2



JAN HAMER. — AMSTERDAM.
Kantoor: Marnixstraat 402, bij het Leidscheplein.
GEBOUW PERMANENTE TENTOONSTELLING VAN DE MAATSCHAPPIJ TOT BEVORDERING DER BOUWKUNST.
4480
Vertegenwoordigt F. WITTE, Berlijn.
OUDSTE FABRIEK VOOR HYDRAULISCHE en HANDLIFTEN.
Alleen in Duitschland meer dan **1000** *Liften geplaatst.*
LIFTEN voor Stoom, Hand- en Waterkracht.
voor Personen, Goederen, Spijzen, enz. enz.
Adressen van hier te lande geplaatste *Personen-* en anderen *Liften* worden óp aanvrage verstrekt. *Modellen* voorhanden.
KELLEY & Co., Londen.
Geschilderd en gebrand Glas, geschilderde Tegels enz. enz.
Monsters voorhanden.
BOYLE's Ventilator's MILDE's Telephonen.
CARRÉ's Waterleidingen voor gebouwen enz. enz.

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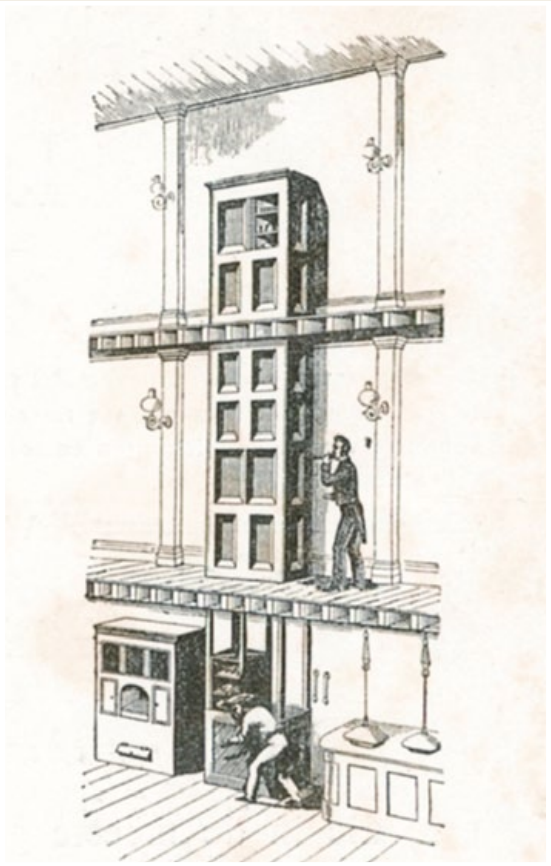


4

Permanently on display

Virtually every single important architect and builder in the Netherlands was a member of the 'Association of Architects'. On 1 January 1888, Jan Hamer relocated his office to this association's headquarters at Marnixstraat 402 in Amsterdam. That not only allowed Jan Hamer to put his products permanently on display for potential customers, it also meant he was always on hand to demonstrate how his products were used.

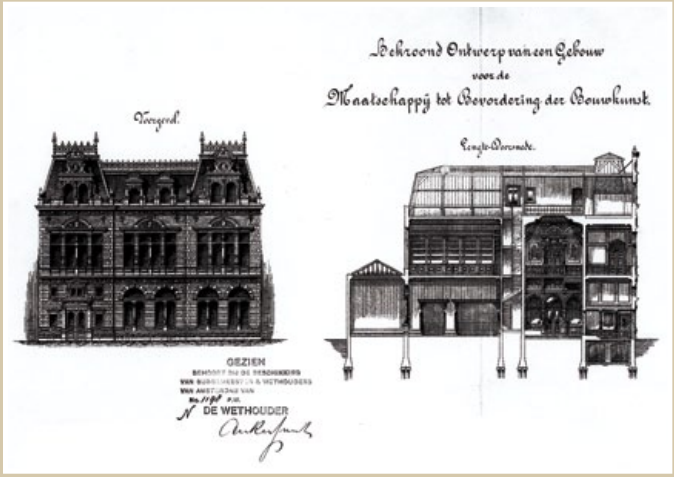
Visitors were mainly members of the association, architects and builders, who were working on building designs. New developments came thick and fast in those days, such as the invention of the passenger lift, the improvement of heating and lighting systems and the introduction of iron as a new building material. Rapid development of the industry meant that architects often found themselves having to meet needs and requirements that were as yet unknown to them. They had to come up with solutions for new types of buildings, such as factories, office buildings and train stations. Jan Hamer's office on the Marnixstraat became the place to go for new products and expert advice, enabling them to use the latest technical products and methods in their designs.

The 'Association' gave Jan Hamer an important network of mutual contacts. With over 1000 members, among whom were the likes of Cuypers and Berlage, both very famous architects in those days, the association provided ample opportunity for partnerships in projects, and members also often recommended Jan Hamer to clients.

1. Marnixstraat 402
2. Permanent showroom
3. Advertisement for permanent showroom
4. Architect Pierre Cuypers
5. Application of Carré water supply system

1888

John Boyd Dunlop patented the pneumatic tyre



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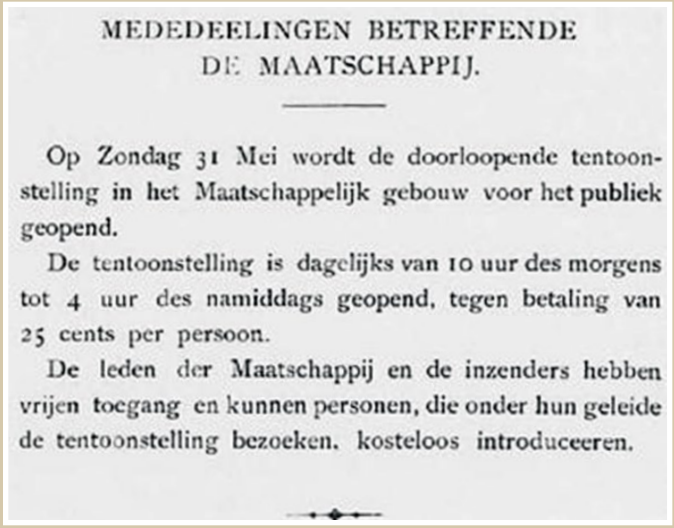

MEDEDEELINGEN BETREFFENDE
DE MAATSCHAPPIJ.

Op Zondag 31 Mei wordt de doorloopende tentoonstelling in het Maatschappelijk gebouw voor het publiek geopend.

De tentoonstelling is dagelijks van 10 uur des morgens tot 4 uur des namiddags geopend, tegen betaling van 25 cents per persoon.

De leden der Maatschappij en de inzenders hebben vrijen toegang en kunnen personen, die onder hun geleide de tentoonstelling bezoeken, kosteloos introduceeren.

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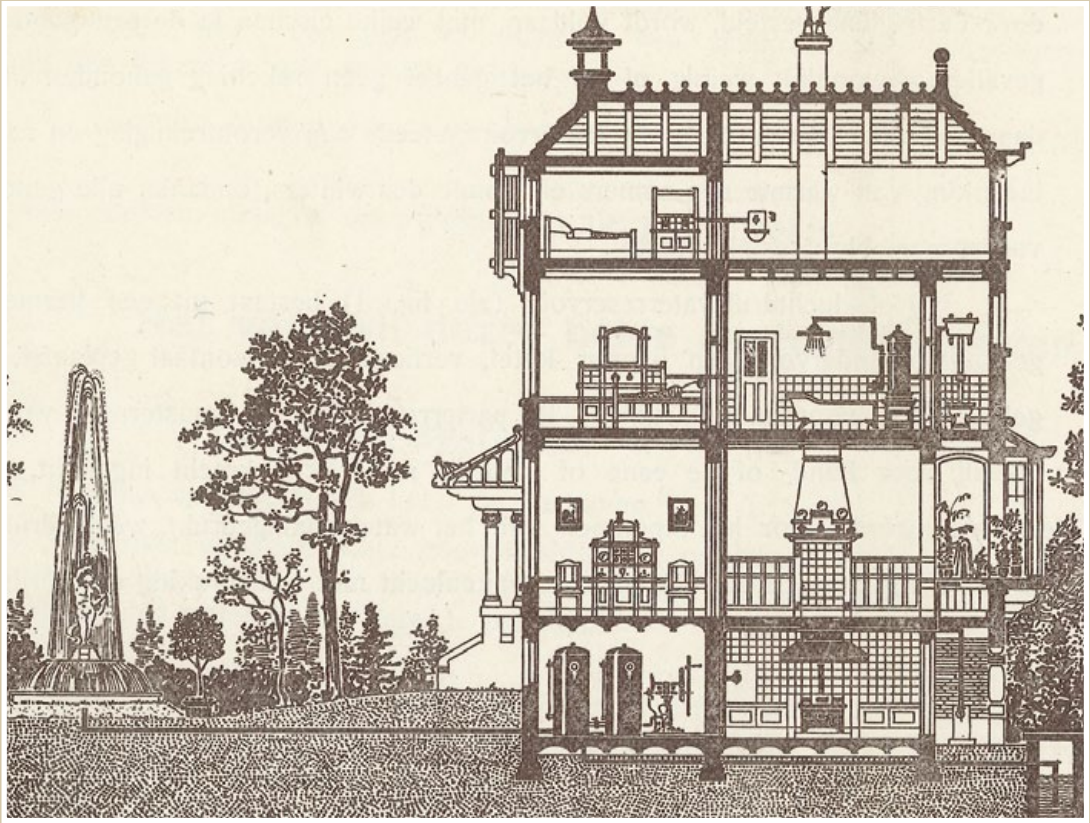


5

Advertising generates sales

Jan Hamer was one of the first to recognise the power of publicity. To generate customer interest in his products and raise awareness of his brand, he placed ads in the 'Bouwkundig Weekblad' (Architects' Weekly) and the 'Opmerker' (Observer). His ads were always creative with convincing arguments, and he regularly changed the contents to draw attention to the richness of his assortment.

The 'Bouwkundig Weekblad' (Architects' Weekly) of 17 March 1888 contained an article on the exposition of Jan Hamer's products, which included the following lines on the company:
"…And Mr Hamer also displays several lift models, for use in private homes, to lift small loads, for example, and which unveil the intricacies of the construction and its functioning to the smallest detail. These lifts are manufactured at the factory of F. Witte in Berlin. One of these lifts, which will be widely used in restaurants, hotels, private homes, etc. is presented in Fig. 1."

"…The lifts described above stand out because of their fair pricing, including the ones intended to transport persons and the ones powered by hydraulic pressure. It is amazing that such devices are not yet more widely used at factories across our country,…"

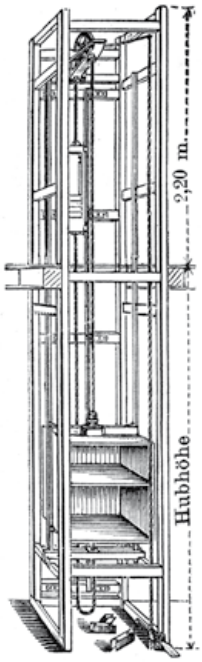


Fig. 1

Aside from an office and exposition area on Marnixstraat, Jan Hamer also had a warehouse and a workshop at Singel 536.

1-7. Various advertisements
8. Endless-cable food lift
9. Bouwkundig Weekblad (architect's weekly) 1888

JAN HAMER. — AMSTERDAM.
Kantoor: Marnixstraat 402 bij het Leidscheplein.
GEBOUW PERMANENTE TENTOONSTELLING VAN DE MAATSCHAPPIJ TOT BEVORDERING DER BOUWKUNST.
Vertegenwoordigt ROBERT BOYLE & SON, Lim. Londen.
Behaalden de hoogste onderscheidingen op verschillende Internationale Tentoonstellingen als prijzen van f 600.— Gouden en Zilveren Medailles.
VENTILATIE EN VERWARMING.
BOYLE'S Luchtpomp ventilators. Patent 1882. BOYLE'S Kappen voor slecht trekkende schoorsteenen. BOYLE'S Schoorsteen-kappen tegen valwinden.
Vereischen geen toezicht, — hebben geen beweegbare deelen, — geen terugslag in den koker, — zijn van soliede constructie.
BOYLE'S Ventilators en Schoorsteenkappen zijn op verschillende *Rijks- Gemeente-* en *Particuliere gebouwen hier te lande* geplaatst. 4469
— In alle voorname plaatsen zijn modellen te bezichtigen. —
MILDE's Telephonen, WITTE's Liften, CARRÉ's Waterleidingen. KELLEY's geschilderd en gebrand Glas, geschilderde Tegels, enz. enz.

1

JAN HAMER. — AMSTERDAM.
Kantoor: Marnixstraat 402 bij het Leidscheplein.
GEBOUW PERMANENTE TENTOONSTELLING VAN DE MAATSCHAPPIJ TOT BEVORDERING DER BOUWKUNST.
Installeerde *hier te lande* met veel succes,
Geheele Waterleidingen in gebouwen in verbinding met
de Luchtdruk-Waterreservoirs systeem Carré, de Reservoir-Waterfilters met luchtdruk systeem Chanoit.
EERE-DIPLOMA TE PARIJS, GOUDEN MEDAILLE TE BRUSSEL, LE MANS, ANGER, ENZ.
Voor het oppersen, filtreeren en verdeelen van water in gebouwen, ter vervanging van de hoogwaterreservoirs. 4628
De *voordeelen* van *dit systeem* zijn: dat men (tot een zeker maximum) over een willekeurigen druk kan beschikken, het water niet zoo zeer onderhevig is aan de verschillende temperatuursveranderingen, het in ieder gebouw kan worden aangebracht, de installatie goedkooper is als de tot nu toe gevolgde wijze van waterverdeeling enz.
— *Adressen* waar dit systeem *hier te lande* is toegepast, worden op aanvrage verstrekt. —
BOYLE's Ventilators, MILDE's Telephonen, WITTE's Liften, KELLEY's gebrand en geschilderd Glas, geschilderde Tegels, enz.

2

JAN HAMER & C°.,
Marnixstraat 402, AMSTERDAM.
Amerik. Lucht- en Stofzuigers,
Wing's Patent.
Voor het **verwijderen** van **warme** of **slechte lucht, stof, stoom, gassen, enz.** Voor **drooging en afkoeling** in fabrieken van verschillenden aard.
In tal van fabrieken en voor verschillende doeleinden hier te lande in gebruik. 9869

3

JAN HAMER & C°.,
Marnixstraat 402, AMSTERDAM.
VEILIGHEIDS LIFTEN
voor Stoom-, Gas-, Hand-, en Waterkracht
(Hydraulisch direct en indirect werkend) 9890
voor PERSONEN, GOEDEREN, SPIJZEN, enz.
Onze nieuwe geïllustreerde brochure met uitgebreide referentie-lijst van in verschillende **Rijks-, Gemeente- en Particuliere gebouwen hier te lande geplaatste Personen- en Goederen Lifts,** *worden op aanvrage gratis toegezonden.*
MEER DAN 200 ALLEEN IN NEDERLAND GEPLAATST.

4

JAN HAMER. Amsterdam.
Kantoor: Marnixstraat 402. b/h. Leidscheplein.
GEBOUW PERMANENTE TENTOONSTELLING VAN DE MAATSCHAPPIJ TOT BEVORDERING DER BOUWKUNST.
Vertegenwoordigt CH. MILDÉ FILS & Co. Parijs.
Telephonen, Electrische schellen, Blikseminleiders enz.
De MICRO-TELEPHOON genaamd Porte Montre.
PRIJS 15 Gulden.
Gemaakt van Notenhout met nickel montuur zeer sierlijk, om aan den muur of de schrijftafel te bevestigen. Twee toestellen op voet, waaraan zij verbonden zijn door middel van een zacht zijden koord, schelinrichting, 40 meter kabel met batterij. Compleet met gebruiksaanwijzing f 45.—
Deze elegante toestellen vereischen geen onderhoud en zijn in bijna alle voorname plaatsen van *Nederland* in werking te zien. 4387
BOYLE's Ventilators, WITTE's Liften, CARRÉ's Waterleidingen, KELLEY's geschilderd en gebrand Glas, geschilderde Tegels, enz. enz.

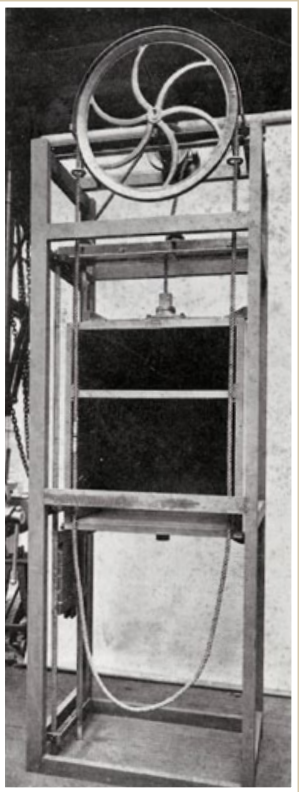
5

JAN HAMER & C°.
Marnixstraat 402. — AMSTERDAM.
DÜRKOPP'S Patent nieuwe geruischlooze
GAS- en PETROLEUMMOTOREN
van 1/4—20 PK. en hooger. 9840
Denkbaar eenvoudigste en soliedste constructie, hoogst elegante en nette afwerking.
— Dagelijks in werking te zien. —

6

JAN HAMER & Co.
MARNIXSTRAAT 402, AMSTERDAM.
D'S Patent- 9800
WINDEN, LIEREN EN KRANEN.
— (Handy Hoists) —
ENKEL EN DUBBEL WERKEND.
Sterk. — Goedkoop.
Vraag onze geïllustreerde Prijscourant.

7



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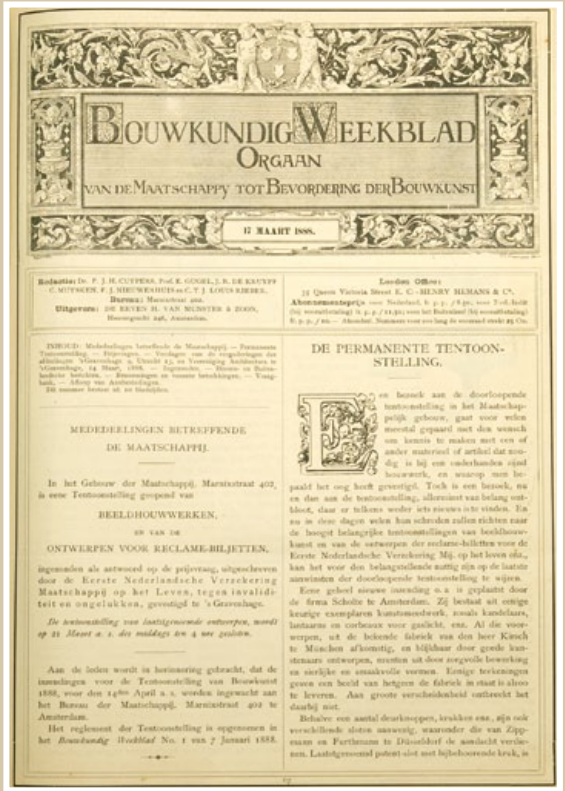


BOUWKUNDIG WEEKBLAD
ORGAAN
VAN DE MAATSCHAPPY TOT BEVORDERING DER BOUWKUNST
17 MAART 1888.

DE PERMANENTE TENTOONSTELLING.

MEDEDEELINGEN BETREFFENDE DE MAATSCHAPPIJ.

BEELDHOUWWERKEN, EN VAN DE ONTWERPEN VOOR RECLAME-BILJETTEN.

9

Partner brings a change of course

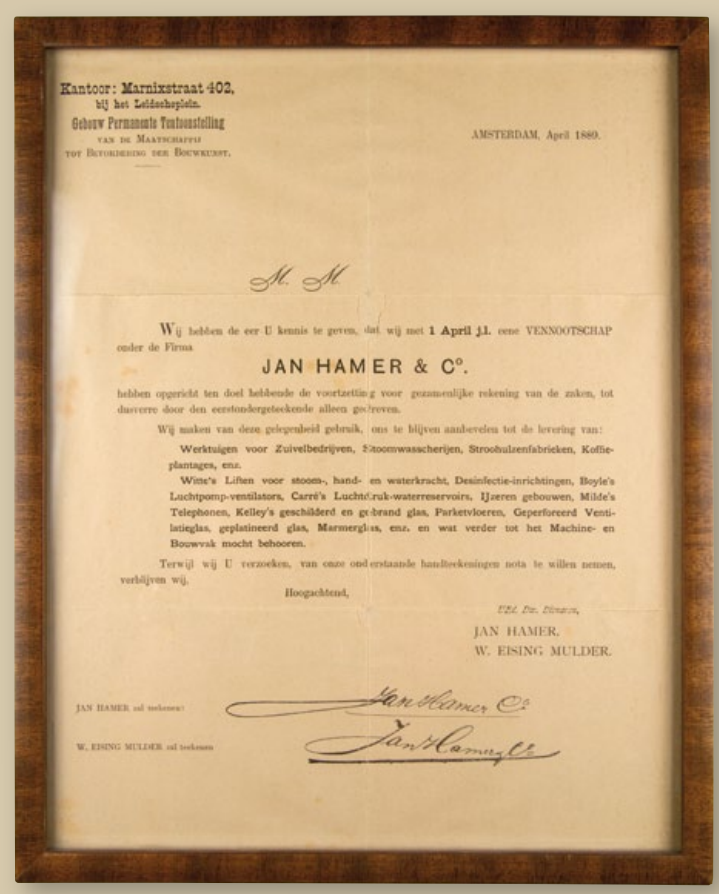
In the spring of 1889, Willem Eising Mulder accepted Jan Hamer's offer to join the company. They had met at university in Groningen, and Mulder's technical know-how proved a massive asset to the company. All of Jan Hamer's customers received a letter in April 1889, informing them that Jan Hamer and Willem Eising Mulder had, as of 1 April, set up a Partnership under the name Jan Hamer & Co.

Who was Willem Eising Mulder?

Willem Eising Mulder was born in Groningen on 8 December 1863. He was an only child and son of Pieter Gerrit Mulder and Geertje Eising. Willem Eising Mulder had a double-barrelled surname to preserve the Eising family name. The registry listed tool trader as his profession. In 1891, he married Hazina Schaafsma from Lemmer.

The birth of Brinkman's lifts in Alkmaar

In 1889, Johannes Brinkman established a forge on the Heiligland in Alkmaar. Working at various companies in the Zaanstreek area, he had become a very competent blacksmith. He was the man to turn to for construction and repair work in Alkmaar. His good name led to his company growing fast, which saw him move his Brinkman forge to Klein Nieuwland in 1894. Both his sons, Willem and Herman, were recruited to help out in the forge before school, between six and half past eight every morning. Willem would eventually follow in his father's footsteps and learn the trade at companies across the Zaanstreek. He later became an apprentice at the Jan Hamer & Co lift factory in Amsterdam. Brinkman's work mainly comprised maintenance and revision of boilers and machines at dairy factories. The latter meant that the company also gained experience in the area of cheese treatment and storage.



Kantoor: Marnixstraat 402,
bij het Leidscheplein.
Gebouw Permanente Tentoonstelling
van de Maatschappij
tot Bevordering der Bouwkunst.

AMSTERDAM, April 1889.

M. M.

Wij hebben de eer U kennis te geven, dat wij met 1 April j.l. eene VENNOOTSCHAP onder de Firma

JAN HAMER & C°.

hebben opgericht ten doel hebbende de voortzetting voor gezamenlijke rekening van de zaken, tot dusverre door den eerstondergeteekende alleen gedreven.

Wij maken van deze gelegenheid gebruik, ons te blijven aanbevelen tot de levering van:

Werktuigen voor Zuivelbedrijven, Stoomwasscherijen, Stroohulzenfabrieken, Koffieplantages, enz.

Witte's Liften voor stoom-, hand- en waterkracht, Desinfectie-inrichtingen, Boyle's Luchtpomp-ventilators, Carré's Luchtdruk-waterreservoirs, IJzeren gebouwen, Milde's Telephonen, Kelley's geschilderd en gebrand glas, Parketvloeren, Geperforeerd Ventilatieglas, geplatineerd glas, Marmerglas, enz. en wat verder tot het Machine- en Bouwvak mocht behooren.

Terwijl wij U verzoeken, van onze onderstaande handteekeningen nota te willen nemen, verblijven wij,

Hoogachtend,

Uwe Dw. Dienaren,

JAN HAMER.
W. EISING MULDER.

JAN HAMER zal teekenen: Jan Hamer C°

W. EISING MULDER zal teekenen: Jan Hamer C°

1

1. Jan Hamer & Co's deed of incorporation
2. Job advertisement 1889
3. Brinkman workshop in Alkmaar

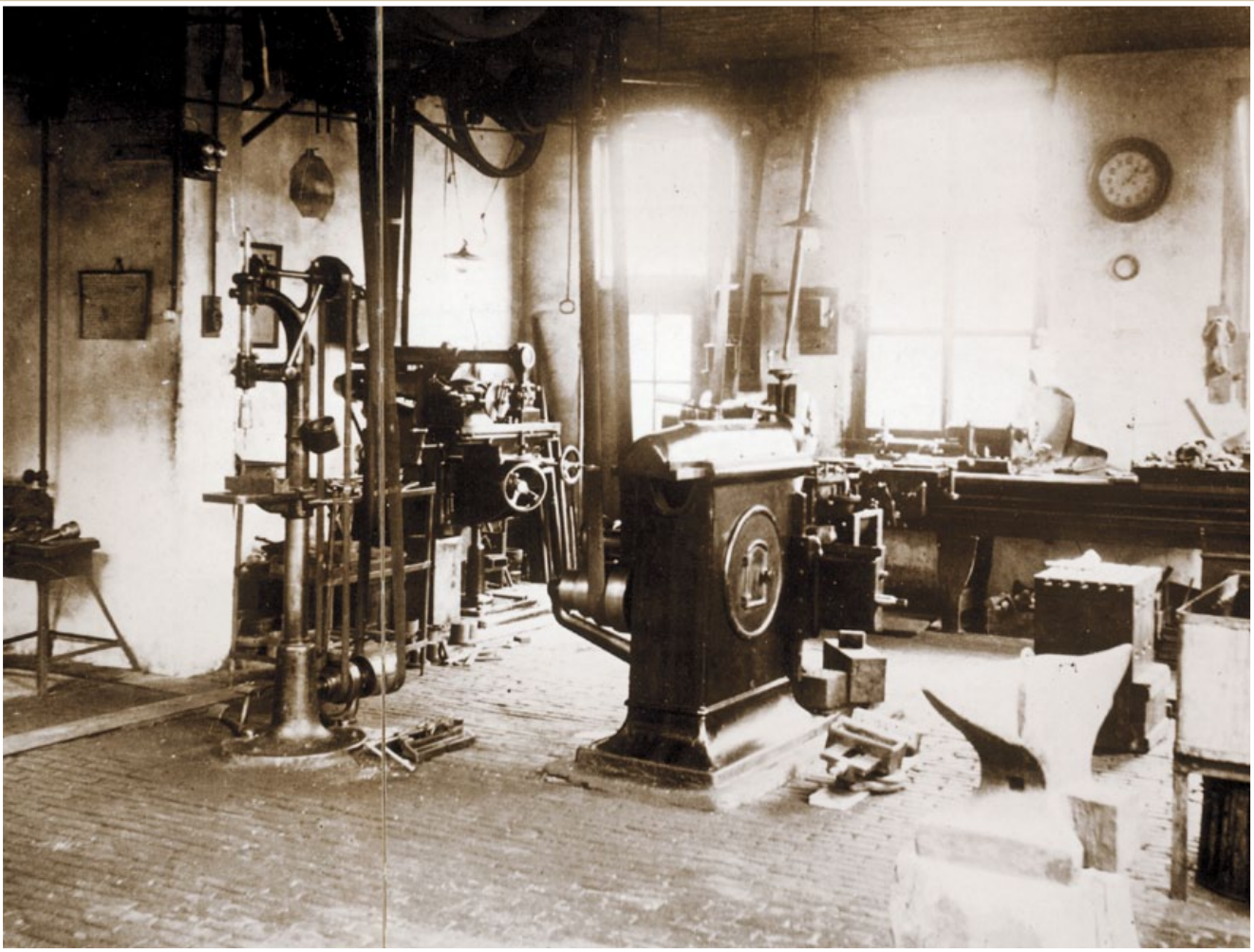
Graansteenen, met alle gaande werken, en tevens de Locomobile p. m. 4 P.K. met Drijfwerk, alles ingericht om met Wind en met Stoom te werken. Ook in gedeelten te Koop.
Adres, onder letters G G, aan den Kantoorboekh. BLIKMAN & SARTORIUS, Amsterdam.

Op het Kantoor

van JAN HAMER & Co., Marnixstraat 402, kan geplaatst worden een net Jongmensch, oud 16 à 17 jaar; bekendheid met de beginselen der Engelsche, Duitsche en Fransche taal strekt tot aanbeveling.
Aanmelding des middags tusschen 12 en 4 uur, in persoon.

W. G. KLEMAN & VAN DER LINDEN zullen ten overstaan van den Notaris P. W. SCHREUDER, op Maandag 25 Mei 1891 te Elf uren, in het Lokaal „HIPPOS", aan de Keizersgracht N°. 127, Verkoopen: Eenige PAARDEN en RIJ-

2



3

Age of invention

The end of the nineteenth century was a time of great technological progress and high-profile inventions. The World's Fair in Paris in 1889, for example, focused attention on new developments in the area of lifts for goods and persons, culminating in the Eiffel Tower, which was built especially for this event. The event generated great interest among the members of the Association of Architects, and several of them, including Hamer and Mulder, visited the World's Fair, which is where they saw the first passenger stairlift.

The first stairlift: Amiot's stair climber
Frenchman Amiot presented his stair climber in Paris. His invention was intended to make climbing up a flight of stairs less tiring, and was easy to install at homes and offices where a lift would be difficult to build or too expensive. This installation was to bring great relief for people who had difficulty walking in particular. The installation was made up of two metal tracks, one above the other, from which a wheeled platform was suspended, which was pulled up by a chain or a cable, with the power source placed at the top of the stairs.

Technical expertise and quality
Jan Hamer was greatly interested in inventions and managed to quickly convert them into practical applications. A fine example of his skills in applying the latest inventions is still on display today in the basement of the 'Gebouw van de Hereeniging' (Reunion Building) on the Grote Poot in Deventer, where Jan Hamer, a ventilation specialist, fitted unique 'Tobin tubes'. This system is made up of eleven man-sized, rectangular tubes made of zinc sheets. These tubes are open at the top to let outside air into the basement. The hot air leaves the room through four air vents higher up in the basement. As a result, the basement is well ventilated so that the skittle alleys in this room could also be used when it was hot outside.

1. Postcard from 1889
2. Amiot's stair climber
3. "Advertisement from ""Het Nieuws van den Dag"" newspaper, 1889"
4. Tobin ventilation tubes in the basement
5. Top end of Tobin tube with pipe wrench

1889

The Eiffel Tower opens in Paris on the occasion of the World's Fair


BRIEFKAART
(CARTE POSTALE)
ALGEMEENE POSTVEREENIGING (UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE)
Zijde voor het adres bestemd. (Côté réservé à l'adresse.)
NEDERLAND
AMSTERDAM
Herrn Ed. Puls
Tempelhofer Ufer 6
Berlin S.W.
61.
16/11
I

1


JAN HAMER & Co.,
Engineering Agency,
Permanent Exhibition Buildings.
AMSTERDAM, 14 Nov. 1889
Marnixstraat 402.
Herrn Ed. Puls Berlin
„Victoria"
Creamseparators.

2


PARIJS.
HOOGSTE ONDERSCHEIDING.
GOUDEN MEDAILLE.
KORTRIJK
1e prijs
Zilveren
en
Verguld
Zilveren
Medaille.
1889.
KAMPEN
1e prijs
Zilveren
Medaille.
LONDON, DAIRY, SHOW,
Zilveren Medaille.
„VICTORIA" Melkseparators.
Enige Agenten voor NEDERLAND en BELGIE:
JAN HAMER & Co.,
AMSTERDAM,
402 Marnixstraat,
GENT,
14 Wondelgemstraat.

3

4

5

Praise and recognition for Jan Hamer & Co

In 1890, Jan Hamer & Co took part in the 'Promotion of Health and Safety in Factories' fair, winning two gold-plated silver, five silver, one bronze and one appreciation medal. At this fair, the company presented the following devices. 1: A Boyle fan, based on the suction force of the wind. 2: A Wings extractor fan and vacuum cleaner. 3: A Boyle chimney hood. 4: A Mayall automated fire extinguisher, which automatically identifies fires in a building and immediately starts extinguishing them. 5: An odourless device with peat dust that automatically disposes of faecal matter, suitable for use in homes. 6: Self-greasing grease boxes and grease injectors for machines, which also give off a signal when they are empty.

The success of the company occasioned yet another move in April 1893, to Heerengracht 583, which they proudly adorned with a Jan Hamer & Co sign on the front of the building.

In 1895, Jan Hamer & Co, by then a leading company, took part in the World's Fair in Amsterdam, where they earned four crosses of merit. An enthusiastic reporter from the 'Nieuws van de Dag' newspaper reported in the 18 June edition of the paper:
"One novelty is the lift that takes people up the left-hand tower of the main building for ten cents. Messrs Jan Hamer and Co have installed a hydraulic lift here, while also operating an electric one in the other tower. The view from the top of the tower, which is over 38 metres tall, is breathtaking. The lift, which runs very smoothly and is, of course, completely without danger, can transport up to five persons at a time."

1. Relocation notice
2. Poster for 1890 fair in Amsterdam
3. Handwheel-operated steering system for electric lift
4. World's Fair building 1895 with lifts in the towers
5. Advertisement for Wing's air pistons and suction cleaners
6. Advertising card from 1893
7. Advertisement for safety lifts

1890

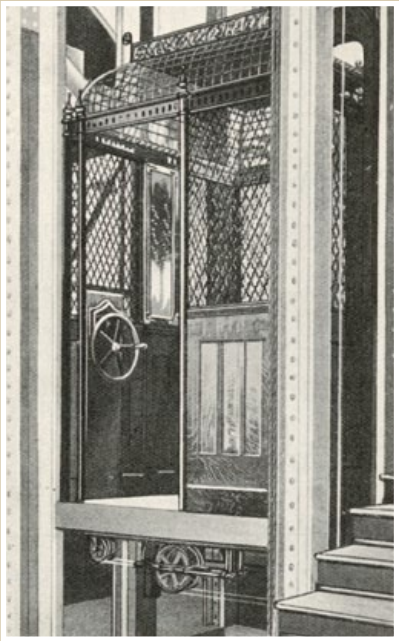
William Kemmler was the first person to die in the electric chair


Het Kantoor van
JAN HAMER & Co.
is verplaatst
van de Marnixstraat N°. 402 naar de
HEERENGRACHT N°. 583
bij de UTRECHTSCHE STRAAT
AMSTERDAM.
9965

1


Tentoonstelling
tot bevordering van
veiligheid en gezondheid
in fabrieken en werkplaatsen
onder Bescherming van
Z.M. d. Koning en H.M. d. Koningin
te houden te Amsterdam in het
Paleis voor Volksvlijt
van half Juni tot einde Augustus 1890

2



3


WELKOM

4


JAN HAMER & Co.,
Heerengracht 583, bij de Utrechtschestraat.
AMSTERDAM.
Amerik. Lucht- en Stofzuigers,
Wing's Patent.
Voor het verwijderen van warme of slechte lucht, stof, stoom, gassen, enz. Voor droging en afkoeling in fabrieken van verschillenden aard.
In tal van fabrieken en voor verschillende doeleinden hier te lande in gebruik.
10101

5


JAN HAMER & Co.
HEERENGRACHT 583
bij de Utrechtschestraat,
AMSTERDAM.
Z. O. Z.
HEERENGRACHT UTRECHTSCHESTRAAT AMSTERDAM

6


JAN HAMER & Co.,
Heerengracht 583, bij de Utrechtschestraat.
AMSTERDAM.
VEILIGHEIDS LIFTEN
voor Stoom-, Gas-, Hand-, en Waterkracht.
(Hydraulisch direct en indirect werkend)
voor PERSONEN, GOEDEREN, SPIJZEN, enz.
Meer dan 225 LIFTEN in verschillende Rijks-, Gemeente- en Particuliere gebouwen hier te lande geplaatst.
J. H. & Co. hebben steeds ervaren monteurs, uitsluitend voor liften ter beschikking, waardoor de montage en eventueel onderhoud in den kortst mogelijken tijd en tegen billijken prijs kan verricht worden.
10114

7

The Netherlands' first lift manufacturer

'Bouwkundig Weekblad' (Architects' Weekly) ran a feature on Jan Hamer & Co:

"…Time has brought a major development, and it is safe to assume that "Lifts" will increasingly become essential lifting equipment, and that development is already leading to the company regularly having between 35 and 45 orders on hand. They used to procure the lifts abroad, but soon realised they would be better off making some of the constructions themselves. Several reasons existed for that, of which the main one was the difficulty of impelling foreign manufacturers to conform to the company's insights based on the particular requirements of customers here in the Netherlands.

Using as a basis the food and small goods lift in its various shapes and sizes, as designed in consultation with various well-known architects who had already received several such lifts, and constantly improving these lifts, the company soon started building larger lift constructions, taking advantage of experience gained with previously completed lifts, finally leading to the current situation where the company builds lift constructions of a wide array of different types...

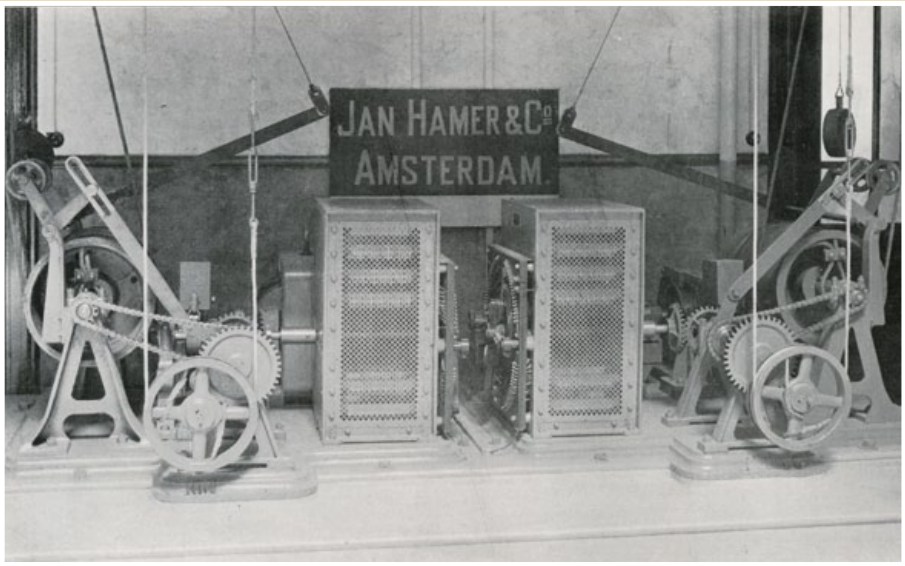
We have slowly taken over this industry from foreign companies, and meanwhile also replaced the foreign technicians we used to employ with Dutch ones."

The success in developing their own products for the Dutch market meant that these lifts could be manufactured and sold at a lower cost.

1. Electric directly-operated lift machines
2. Top gear of a hand lift
3. Diagram for lift at De Haar Castle, 1894
4. De Haar Castle in Haarzuilens
5. Console food lifts
6. Manual goods lift
7. Food lift at De Haar Castle

1895

Jos Bogaers from Tilburg was the first person to drive a car in the Netherlands



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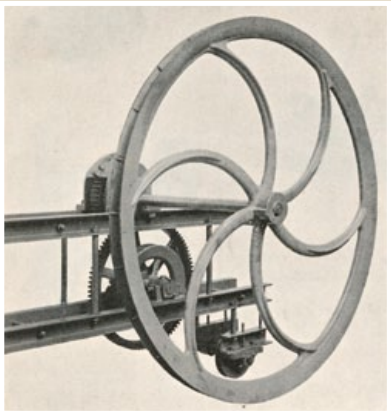

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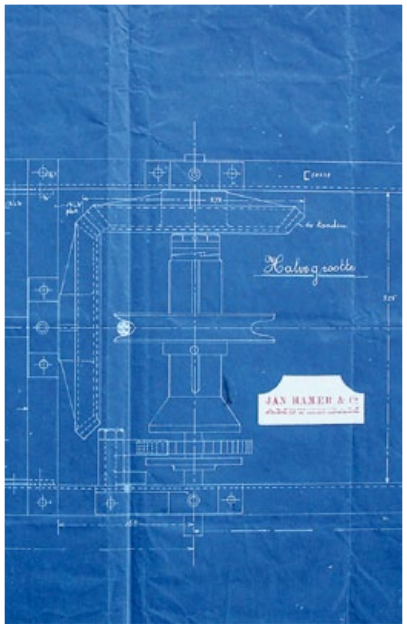

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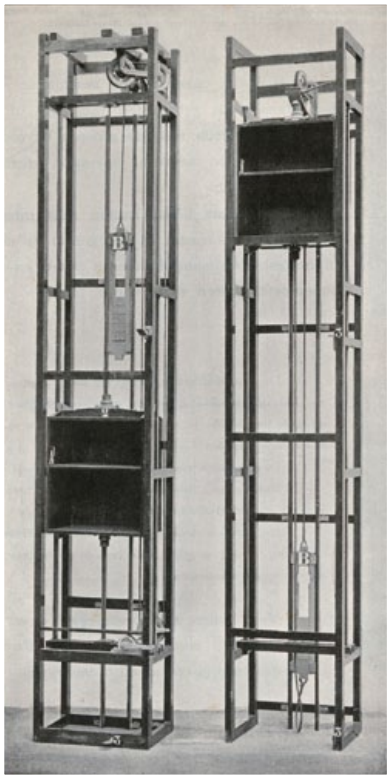


5

6

7

Different types of lifts

The great success of the products developed in-house at Jan Hamer & Co propelled the company's rapid growth. By 1900, the company had installed as many as 600 lifts for different purposes across the Netherlands. The company kept close track of all the latest developments in the industry, and its range included the following lifts in the period around 1900:

- *Hydraulic or hydropower lifts:* these worked thanks to the water pressure provided by the water supply system or generated by accumulators.

- *Electric lifts:* these used an electromotor connected to the lift mechanism, using only electricity when the cage moved up or down.

- *Transmission lifts:* these transmitted the power generated by the electromotor to the lift mechanism by way of belts.

- *Hand lifts:* the driving power moving the cage of these lifts up and down was generated by human hands. These were mainly used as food lifts or small goods lifts. They came in two types: the cable-without-end lift and the console lift. The former was widely used in restaurants, institutions and hotels, and was operated from either inside the cage or from the various floors. The latter, the console lift, was mostly installed in villas and town houses, and offered sufficient capacity to transport entire dinner sets. Such lifts were also used in warehouses and office buildings.

1. Print and printing plate of an advertisement
2. Electric book lift at the National Library of the Netherlands in The Hague
3. Electric car lift at Amsterdam Coach Company
4. Electric document lift at Nederlandsche Bank in The Hague
5. Name plate with maximum load
6. Electric bed lift at Municipal Hospital in The Hague

1900

Ferdinand Graf von Zeppelin made the first flight in a Zeppelin

1

2


183
G 2083

3

4

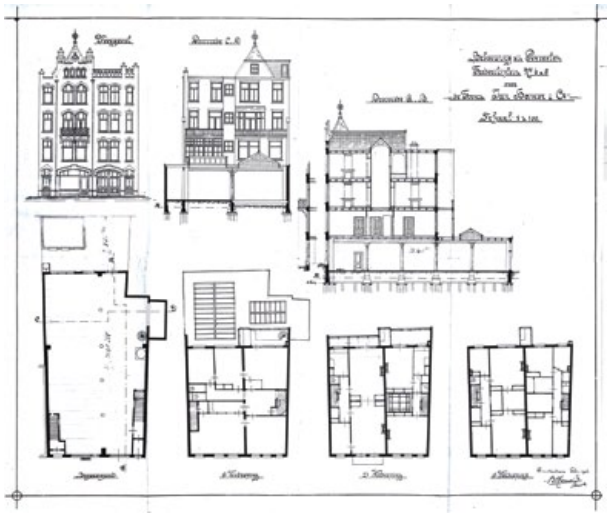

JAN HAMER & Co.
AMSTERDAM.
NIET HOOGER
TE BELASTEN DAN
150 Kilogram.

5

6

Time for a new factory

Their advanced product range enabled Jan Hamer & Co to make the most of the opportunities offered by the industrial revolution, and Jan Hamer foresaw that the workshop would soon be too small to handle the expected number of orders. Around 1900, Jan Hamer and Willem Eising Mulder made the first plans to move the company.



They drew on their vast network of architects to commission the design of a factory and office building for Jan Hamer & Co. In 1901 and 1902, Jan Hamer and Willem Eising Mulder took out loans totalling as much as 40,000 guilders to finance this undertaking. In 1904, the company's splendid new building at Fredriksplein 6-8, incorporating offices, factory and a repair shop, was completed.

In 1905, the company delivered its one thousandth lift, which was a completely new model, very different from the usual lifts, as it was an electric, instantly operating lift they built according to their own insights. They built it for the extension to the government department of war in The Hague.

The company had meanwhile built a highly diverse customer base, and used these references to inspire confidence and attract new customers:
"The company Jan Hamer & Co in Amsterdam has distributed a booklet with a reference list of testimonials about the hydraulic, electric, transmission and hand lifts it has supplied to various national and local authorities, various royal palaces, banks, schools and a number of industrial institutions in recent years."

In May 1910, the company sold 2,224 lifts and there is mention of a branch on London's Queen Victoria Street.

1903

The Wright brothers made the first flight in a motorised plane

1. New Jan Hamer & Co factory at Frederiksplein 6-8

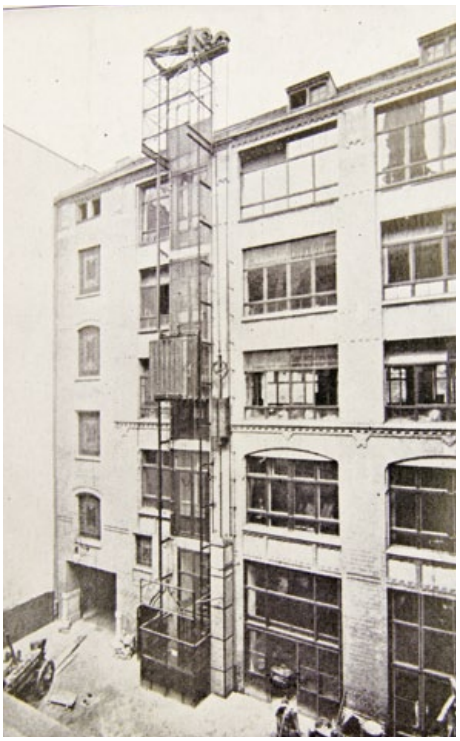
INTERIEUR ONZER FABRIEK EN HERSTELPLAATS.

FREDERIKSPLEIN 6 & 8, AMSTERDAM.

N.B. Voor **aanvragen** en **opdrachten**, zijn wij zoo vrij naar de vragen, gesteld op pag. 6, te verwijzen.
De afbeeldingen, in den catalogus, zijn zonder verbinding.

AMSTERDAM, 1 Mei 1904. **JAN HAMER & Co.**

1

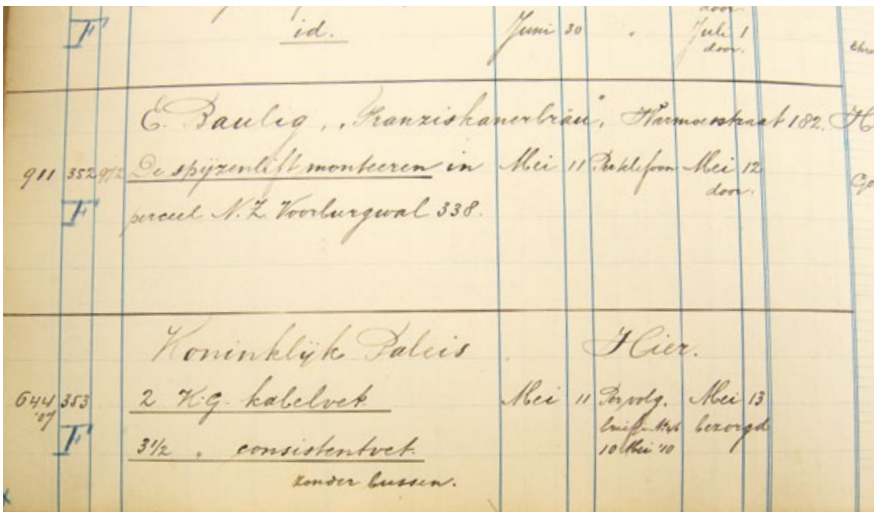


Hydraulic indirectly-operated goods lift

Electric passenger and goods lift

Frederiksplein in 2010

Royal Palace at Dam Square, Amsterdam



id. Juni 30 . Juli 1 door.

E. Baulig, Franziskanerbräu, Hammerstraat 182. H

911 352 972 De spijzenlift monteeren in Mei 11 Tel. from Mei 12 door.

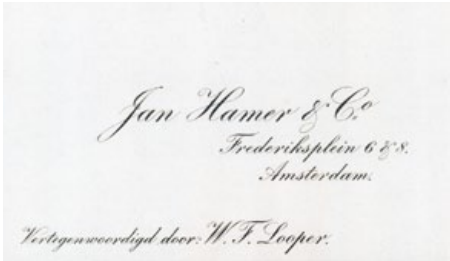
F gereed N.Z. Voorburgwal 338.

Koninklijk Paleis Hier.

644 353 2 H.G. kabelvet Mei 11 Tr. vlg. Mei 13 Uitf. Mrs 10 Mei '10 bezorgd

F 3½ . consistentvet zonder kussen.

Fragment from ledger 1910-1911 listing delivery to the Royal Palace



Jan Hamer & Co
Frederiksplein 6 & 8.
Amsterdam.

Vertegenwoordigd door W. F. Looper.

Sales rep's business card

JAN HAMER & Co.
Fredriksplein 6 en 8. AMSTERDAM.
Hydraulische-, Electrische-, Transmissie- en Hand-
VEILIGHEIDS-LIFTEN
In verschillende KONINKLIJKE-, RIJKS-, PROVINCIALE-, GEMEENTE-, SPOORWEG-, FABRIEKS- en PARTICULIERE GEBOUWEN hier te lande geplaatst.
1000 NEDERLANDSCHE REFERENTIES.
Veiligheids deursluitingen,
ONS EIGEN SYSTEEM.
VEILIGHEIDS STUURINRICHTINGEN.
N.B. Leveringen geschieden onder zoo garantie en niet onder die van buitenlandsche fabrieken.

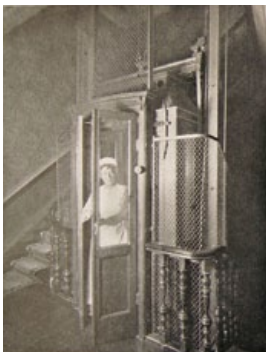
Advertisement for safety lifts

Frederiksplein in 1971

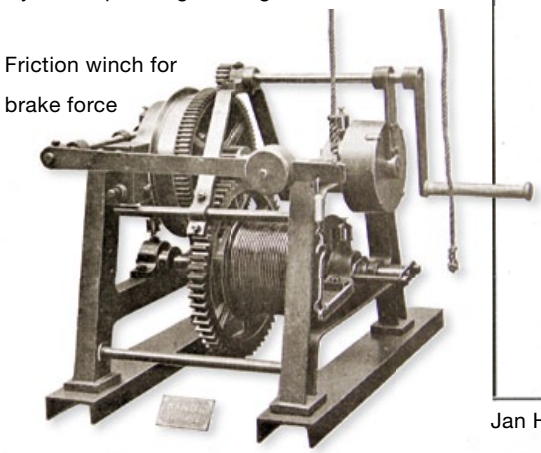
Transportable electric directly-operated friction winch

Electric passenger and goods lift

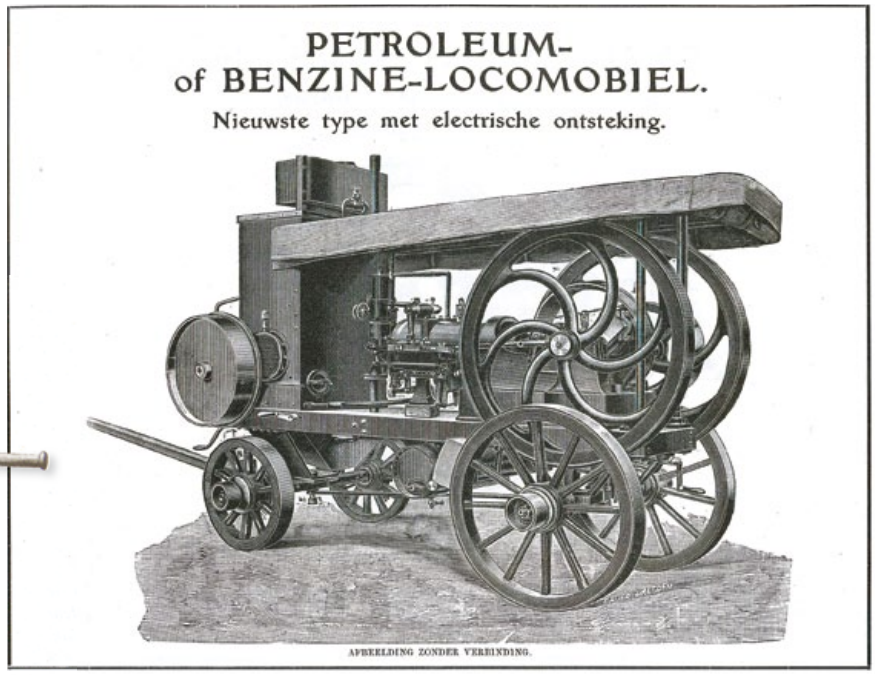
Hydraulic passenger and goods lift



Electric passenger and goods lifts



Friction winch for brake force



Jan Hamer & Co agent at A.G. Dresdner Gasmotoren-Fabrik

The invention of Vulcanus material

At the end of the nineteenth century, an Amsterdam diamond cutter called Simon Stern struggled with fast-wearing cast-iron discs in his diamond polishing wheel. After years of experimenting with various combinations of cast iron, he eventually invented a highly wear-proof compound that met all requirements. His invention was a major breakthrough in its time, and Stern named the material he had developed Vulcanus. Simon Stern was a close friend of Jan Hamer's, who was convinced this new cast iron would not only be suited for diamond polishing wheels, but would offer many more possibilities. Together they further perfected the wear-proof Vulcanus material and also developed a new variety that could resist very high temperatures.

Protecting trade secrets

With competition looming, Stern and Hamer painstakingly maintained strict secrecy on the composition and the melting process of the new cast iron. The Netherlands, however, did not have a patent protection system in place for inventions, forcing Jan Hamer to go to the United Kingdom in 1909 to patent the Vulcanus material for the first time.

Meanwhile, there were also further technical developments in the lift business. One such development was electric lift operation, which Jan Hamer & Co patented in 1916.

Jan Hamer brought both kinds of Vulcanus to the attention of the Dutch national railway company. He was convinced the wear-resistant Vulcanus material would be ideal for the fast-wearing brake blocks of rail carriages, and that the fire-proof version would be the best solution for the grid irons in the boilers of steam engines. The managers of the Dutch national railway company showed great interest and after some thorough testing the material's superior quality was indeed confirmed. From 1907, the railway quickly started ordering huge quantities of the material. Jan Hamer & Co also proudly advertised the unique Vulcanus cast-iron products, and the orders came pouring in.

1. First Vulcanus / Jan Hamer & Co logo
2. Ad for Vulcanus grate bars
3. Diamond grinder
4. Several Vulcanus products
5. Electric lift operation
6. Various patent certificates

1908

Henry Ford introduced the T-Model Ford

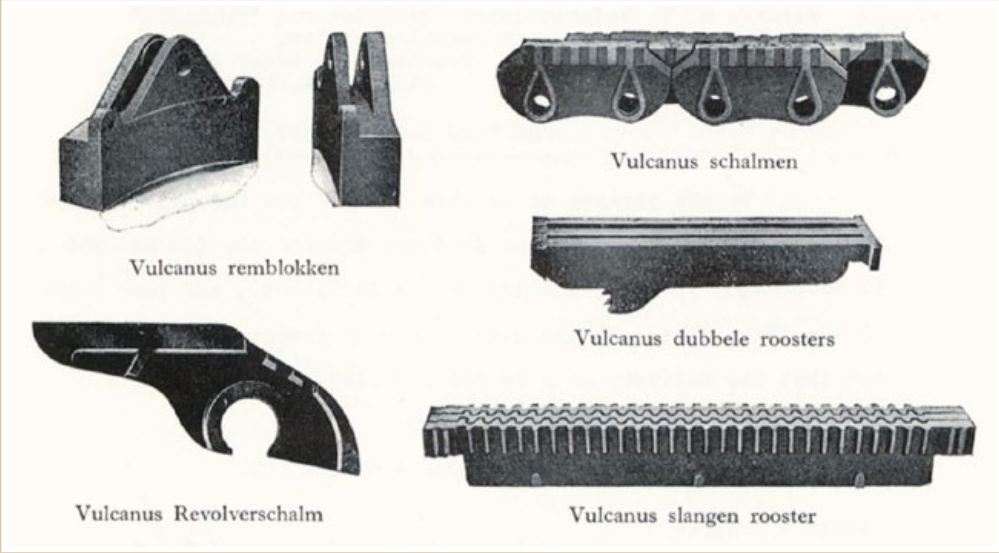

VULCANUS
JC
GEDEPONEERD HANDELSMERK

1


„VULCANUS" ROOSTERBAREN.
Voor:
GEWONE EN GEFORCEERDE VUREN.
Naar elk in te zenden model.
Geven brandstofbesparing.
Zijn duurzaam.
Trekken niet krom.
Springen niet.
Zetten niet aan.
Alle roosterbaren zijn van onzen firmanaam voorzien.
Hebben bewezen duurzamer te zijn dan de gesmeed stalen roosterbaren.
De grootste stoomverbruikers in Nederland geven aan de „Vulcanus" roosterbaar verre de voorkeur boven alle andere en zelfs veel duurdere soorten.

2

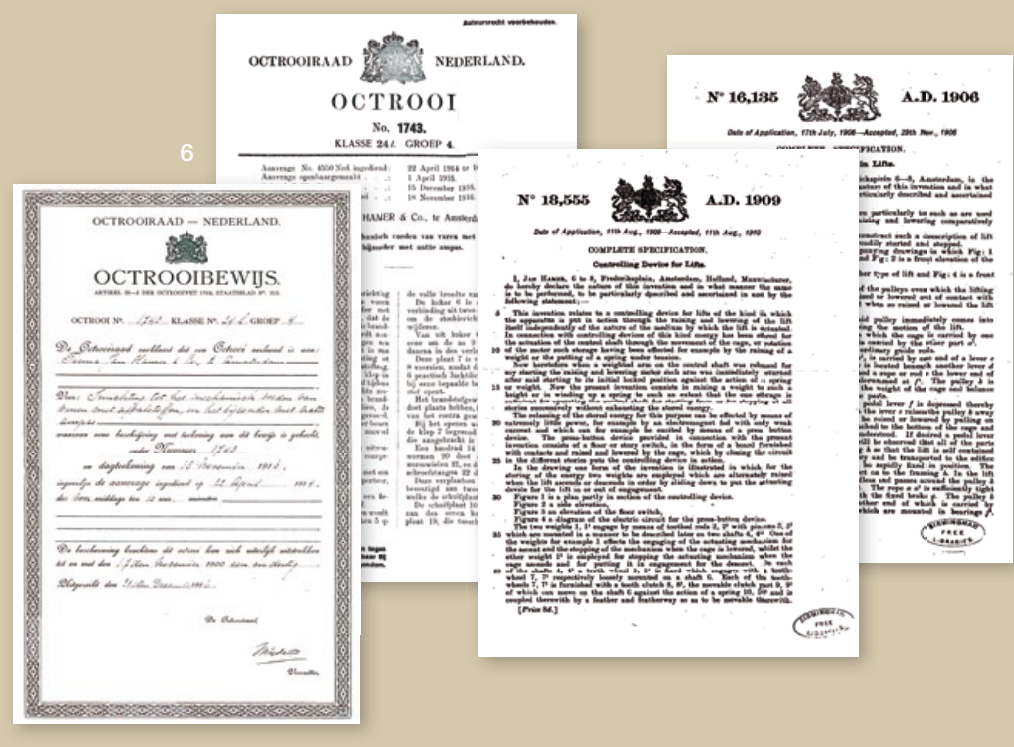
3


Vulcanus schalmen
Vulcanus remblokken
Vulcanus dubbele roosters
Vulcanus Revolverschalm
Vulcanus slangen rooster

4

5

6


OCTROOIRAAD NEDERLAND.
OCTROOI
No. 1743.
KLASSE 24 l. GROEP 4.
N° 16,135
A.D. 1906
N° 18,555
A.D. 1909
COMPLETE SPECIFICATION.
Controlling Device for Lifts.
OCTROOIRAAD — NEDERLAND.
OCTROOIBEWIJS.

Jan Hamer & Co: active on many fronts

Jan Hamer ensured that the company stayed at the forefront of the new developments brought by Europe's industrial revolution. The First World War did not really affect Jan Hamer & Co. Despite the company being blacklisted for a time, it continued to register strong growth. Apart from developing and manufacturing lifts in-house and marketing the new Vulcanus cast iron, the company also offered a wide array of other products. The forty metal workers the company employed not only built lifts, but were also regularly deployed to install the various products procured by the company. This varied from ventilation and heating systems at factories and institutions, to galleys in ships, water supply systems at private villas and complete installations for powdered milk plants. The company furthermore sold commodities such as scales and weighing chairs under the Jan Hamer & Co brand.

Brinkman lifts

In 1916, his son Herman joined Johannes Brinkman's company. With great pride they put up a new sign, which read: Fabriek en Herstelplaats van Werktuigen van J. Brinkman en Zonen (J. Brinkman and Sons Tool Factory and Repair Shop). Alkmaar had already grown into a very industrious town, and it was also the place where many soldiers fighting in the First World War had set up camp. That brought the Brinkmans a lot of business repairing tools and mess tins.

At various companies, Brinkman came up against the problem posed by having to transport goods from lower floors to higher floors and vice versa. In order to lighten the load of lugging things up and down stairs and save time, the obvious solution was, of course, a lift. And that was where the experience his son Willem had gained at Jan Hamer & Co came in very handy. Various goods lifts were built, and even a number of passenger hand lifts were built in those days. These latter lifts were operated by pulling a rope.

1. Klein Nieuwland with J. Brinkman and Sons on the right
2. Wrought-iron spiral staircase
3. Weighing chair at Handicare museum
4. Advertising drawing of weighing chair
5. Cheese in the lift
6. Over 3500 lifts
7. Job advertisement for an accomplished typist

1914

Start of the First World War

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Huishoudster b. z. a., 45 j., goed kunnende koken.
Fr. br., lett. L, Kiosk Sarphatipark.

TYPISTE.

Op een fabriekskantoor te Amsterdam wordt voor TIJDELIJK gevraagd eene volleerd Typiste, bekend met »Remington« en de moderne talen. Zich persoonlijk aan te melden bij de Firma JAN HAMER & Co., Frederiksplein 6, 's morgens vóór 12 uur. (6469)

7

Huge demand for Vulcanus leads to new plans

The huge demand for the new Vulcanus cast iron exceeded all expectations, and soon led to capacity issues as the supplying foundries in Tegelen, which were contracted to produce the material, were unable to produce more than 500,000 kg per year. That was nowhere near enough to meet the rapidly growing demand for the material from the Dutch national railway company alone. And besides, due to the need to maintain strict secrecy regarding the casting process, someone from Jan Hamer & Co in Amsterdam had to be present at every single casting. All this back-and-forth travel between Amsterdam and Limburg became an ever greater burden for the company.

Being an ambitious entrepreneur, Jan Hamer therefore undertook to set up his own foundry, and managed to arouse great interest in his initiative at the Amsterdam-based bank Labouchère & Co. This bank ordered their accountant to conduct an in-depth assessment of the plan, which resulted in a highly positive report from the accountant issued on 8 April 1919, which was subsequently approved. With this report in hand, Labouchère & Co soon found two other parties willing to co-finance the project; the Rotterdamse Bank Vereniging in Amsterdam and the Buisma & Gratama company in Zwolle. One key reason these financiers had for backing the project was the good reputation founders Jan Hamer and Willem Eising Mulder had built by then. Aside from that, they were also impressed by the huge demand for Vulcanus, and their trust was further strengthened by the fact that Hamer had a major customer in the Dutch national railway company. The plan also allowed for lift manufacturing and other Jan Hamer & Co activities to be based at the same site as the foundry that would be built.

Lift production was meanwhile going at full speed, and Jan Hamer & Co proudly reported that it had already sold and installed 4000 lifts.

Major setback

Unfortunately, Jan Hamer never got to see ‘his’ foundry in action. He suddenly passed away on 11 October 1919 at the age of 58.

1919

Koninklijke Luchtvaart Maatschappij (KLM) was founded


VULCANUS

NAAMLOOZE VENNOOTSCHAP

NEDERLANDSCHE IJZERGIETERIJ „VULCANUS",

GEVESTIGD TE VAASSEN.

Maatschappelijk Kapitaal ƒ 5,000,000.—,

OPRICHTERSBEWIJS

№ 0001 № 0001

AAN TOONDER

VAASSEN, October 1921.

HIERBIJ AFGEGEVEN 20 DIVIDEND-BEWIJZEN MET TALON.

VULCANUS

1


VULCANUS

NAAMLOOZE VENNOOTSCHAP

NEDERLANDSCHE IJZERGIETERIJ „VULCANUS",

GEVESTIGD TE VAASSEN.

Maatschappelijk Kapitaal ƒ 5,000,000.—,

BEWIJS VAN AANDEEL

№ 0112 № 0112

AAN TOONDER

GROOT

EEN DUIZEND GULDEN.

VAASSEN, October 1921.

HIERBIJ AFGEGEVEN 20 DIVIDEND-BEWIJZEN MET TALON.

VULCANUS

2


VULCANUS

NAAMLOOZE VENNOOTSCHAP

NEDERLANDSCHE IJZERGIETERIJ „VULCANUS",

GEVESTIGD TE VAASSEN.

Maatschappelijk Kapitaal ƒ 5,000,000.—,

WINSTBEWIJS

№ 001 № 001

AAN TOONDER

VAASSEN, October 1921.

HIERBIJ AFGEGEVEN 20 DIVIDEND-BEWIJZEN MET TALON.

VULCANUS

3

4


1. Opgaaf van Firma Jan Hamer & Co (Handelsnaam).
gevestigd te Amsterdam Frederiksplein 6/8.

2. De Handelszaak is met ingang van 1 November 1919 opgeheven.

3a. Naam van den Vereffenaar (Zie toelichting 1). N.V. Nederlandsche Ijzergieterij en Machinefabriek Directeur A. Giering Hulsen te Vaassen.
b. Voornamen (voluit). Willem
c. Woonplaats, straat en huisnummer Amsterdam, Willemsparkweg 176
d. Geboorteplaats (Zie toelichting 2). Groningen
e. Dagteekening der geboorte 8 December 1865.
f. Nationaliteit (eventueel dagteekening der naturalisatie) Nederlander
g. Handteekening. } die door den Vereffenaar onder de stukken, de zaak betreffende, gesteld wordt.
h. Paraaf.

OPGEHEVEN

5

1. Incorporation certificate
2. Share certificate
3. Profit-sharing certificate
4. Advertisement from ‘Wendingen’, 1920
5. Closure of Jan Hamer & Co

1921
1932


VULCANUS
AMPASOVEN
VULCANUS
ROOSTERIJZERS
ROOSTERSCHALMEN
BRANDWERK
JAN HAMERSTRAAT

Establishment of Vulcanus foundry

On 21 June 1920, a public limited company under the name *Nederlandse IJzergieterij Vulcanus en Machinefabriek voorheen Jan Hamer & Co* (Netherlands Vulcanus Iron Foundry and Machine Factory formerly Jan Hamer & Co) was established. The official inaugural meeting was held at the office of De Rotterdamsche Bank Vereeniging (RBV) in The Hague. Willem Eising Mulder was appointed managing director of the factory, as he, being Jan Hamer's partner, was already fully up to speed on the secret Vulcanus casting method.

A fine location for the production plant was found in the province of Gelderland. In the summer of 1920, the company purchased land in the village of Vaassen where it would build the factory. Vaassen was relatively close to Amsterdam, land was cheap there and there was plenty of good-quality moulding sand available close by. Moulding sand was needed to fill the cavities in the casting mould around the model that would be cast. The location was not situated on a deep waterway, so a railway line was laid especially for the transportation of goods for Vulcanus from and to the factory. The German contractor Carl Rein was commissioned to build the factory.

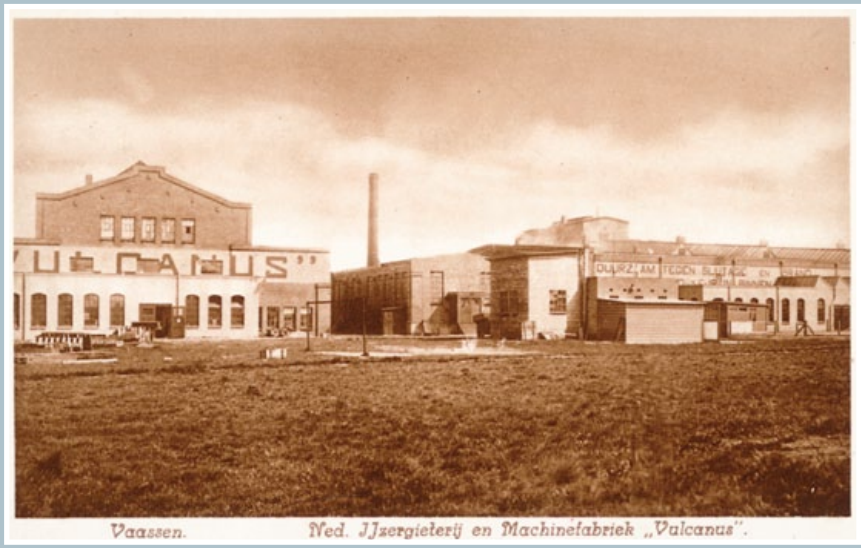
The bankers were willing to invest heavily and raised initial capital totalling as much as one million guilders. That was an immense amount, especially in those days, and equalled the annual wage of 600 fitters. Converted to today's situation, it would be 20 million euros of equity capital! This amount was initially thought to be enough. But a few setbacks during the building of the factory meant that more funds were required. The bankers involved raised another 600,000 guilders to ensure the project could continue.

The grand opening of the factory on 27 July 1921 was a very festive occasion, as evidenced by an article in the local newspaper: *"On Wednesday the new factory here was put into operation, which triggered festive celebrations among the workers, who consumed many a glass of beer."*

1. Postcard of the Vulcanus factory
2. Manual iron casting with a casting ladle
3. Working the mold
4. Vulcanus' own railway line
5-7. Vulcanus lorries
8. Name plate from lift, 1922
9. Advertisement for Vulcanus products

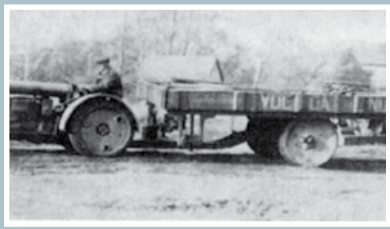
1920

Women got the right to vote in the US


Vaassen.
Ned. IJzergieterij en Machinefabriek „Vulcanus".

1

4



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N.V. NED. IJZERG. VULCANUS
EN MACHINEFABRIEK
V/H JAN HAMER & Co
VAASSEN // AMSTERDAM

8


VULCANUS
AMPASOVENS
VULCANUS
ROOSTERIJZERS
ROOSTERSCHALMEN
BRANDWERK
GELEEN VOOR VUILVERBRANDING
REMBLOKKEN
Levensduur meer dan tweemaal zoo lang als hartgusz of ander vuur vast gietijzer.
VEEL ECONOMISCHER
IJC

9

Two modern factories under one name

Two main buildings were erected on the site. One for the foundry for Vulcanus production, and one for the machine factory for lift and hoisting equipment production. Offices, a wash room, a wood storage facility and a garage completed the premises. All buildings were modern and designed with working conditions in mind, which, according to the first annual report, took some getting used to: *"The best interests of the workers were also extensively considered by letting in sufficient natural light and installing ventilation and heating, as well as providing ample wash rooms with bathtubs and showers, lockers, etc. Oddly enough however, the management will have to exercise a certain degree of pressure to actually get workers to use the latter facilities."*

Although the site in Vaassen was purchased relatively cheaply, the Nuisance Act threw a spanner in the works during the building work. It turned out that several adjacent villas would have to be bought up as well to stay within the limits stipulated by this piece of legislation. But they managed to make a virtue of necessity by deciding to fit one of the villas, 'de Kerckekamp', out as a guest house "for shorter or longer stays in Vaassen by company directors", because director Willem Eising Mulder continued to reside in Amsterdam, since he felt a bond with the city and still looked after the company's affairs there.

Housing was scarce in Vaassen, which made the company decide, in the summer of 1920, to also purchase a 24-hectare piece of land on which it intended to build about one hundred houses for its factory workers. Due to the unexpected extra expenses, the building of these houses had to be put off, and eventually only 20 houses were built. These were built by the German contractor Pistor & Co, and are up to this day still referred to as 'Pico houses'.

In memory of Jan Hamer, a street was named after him in Vaassen; Jan Hamerstraat.

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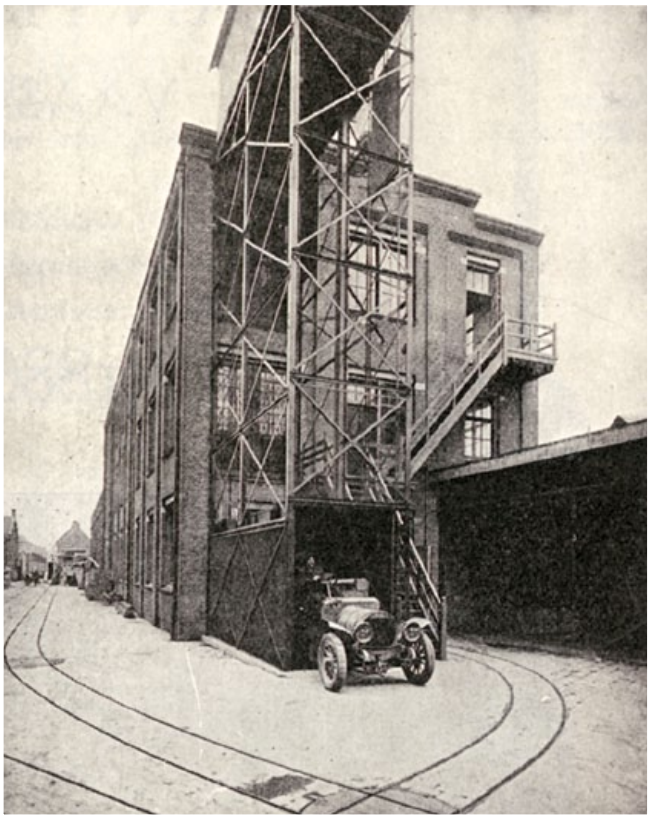

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1. Vulcanus factories
2. Lift for cars
3. Safety lift brochure
4. ‘De Kerckekamp’ villa
5. Tuindorpweg with ‘Pico houses’

A leading company with large clients

During the first three months after the grand opening, the foundry produced as much as 162,400 kilogrammes of iron, of which 102,190 kilogrammes were destined for the company's own production process, with 1,807 kilogrammes used to build lifts and 58,403 kilogrammes going into the 'Vulcanus metal' production process. By the end of 1921, the company had already delivered 277,760 kilogrammes of iron, with orders totalling 548,760 kilogrammes. The most prominent clients in the Netherlands were the Royal Netherlands Navy in Hellevoetsluis, the Dutch national railway company, the local electricity company in The Hague, CSM (Sugar Refinery), the local gasworks and transport company in Amsterdam, the Lloyd shipping company in Rotterdam, the shipping and coal company in Rotterdam, and Rotterdam's municipal hospitals. There was also growing demand from abroad, with major orders coming in from various sugar refineries, railway companies and cultivation companies in the Dutch East Indies. Orders also came in from British and Swedish railway companies. Most companies placed repeat orders and the board rightfully kept reiterating its belief: *"that orders are bound to follow once people have tried Vulcanus for themselves."*

Innovation and development at Brinkman
Brinkman's forge in Alkmaar had meanwhile grown and started producing a range of different machines, such as: packaging machines, cheese washing machines and boilers used to dip cheeses in paraffin wax. Brinkman built solid and sophisticated machines, as becomes clear from the fact that many of its machines built in those early years are still in operation today.

Little by little, the existing activities of Jan Hamer & Co were also transferred to the new factory in Vaassen. The company's personnel administration shows that a relatively large number of bench fitters and bench turners were hired. This recruitment drive was intended to get lift production at Vaassen up and running as quickly as possible. Up to October 1923, the company had manufactured nearly 6,000 lifts, of which 1146 were passenger and bed lifts, 1889 were goods lifts and 2763 were small goods, food and document lifts.

1923

The Disney brothers founded the Walt Disney Company

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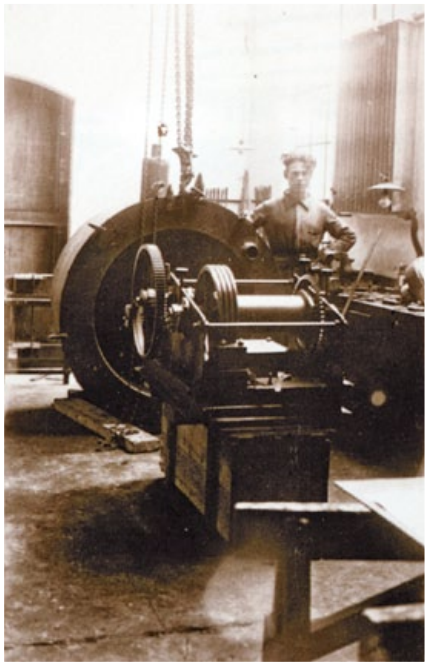

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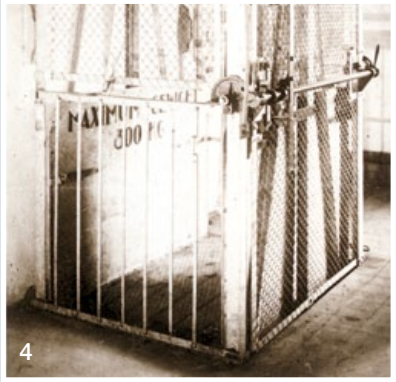

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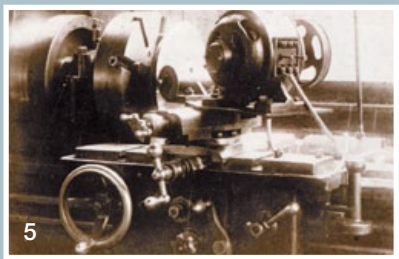

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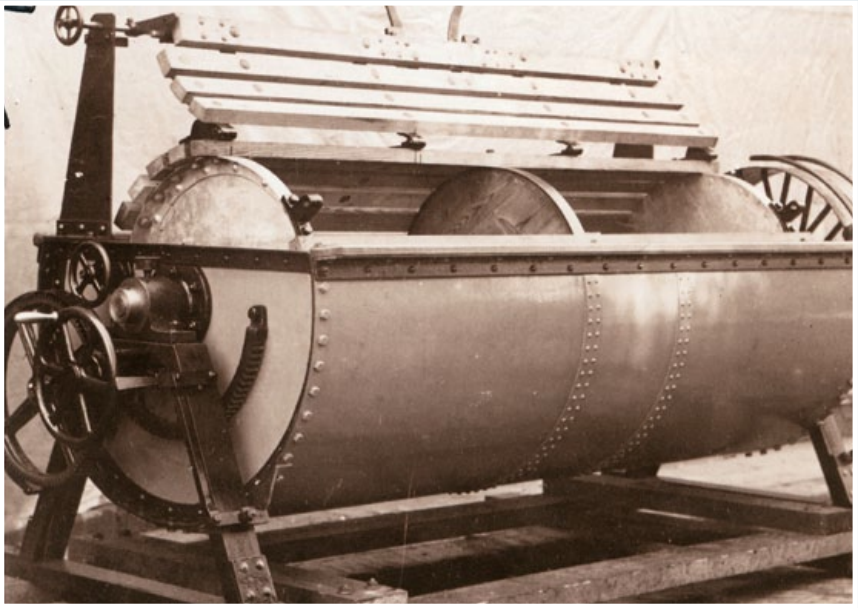


6

1. Metal working
2. Electric passenger lift
3. Lift machine construction in progress
4. Electric goods lift
5. Turning lathe
6. Cheese-washing machine
7. Lift at a cheese warehouse

Testimonials we have received over the years

Huize Westerflier,
Diepenheim, 10 April 1923.

Personen-handlift.
Geleverd in 1921.

Naar aanleiding van uw verzoek van den 7e dezer is het mij aangenaam U te kunnen melden, dat de door U geleverde personenhandlift **mijne volle tevredenheid** wegdraagt.

De bediening is **gemakkelijk en licht,** veiligheid en gemak **laten niets te wenschen over** en het **onderhoud kostte mij tot dusverre nog niets** dan een weinig olie.

Hoogachtend,
(w.g.) GRAAF SCHIMMELPENNINCK.

St. Michiels Gestel, 16 April 1923.

Kabel-zonder-einde-lift.
25—35 K.G.
Geleverd in 1921.

..... De door U geleverde kleine goederen-spijzenlift bevalt ons **uitstekend en voldoet in alle opzichten.** Wij zijn tevreden over den aanleg, de werking enz. en moeten erkennen, dat ze ons veel gemak aanbrengt.

OVERSTE VAN HET KLOOSTER.

Vlijmen, 19 April 1923.

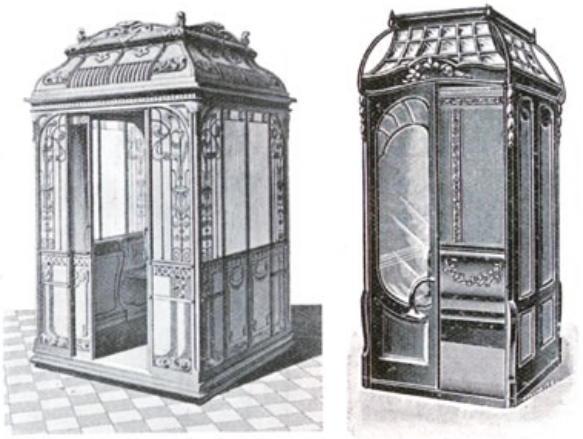
Kabel-zonder-einde-lift.
25—35 K.G.
Geleverd in 1920.

Op uw verzoek deelen wij U mede, dat de door U geleverde spijzenlift in **alle opzichten voldoet.** Ze kan gemakkelijk bediend worden en is **zeer gerieflijk.**

OVERSTE ST. FRANCISCUS XAV. GESTICHT.

't Loo Royal Palace, Apeldoorn

Royal Palace, Amsterdam



NEDERLANDSCHE SPOORWEGEN
UTRECHT

UTRECHT, 3 Januari 1923.

N.V. „VULCANUS"
VAASSEN.

Betr.: „VULCANUS" Roosters.

Hierdoor deelen wij U mede, dat bij door onze Maatschappij gehouden proefnemingen met „VULCANUS" roosters gebleken is, dat deze belangrijk beter voldoen en een langeren levensduur hebben dan gewone gietijzeren roosters.

Voor den Chef van den Dienst van Materieel en Werkplaatsen,
w.g. W. HUPKES.

St. Michiels Gestel, 19 April 1923.

8 Spijzenliften.
Geleverd in 1913.

Hiermede betuigen wij U **onze volle tevredenheid** over de door U geleverde spijzenliften. **Alle 8 liften** die wij hier in onze inrichting in gebruik hebben zijn van Uwe firma en **werken uitstekend.** Tot nu toe, na ruim 10 jaren, hebben wij er **nog geen enkel defect** aan waargenomen.

(w.g.) A. HERMUS,
Dir. Doofstommen Instituut.

Console-spijzenlift.
Geleverd in 1922.

Kasteel „De Sijpensteyn", 23 April 1923.

Gaarne deel ik U mede, dat ik over de geleverde spijzenlift **zeer tevreden ben.** De bediening is gemakkelijk, onkosten heb ik na de plaatsing nog niet gehad en het **gemak is zeer groot.**

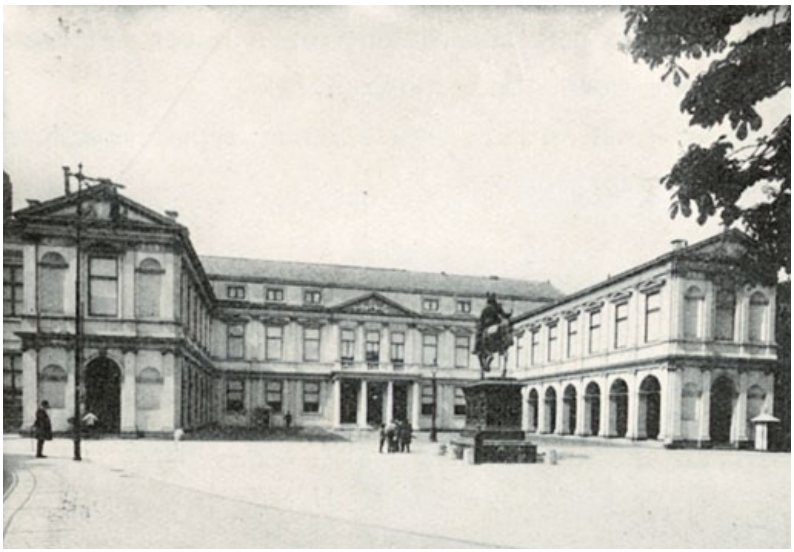
Jhr. VAN SIJPENSTEYN.

Console-lift.
Geleverd in 1922.

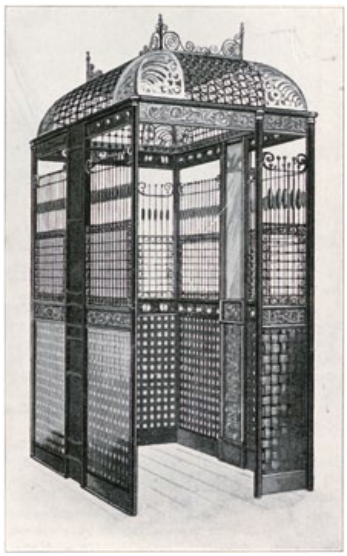
Halfweg (N.-H.), 11 April 1923.

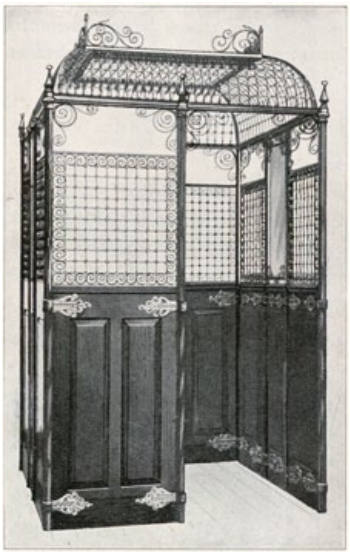
In antwoord op uw schrijven deelen wij U mede, dat de indertijd door U geleverde console-lift voor ons bietenlaboratorium **in alle opzichten goed voldoet.**

SUIKERFABRIEK „HOLLAND".



Noordeinde Royal Palace, The Hague





Wrought-iron lift cages for persons

Goederen-handlift.
100 K.G.
Geleverd in 1921.

Rotterdam, 11 April 1923.

In antwoord op uw schrijven d.d. 6 dezer gelieve U te noteeren, dat wij met de geplaatste handgoederenlift **zeer tevreden** zijn, zoodat wij de plaatsing van een tweede handlift overwegen. Wij zien dus het bezoek van een uwer gaarne ten spoedigste tegemoet.

Inmiddels teekenen wij, Hoogachtend,

(w. g.) Fa. K. BERGEL.

New post and telegraph office, Rotterdam

A slow start in an unstable economy

In the first years of the Vulcanus production facility, things were not exactly running smoothly. Seeing as the managing director, Willem Eising Mulder, did not live in Vaassen, his control over the company's set-up was insufficient. A second managing director, Mr C. P. L. Niland, was therefore appointed in 1922, and did move to Vaassen. But then the economic tide changed, and this downturn also heralded a drop in orders. On top of that, clients feared Vulcanus might not be able to live up to expectations. Initial high profit expectations were revised and shareholders realised they would not be seeing any dividend payments in those early years. Willem Eising Mulder stepped down as managing director and became a commissioner. His son, Pieter Gerrit, had been working in the Dutch East Indies for a few years, and joined the company in Vaassen at the age of 27 to head up the lifts division.

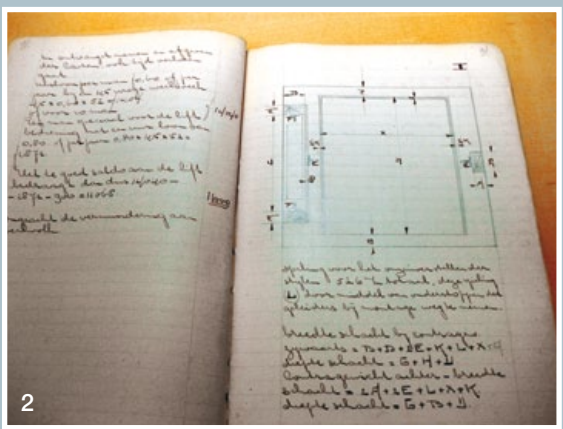
The company needed a strong leader, which Niland, despite his merits on a technical level, turned out not to be. His shortcomings were on a commercial level. In 1924, the Board of Commissioners decided to keep Niland on as a technician, but to relieve him of his management duties. His position was temporarily taken over by one of the commissioners, Mr T. Jacometti, who had previous experience running a company in the Dutch East Indies. His knowledge and contacts led to the Prince of Yogyakarta visiting the Vulcanus plant with a trade delegation in 1923. The Prince was impressed with Vulcanus and underlined the company's good reputation in the Dutch East Indies. The visit was wrapped up with a dinner at the 'Kerckekamp' villa.

Jacometti struggled with bad health, leading to him also failing to maintain full control over all of the company's affairs. The Board of Commissioners intervened in 1926 by appointing Mr G. Kalff as the new managing director. He showed commitment by moving to Vaassen, and his arrival brought some fresh air into the company. An investment plan was made, approved and implemented, enabling production to keep up with sales. The company's financial structure was reorganised, as a consequence of which Pieter Gerrit Mulder was granted permission to continue lift manufacturing operations independently.

1925

John Baird shot the first TV images in London

1



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Uit de Mail.

(loopende tot 8 Dec. 1923.)

NEDERLAND.

De Vorstenlandsche Prinsen en Nederlandsche Industrie.

Den 27sten November bezocht de Pangeran Ario Soerjowidjojo van Djokjakarta, met gevolg en de oud-resident Oudemans, het dorpje Vaessen, waar de fabrieksomplexen van de N. V. IJzergieterij „Vulcanus" en Machinefabriek v/h Jan Hamer bezichtigd zouden worden.

Van het station te Apeldoorn werd met auto's naar Vaessen gereden, waar het gezelschap ontvangen werd door den Burgemeester van Epe, waaronder Vaessen ressorteert, Baron J. L. J. B. Sweerts de Landas en den Directeur der fabriek, den Heer Nijent. Allereerst werd daarna gereden naar het middeleeuwsche slot „De Cannenburgh", waar eertijds Maarten van Rossen zetelde. De Indische gasten werden hier rondgeleid door Baron Sweerts de Landas, die met de historische geschiedenis van den burcht uitstekend op de hoogte bleek. Nadat het gezelschap voor het kasteel op de gevoelige plaat vereeuwigd was, werd naar de fabrieksterreinen gereden, waar men zich ten huize van den directeur voor de lunch vereenigde.

Aan tafel werden eenige in hartelijke bewoordingen gestelde speeches uitgesproken door den burgemeester en daarna

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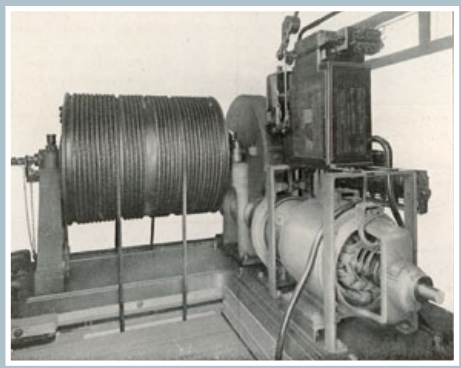

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7

N.V. NEDERLANDSCHE IJZERGIETERIJ „VULCANUS" TE VAASSEN.

OPROEPING tot eene

Buitengewone Algemeene Vergadering

van AANDEELHOUDERS

(spoedvergadering op grond van Artikel 21 der Statuten)

op DONDERDAG, 25 FEBRUARI 1926, 12 uur, ten kantore der ROTTERDAMSCHE BANKVEREENIGING te Amsterdam.

8

FABRIEKSBOEKHOUDER

gevraagd door IJzergieterij Vulcanus te Vaassen bij Apeldoorn.

Ervaring van omvangrijke bedrijfs-administratie noodzakelijk.

Spoedige schr. sollicitatie onder opgaaf van leeftijd, vroegeren werkkring, verlangd salaris en tijdstip van indiensttreding. 44529.40

9

1. Pieter Gerrit Mulder
2. P.G. Mulder's notebook
3. Prince of Djocjakarta's visit to Vulcanus
4. Dinner in Prince's honour
5. Prince departs from 'De Kerckekamp'
6. Lift machine type 1926
7. The Prince views furnaces for Java sugar plants
8. Convocation of Meeting of Shareholders
9. Job advertisement for a factory accountant

A distinguished visitor in Vaassen

The company put a lot of effort into promoting Vulcanus, with a plant visit being one of the ways of generating publicity. It became common practice to seal a big deal with someone important visiting the plant, meaning that Vaassen would often welcome high-profile visitors. In 1925, for example, South Africa's high commissioner in London, Mr Smit, personally came to Vaassen to inspect and approve Vulcanus brake blocks. Vulcanus subsequently received an order to deliver these brake blocks to the South African national railways, and although Vulcanus was more expensive than other kinds of cast iron, an investment in Vulcanus quality would soon repay itself. They would last longer, meaning considerable savings. Apart from brake blocks and grate bars for steam engines of trains, shipping companies also used Vulcanus in the machine rooms of large ships.

Vulcanus back onto its feet

In 1926, the company celebrated its fortieth anniversary, and proudly announced that it had delivered 6500 lifts in those forty years. To serve the many customers in the west of the Netherlands, the company set up a fixed maintenance and repair shop at Ten Katestraat 86 in Amsterdam. Customers could also report faults there.

From 1927, Vulcanus slowly got back onto its feet, partly thanks to an economic upturn in the Netherlands and its colonies in the East Indies. The latter was important seeing as Vulcanus supplied many of the grate bars for bagasse-fired furnaces at sugar refineries there. Aside from producing cast iron itself, Vulcanus also licensed companies in France, the UK and Belgium to make the Vulcanus metal locally using the secret technique. Between 1927 and 1930, managing director Kalff regularly succeeded in making a profit, so shareholders could finally be paid dividend. Around 1930, a worldwide economic crisis broke out that also affected Vulcanus. Production dropped by over 35 per cent, and even wages had to be cut. An adult employee's hourly wage went down from 62 cents in 1930 to 50 cents in 1932.

1. Visit to Vulcanus by South Africa's High Commissioner
2. Printing plate of advertisement for lifts
3. Various advertisements

1927

Charles Lindbergh was the first person to make a solo flight across the Atlantic

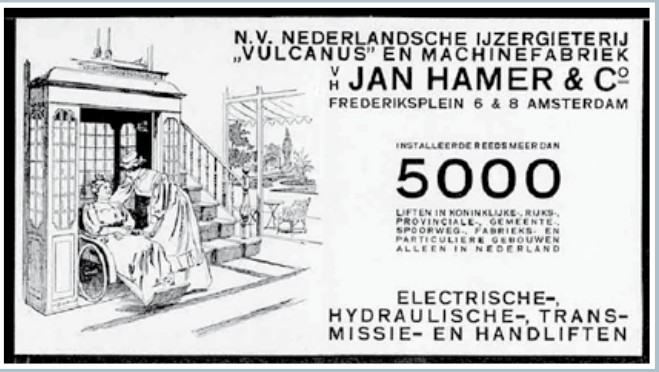
1

2


VULCANUS-METAAL
is het beste en het duurzaamste voor gietstukken die onderhevig zijn aan grooto wrijving, als remblokken en dergelijke gietstukken.
Vraagt inlichtingen en prijzen ook van gewoon gietwerk aan
N.V. NED. IJZERGIETERIJ „VULCANUS"
EN MACHINEFABRIEK V.H. JAN HAMER & Co
HOOFDKANTOOR AMSTERDAM FREDERIKSPLEIN 6-8
TELEFOON N 3067 - TELEGRAMADRES „TUBULAR"
FABRIEKEN TE VAASSEN

3


VEILIGHEIDS-LIFTEN
ontwerpen en leveren wij in elke uitvoering. Meer dan 5000 liften plaatsten wij, hetgeen als een bewijs voor de waarde en degelijkheid van ons fabrikaat mag gelden.
Vraagt Catalogus aan (16585)
N.V. NED. IJZERGIETERIJ „VULCANUS"
EN MACH. FABR. V.H. JAN HAMER & Co.
HOOFDKANTOOR
FRED. PLEIN 6-8 AMSTERDAM
TELEGR. ADR. „TUBULAR" TEL. N. 3067
FABRIEKEN TE VAASSEN


N.V. NEDERLANDSCHE IJZERGIETERIJ
„VULCANUS" EN MACHINEFABRIEK
V.H. JAN HAMER & Co
FREDERIKSPLEIN 6 & 8 AMSTERDAM
INSTALLEERDE REEDS MEER DAN
5000
LIFTEN IN KONINKLIJKE-, RIJKS-, PROVINCIALE-, GEMEENTE-, SPOORWEG-, FABRIEKS- EN PARTICULIERE GEBOUWEN ALLEEN IN NEDERLAND
ELECTRISCHE-, HYDRAULISCHE-, TRANSMISSIE- EN HANDLIFTEN


LIFTEN
PERSONEN-LIFTEN
GOEDEREN-LIFTEN
SPIJS-LIFTEN
N.V. NEDERLANDSCHE IJZERGIETERIJ „VULCANUS"
EN MACHINEFABRIEK V/H
FABRIEKEN TE VAASSEN (GELDERLAND)
JAN HAMER & Co
VERKOOPKANTOOR SINGEL 256 AMSTERDAM TELEFOON 43067


Jan Hamer
SPIJS-LIFTEN
NIEUWSTE CONSTRUCTIE = GERUISCHLOOS
VRAAGT DEMONSTRATIE
N.V. NEDERLANDSCHE IJZERGIETERIJ „VULCANUS"
MACHINEFABRIEK VOORHEEN JAN HAMER & Co.
FABRIEKEN:
VAASSEN
GELDERLAND
TELEFOON 17
VERKOOPKANTOOR:
AMSTERDAM
HEERENGRACHT 12
TELEFOON 43067


N.V. NEDERLANDSCHE IJZERGIETERIJ „VULCANUS"
EN MACHINEFABRIEK
V.H. JAN HAMER & Co
FABRIEKEN TE VAASSEN (GELDERLAND)
VERKOOPBUREAU: AMSTERDAM SINGEL 256 - TEL. N. 3067
LIFTEN
STANDAARDTYPEN VAN 5—5000 K.G.
MODERNSTE CONSTRUCTIE
35-JARIGE ERVARING
REEDS 5500 LIFTEN GELEVERD

Lift company goes solo

In February 1932, Willem Eising Mulder and managing director Kalff realised that the results of the lift-manufacturing division were failing to reach levels formerly reached by Jan Hamer & Co in Amsterdam. At Vulcanus, the lifts division stood in the shadow of the foundry and did not receive the board's undivided attention. It also became clear over the years that the move to Vaassen was an unfortunate one in the eyes of customers. Demand for new lifts mainly existed in the west of the country and that was also where most of the existing customers were, customers who needed lift maintenance. Mulder and Kalff came to the conclusion that relocation back to Amsterdam was a precondition for success in the Netherlands, so moving the lift plant back to the west was a logical step.

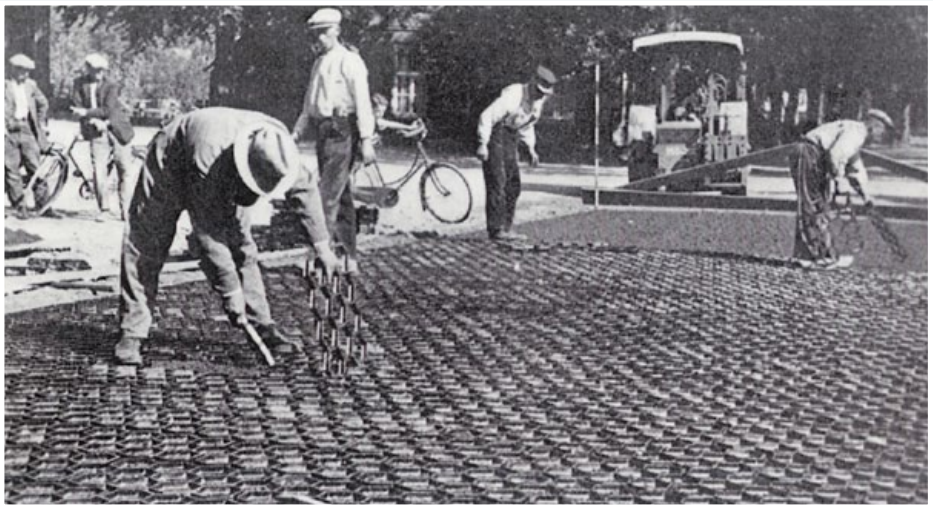
Vulcanus keeps casting

As production continued to grow, the company started to look for faster production methods. Vulcanus also sought new applications for cast iron. One application came in the form of 'honeycomb grates' for road surfaces, produced in large quantities, and mainly used for road asphalting in Germany. Another development was the enamelling of cast-iron products cast at Vulcanus. Demand for lavatory bowls, washbasin consoles and drinking troughs for cattle was high.

At the height of production, Vulcanus employed over 500 people, and the foundry in Vaassen remained in operation until 1999. That was when production was relocated to a previously purchased foundry in Doetinchem. The company premises in Vaassen have meanwhile made way for a new housing estate, where street names such as Gieterij (foundry) and Vormerij (Moulding Shop) are still reminiscent of the site's past.

A decision was made to demerge the lift factory, with the management of the new company placed in the hands of Pieter Gerrit Mulder, who would be assisted by his father Willem Eising Mulder. On 21 March, the board confirmed that P. G. Mulder's contract would be terminated on 30 April. In order to facilitate preparations for his new position, he was put on reduced pay for 6 months and was allowed to continue living in the company accommodation up to 31 July.

1-2. Road construction using Vulcanus road surface grids
3. Enamelling cast-iron products
4. Furnaces for Java sugar plants
5. Vulcanus lorry
6. Advantages of Vulcanus road surface grids



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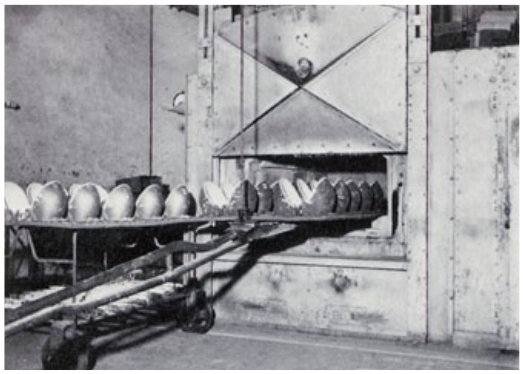

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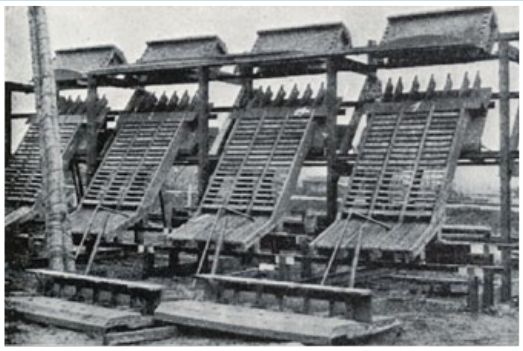

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N.V. Nederlandsche Yzergieterij „Vulcanus"
te Vaassen (gem. Epe).

Telefoon No. 17
Telegraaf „Vulcanus"
Vaassen.

Vaassen,

Directie.

GEGOTEN YZEREN WAPENING VAN HET WEGDEK

Nederlandsche Octrooi-Aanvr. No. 57506.

De WAPENING van het bitumendek heeft de volgende

VOORDELEN

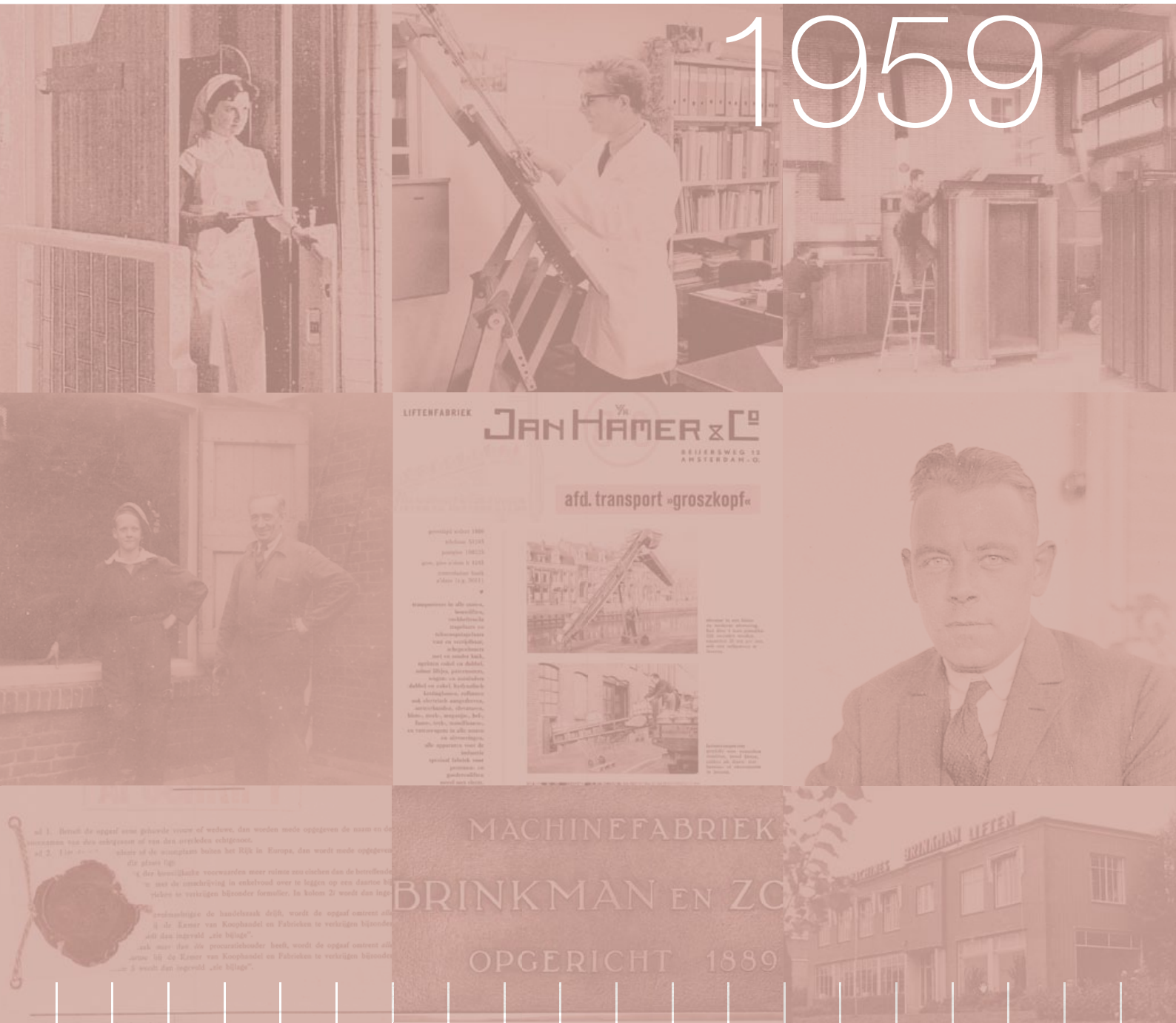
1. Voorkomt het ontstaan van gaten en kraters;
2. Geen afbraak langs de wegkanten;
3. Geen slippen op asfaltwegen;
4. Elasticiteit van het bitumendek gehandhaafd;
5. Gegoten yzer is roestbestendig;
6. De 6-hoekige vorm verankert de roosters onderling en voorkomt zijdelingse verschuiving;
7. Gewicht slechts 25 K.G. per M²;

De wegroosters worden als massa-product vervaardigd op de Loopende Band-installatie onzer gietery te VAASSEN.

Nederlandsch Fabrikaat bestrydt Nederlandsche werkeloosheid.

6

1933
1959


LIFTENFABRIEK
JAN HAMER & Co
BEIJERSWEG 12
AMSTERDAM-O.
afd. transport »groszkopf«
MACHINEFABRIEK
BRINKMAN EN ZO
OPGERICHT 1889

Determination in times of crisis and war

Pieter Gerrit Mulder made an energetic start setting up the new company and finding suitable premises in Amsterdam. On 25 April 1932, Vulcanus N.V. announced that it would let the new company have the name “Jan Hamer & Co”. Service contracts were all transferred to the new company, on the condition that it would take on all existing obligations and guarantees. On 1 May 1932, the company “Stamp- en Perswerk en Liftenfabriek voorheen Jan Hamer & Co” (Stamping and Compression Works and Lift Factory formerly known as Jan Hamer & Co) was registered with the Chamber of Commerce. The company’s temporary postal address was on Zandpad in Maarssen. The company’s working capital initially amounted to 50,000 guilders, of which 10,000 was the share of Messrs Mulder, 20,000 the share of Vulcanus N.V. and the final 20,000 was a credit line provided by Vulcanus N.V.

Under its new name, the company opened its doors on Marinewerf in Amsterdam in May 1933. The company had a number of experienced workers on its books who had moved with the company from Vaassen. Ties with Vaassen remained intact, as Vulcanus continued to supply cast iron for the lifts.

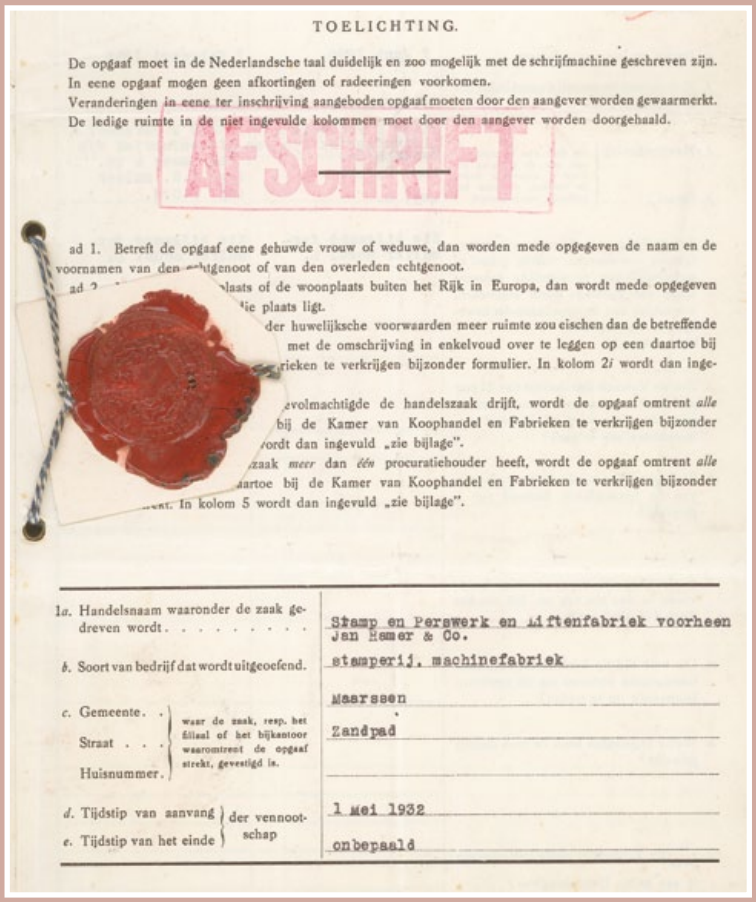
The new company’s start-up period was far from easy. Due to a global economic crisis, lift production slumped to about fifteen lifts per year. Revenue mainly came from small repairs and maintenance contracts for existing lift installations. The outbreak of the Second World War in 1940 did not help matters either. The lathe broke down, and parts for lifts were increasingly hard to come by. They became so scarce that lifts had to be repaired using parts taken from functioning lifts. The people of Amsterdam also grappled with scarcity during the war. The boxes with parts that Vulcanus sent to Jan Hamer & Co often contained potatoes and other primary necessities of life instead of the lift parts listed on the lid.

Willem Eising Mulder, co-founder of Jan Hamer & Co, passed away on 31 August 1944, at the age of 80.

1. Jan Hamer & Co 1932 deed of incorporation
2. Pieter Gerrit Mulder
3. Name plate Jan Hamer & Co Amsterdam
4-5. Food scarcity during the famine in the winter of 1944
6-7. Wood robbery from lifts and tram tracks

1937

The 2790-metre Golden Gate Bridge was opened in San Francisco



TOELICHTING.

De opgaaf moet in de Nederlandsche taal duidelijk en zoo mogelijk met de schrijfmachine geschreven zijn.
In eene opgaaf mogen geen afkortingen of radeeringen voorkomen.
Veranderingen in eene ter inschrijving aangeboden opgaaf moeten door den aangever worden gewaarmerkt.
De ledige ruimte in de niet ingevulde kolommen moet door den aangever worden doorgehaald.

AFSCHRIFT

ad 1. Betreft de opgaaf eene gehuwde vrouw of weduwe, dan worden mede opgegeven de naam en de voornamen van den echtgenoot of van den overleden echtgenoot.
ad 2. ... plaats of de woonplaats buiten het Rijk in Europa, dan wordt mede opgegeven ... die plaats ligt.
... der huwelijksche voorwaarden meer ruimte zou eischen dan de betreffende ... met de omschrijving in enkelvoud over te leggen op een daartoe bij ... rieken te verkrijgen bijzonder formulier. In kolom 2*i* wordt dan inge-
... evolmachtigde de handelszaak drijft, wordt de opgaaf omtrent *alle* ... bij de Kamer van Koophandel en Fabrieken te verkrijgen bijzonder ... wordt dan ingevuld „zie bijlage".
... zaak *meer* dan *één* procuratiehouder heeft, wordt de opgaaf omtrent *alle* ... daartoe bij de Kamer van Koophandel en Fabrieken te verkrijgen bijzonder ... In kolom 5 wordt dan ingevuld „zie bijlage".

1*a*. Handelsnaam waaronder de zaak gedreven wordt	Stamp en Perswerk en Liftenfabriek voorheen Jan Hamer & Co.
b. Soort van bedrijf dat wordt uitgeoefend	stamperij, machinefabriek
c. Gemeente (waar de zaak, resp. het filiaal of het bijkantoor waaromtrent de opgaaf strekt, gevestigd is)	Maarssen
Straat	Zandpad
Huisnummer	
d. Tijdstip van aanvang der vennootschap	1 mei 1932
e. Tijdstip van het einde der vennootschap	onbepaald

1

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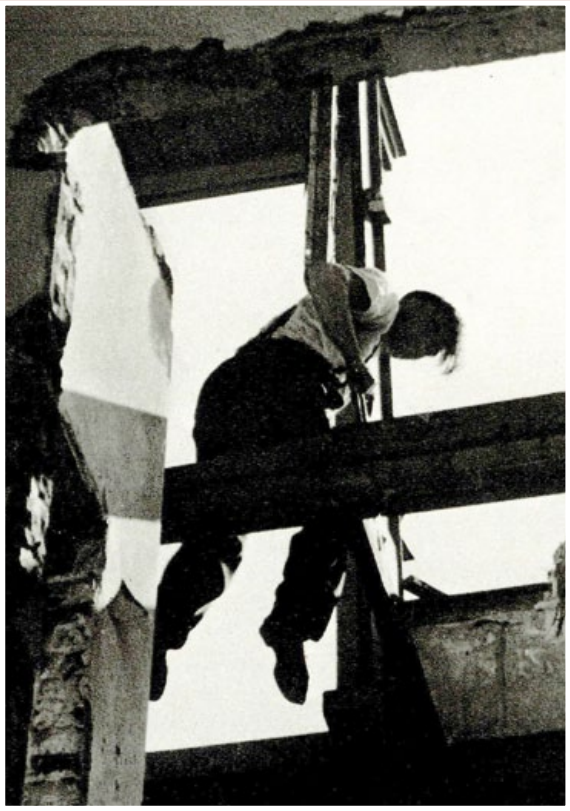

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A new era for Brinkman

The war years were also far from easy for Brinkman, the lift manufacturer in Alkmaar. German occupying forces took over the Brinkman workshop on two occasions, all but closing down the company's own production. In 1944, the company had to absorb a major setback when Willem Brinkman died. Willem and Herman Brinkman each had a son called Jan, who would together step in to lead the company after the war.

Gerrit de Heer tells the story: *"I was picked up by the Germans in a raid in Utrecht in 1943. In a transit camp en route to Dessau I met Jan Brinkman (Herman's son). We endured two years at the Dessau labour camp together. After we both survived a heavy bombardment, we spoke about what we would do once we got back to the Netherlands. I told him "if you can use me, just come over to Utrecht". He duly did so after the liberation, and invited me. So I headed over to Alkmaar on a freight train in November 1945 to take a look at the company. Walking over to the company from the train station, I asked a nice young lady for directions. She turned out to be Jan's sister, and escorted me to the Brinkman workshop. Their smithy was not big, and there was still the place where horses used to be shod by the entrance, but the whole thing still appealed to me, and I took the job. And the funny thing was that his sister and I really hit it off and she eventually became my wife."*

Another setback followed in 1946 when Herman Brinkman died suddenly. His knowledge and years of experience had made him the driving force behind the company, which the company suddenly had to do without. Gerrit de Heer was put in charge of making technical drawings of all machines the company had developed up to that point. These drawings were subsequently used to built one copy of each machine with a view to gaining experience. Immediately after that, the company set off on a modernisation drive for these machine to be able to meet new wishes and requirements.

1. Willem and Herman Brinkman
2. Jan Brinkman (Willem's son) and Jan Brinkman (Herman's son)
3. Lift component manufacturing
4. Advertising leaflet targeting the dairy industry
5. Bronze name plate

1946

John William Mauchly and John Presper Eckert unveiled the first computer: Eniac

1

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3


J. BRINKMAN & ZONEN
OPGERICHT 1894
MACHINEHERSTELP TS
ALKMAAR - KL. NIEUWLAND D 4-6-8 341
WIJ MAKEN EN REPAREEREN
SPECIAAL VOOR DE ZUIVELINDUSTRIE
ALLE ONDERDEELEN VOOR:
STOOMMACHINES — STOOMPOMPEN — CENTRIFUGAALPOMPEN
MELKPOMPEN — KETELAPPENDAGES — KRANEN EN AFSLUITERS
PASTEURS – PAPKETELS – BOTERKNEEDERS – ELECTROMOTOREN
WIJ MAKEN OP SPECIALE MACHINES
Alle soorten Tandwielen, Rechte-, Conische- en Kettingwielen
WIJ LEVEREN
Alle soorten Appendages, Kranen en Afsluiters. Pijpleidingen in ijzer en koper, diverse Pompen, Drijfwerk enz. enz.
PRIMA WERK
LAGE PRIJZEN
VRAAGT ONS AAN, HET VERPLICHT U TOT NIETS
REPARATIE VAN EEN PASTEUR
K 317

4


MACHINEFABRIEK
J. BRINKMAN EN ZONEN
OPGERICHT 1889

5

Post-war reconstruction

Jan Hamer & Co too resumed operations after the liberation, and started by repairing all lifts that had stopped working during the war. The massive reconstruction effort after the war offered good opportunities for companies in the lift industry, because high-rise was a popular option for the new buildings that were erected everywhere, and these all needed lifts. The company buckled down again and moved to a larger workshop nearby at Grootte Kattenburgstraat 17B in Amsterdam in 1946.

In 1947, both Jan Eylander and Jan van Wetering joined Jan Hamer & Co. In the following, they explain the mood of the time as they reminisce about their days at Jan Hamer & Co. Eylander: *: "The lifts and lift components we produced were transported to Amsterdam Central Station by horse and cart. From there they were taken to the location were the whole thing had to be assembled. You then had to make sure your tools were delivered to the site on time by a parcel delivery service. As a technician you would also travel by train, and often stay in a local guest house for the time it took to complete the job."* For installations in Amsterdam, it was not uncommon for Jan Eylander and Jan van Wetering to ship lifts to the installation address by delivery bicycle. These would then generally be food lifts.

Van Wetering continues: *"The Royal Netherlands Navy, which owned our building on the Grootte Kattenburgstraat, wanted the building back for themselves. We would therefore be moving to a new location at Beijersweg 12 in December 1947. Jan Hamer & Co would there move into a former airplane hangar built on the foundations of the old ice rink. But fierce winds brought this hangar down just before the relocation. After it had been rebuilt, we finally relocated anyway in January 1948. Our removals expert was the coal man, who transported our equipment by horse and cart. Jan Eylander and I set up the new workshop together, which was not an easy job by any means as the winter of 1948 was an exceptionally cold one."*

1. Jan Hamer & Co logo
2. Jan van Wetering and Faure in lift assembly plant, 1948
3. Manual food lift with automatic friction brake
4. Lift at Rijksmuseum's print gallery
5. Company stamp Grootte Kattenburgerstraat
6. Beijersweg ice rink before its demolition
7. Beijersweg with Jan Hamer & Co's building on the right
8. Drawing of Beijersweg plant's facade
9. Lift door push plate

1947

First officially reported UFO sighting, by Kenneth Arnold


LIFTENFABRIEK
JAN HAMER & Co
1


2


3


4


LIFTENFABRIEK
JAN HAMER & Co
Gr. Kattenburgerstraat 17B
AMSTERDAM-C.
5


KUNSTIJSBAAN - AMSTERDAM
ijsoppervlakte 2400 M² - 8000 tribuneplaatsen
6


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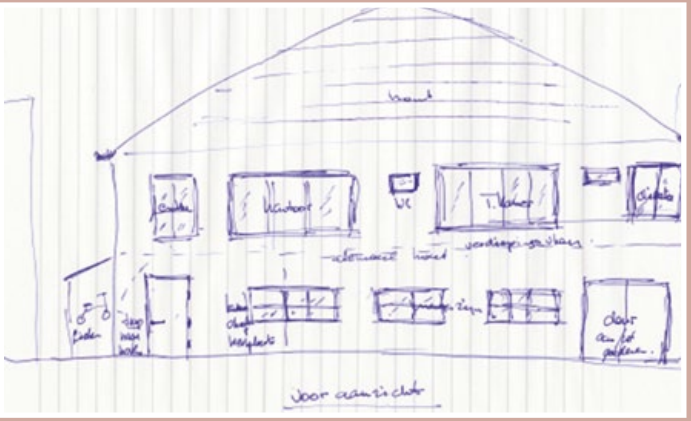
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Jan Hamer
AMSTERDAM
9

A new period of growth in the 1950s

Van Wetering describes the hangar: *"Entering the building you would immediately find yourself right in the centre of the workshop. There were offices upstairs for Mr Mulder, the accounting department, the draughtsmen and the works manager. There was one toilet and one small washbasin in the building. Mr Mulder had banned smoking in the factory, and seeing as there was no cafeteria or anything like that, we ate our sandwiches by our bench vices. That cafeteria didn't come until later."*

Eylander continues: *"The lifts were designed at Jan Hamer & Co in their entirety, and the complete lift construction was built based on a drawing. The workshop had five workers in those days. A hoist was lacking, which meant that whenever material arrived or a lift had to be shipped from the workshop, all workers were rounded up to load or unload goods by hand. After a lift had arrived at the location were it would be installed, that installation was generally taken care of by the person who had built the lift. That ensured maximum involvement in the product, and bolstered craftsmanship."*

Halfway through the 1950s, P. G. Mulder entered into a contract with a transport tools manufacturer called "Groszkopf", under which Groszkopf got an office in the building on Beijersweg and supplied the correct drawings of his products. These products would then be manufactured and maintained by Jan Hamer & Co staff.

The company was doing well, and the work force grew to about 40 in the 1950s. Van Wetering: *"It really was a family business. My mother did the cleaning, for example. She had taken that up to save up to buy me a bike. The atmosphere among staff was very good, which also was apparent during the staff outings that were organised every year."*

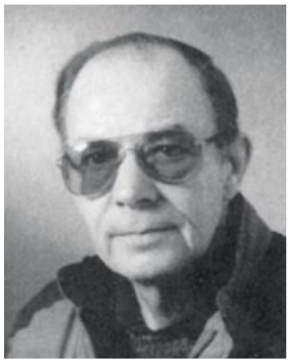
1. Jan van Wetering in his office
2. Raymond Latten behind his drawing board
3. Jan Eylander
4. Pieter Gerrit Mulder
5. Brochure for Groszkopf transport devices
6. Staff outing to Holterberg, 1957
7. Raymond Latten's wedding, attended by colleagues and Fanny Blankers-Koen (far left)
8-9. Name plates from lifts

1951

First TV broadcast in the Netherlands

1

2



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LIFTENFABRIEK

JAN HAMER & Co

BEIJERSWEG 12
AMSTERDAM-O.

GROSZKOPF
FABRIEK EN VERKOOPKANTOOR VAN

TRANSPORTWERKTUIGEN
LIFTEN EN PATERNOSTERS

afd. transport »groszkopf«

gevestigd sedert 1886
telefoon 51245
postgiro 198225
gem. giro a'dam h 4245
rotterdamse bank
a'dam (r.g. 3011)

transporteurs in alle maten,
bouwliften,
verkheftrucks
stapelaars en
telescoopstapelaars
vast en verrijdbaar,
schepenlossers
met en zonder kuik,
opritten enkel en dubbel,
minor liftjes, paternosters,
wagon- en autoladers
dubbel en enkel, hydraulisch
kettinghanen, rolbanen
ook electrisch aangedreven,
steiteerbanden, elevatoren,
kleine, steek-, magazijn-, hef-,
fusee-, trek-, mandflenes-,
en vatenwagens in alle maten
en uitvoeringen,
alle apparaten voor de
industrie
speciaal fabriek voor
personen- en
goederenliften
zowel met electr.
aandrijving als voor
handkracht
tot elk hefvermogen
en voor elk doel.
ervaring van meer dan
8 duizend gelevende liften
speciale reparatie- en
onderhoudsafdeling
ombouw volgens de
nieuwste
veiligheidsvoorschriften

elevator in een lichte
en moderne uitvoering,
kan door 1 man gemakke-
lijk verreden worden.
capaciteit 20 ton per uur,
ook met zelfgeyers te
leveren.

latentransporteur
geschikt voor zwaardere
vrachten, zowel kisten,
zakken als dozen, met
benzine- of electromotor
te leveren.

latentransporteur
met zwaenehals
voor het laden en lossen
van auto's, wagens etc.
prima geschikt voor zeer
zware vrachten, ook als
schepenlosser te gebruiken.
de transporteur kan door
2 man verreden worden en
is ook geschikt om achter
een auto te koppelen.

5

6

7

8

9

Brinkman lifts on the way up

Brinkman was also enjoying a prosperous time in the 1950s as the company started to focus on developing lifts again. They developed a special goods lift for use in cheese warehouses and dairy factories. The first one was built in 1949 at the Warns dairy factory in Friesland, with a further 120 delivered in subsequent years.

A conversation with a friend of his, the managing director of the Hensen lift factory in Rotterdam, gave De Heer the idea for the Brinkman home lift. This was, in effect, the first 'stairlift' our company would develop, seeing as it was a lift that could transport a person from one floor to the next without using the stairs. The first ever specimen was built for the then director of the Tuschinski Theatre in Amsterdam, who was unable to go up and down stairs. His daughter proudly posed for the brochure photos.

Growing demand led to the company outgrowing the workshop on Klein Nieuwland. Seeing as an extension to the workshop was not permitted, the company decided to build a new factory at another site in Alkmaar. The new building on Koelmalaan was opened in 1958.

A major housing shortage in the 1960s prompted the Dutch government to pass legislation intended to free up housing for young people. People in rented accommodation were forced to leave their houses and live in a retirement home as soon as they reached the age of 65. Brinkman saw a huge opportunity in the massive retirement home building works that ensued, and the board decided to focus on the manufacturing of passenger lifts, a novelty at Brinkman at the time. Experts from the Netherlands Institute for Lift Technology in Amsterdam were recruited to help design these lifts.

In 1962, Jan, Herman Brinkman's son, left the company. His cousin Jan subsequently ran the company's dairy wing, while Gerrit de Heer managed the lifts division. In 1963, the first ever Brinkman column lift was installed at the Friesmahiem retirement home in Grou. Based on the home lift, the company had developed a very good column lift. Its simple but solid construction was suitable for mass production, and the new lift was thirty to fifty per cent cheaper than existing alternatives. Due to the huge success, the company soon switched to exclusively producing this type of lift.

1. New premises on Koelmalaan
2. Lift cabin assembly
3. "Article from the ""Alkmaarsche Courant"" newspaper"
4. The first Brinkman column lift
5. Brochure for a home lift
6. Name plate from a column lift

1959

Toy manufacturer Mattel launched the Barbie doll

1

2

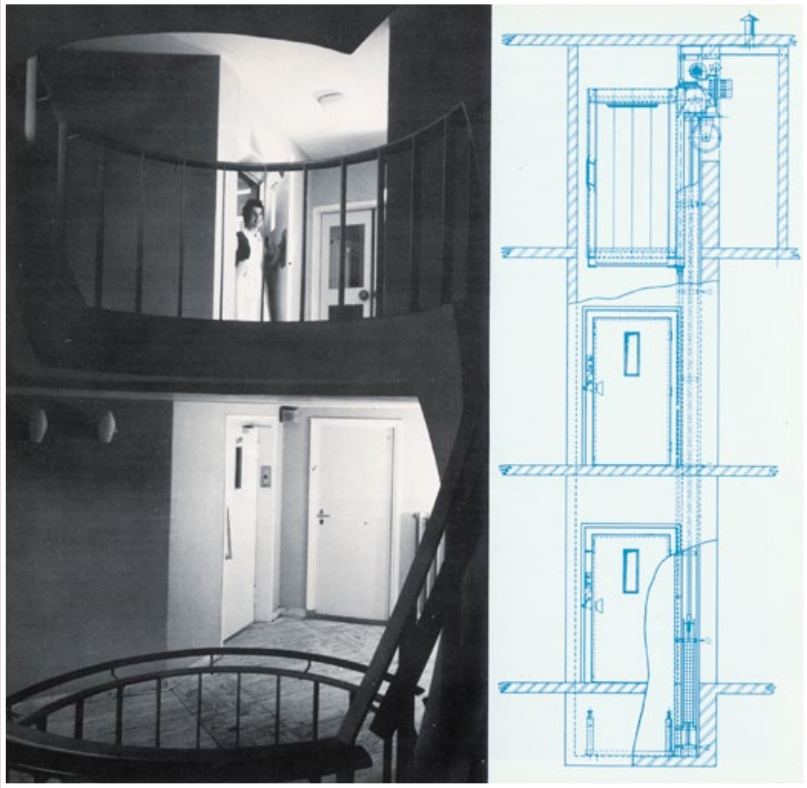
WOENSDAG

Oude Alkmaarse industrie verhuist.....

Fa. Brinkman in gloednieuw fabriekspand in OVERDIE

SOBER, DOELMATIG GEBOUW

3



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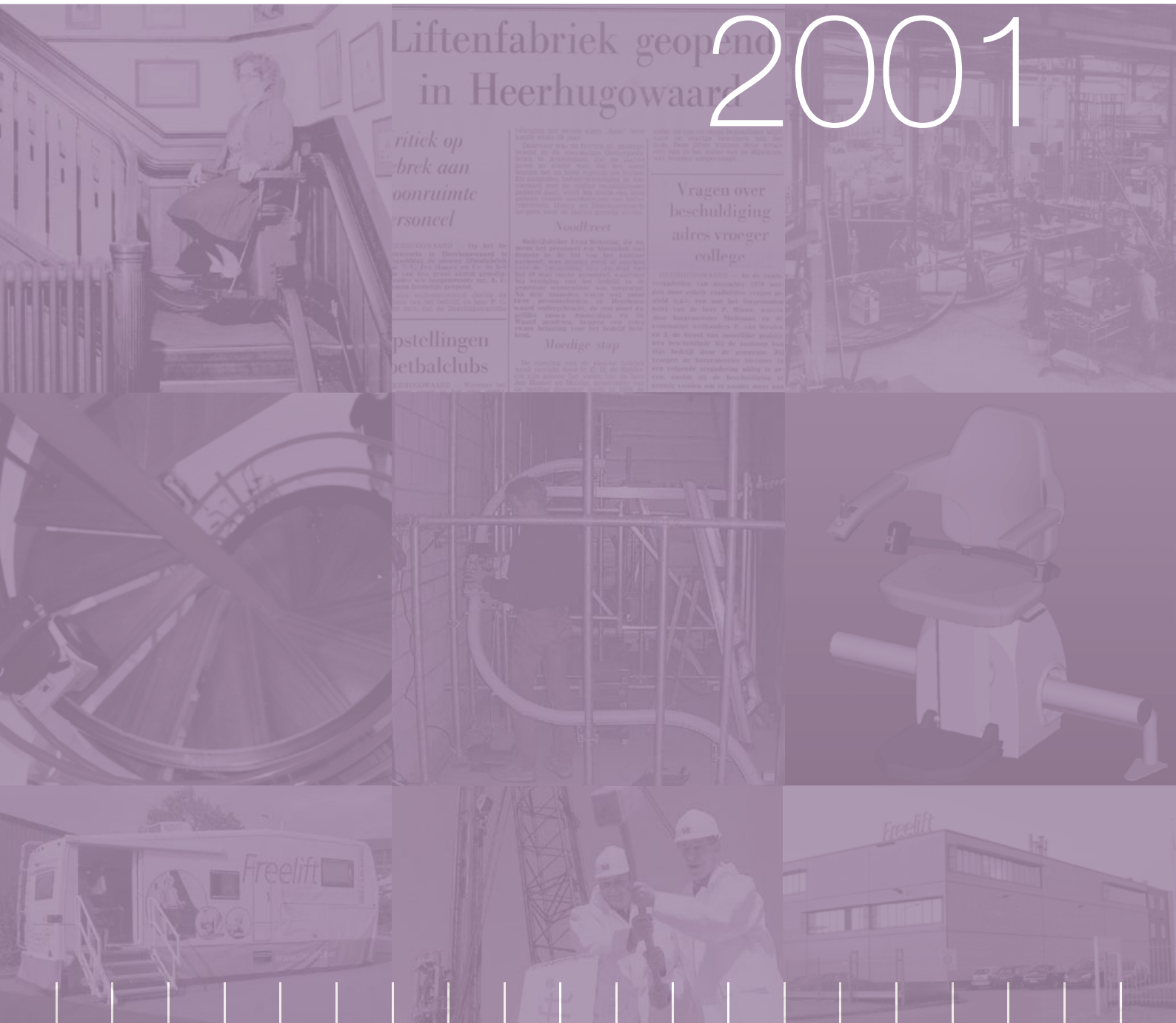
1960
2001


Liftenfabriek geopend
in Heerhugowaard
Vragen over
beschuldiging
adres vroeger
college
Noodkreet
Moedige stap
Freelift
Freelift

Europe's first seated stairlift

In 1904, Jan Hamer & Co produced the first stairlift - the "winch" lift. This was a goods lift operated from the outside using a winch. Around 1930, the first seated stairlifts were developed in the US by the Inclinator company. Other manufacturers followed suit over the next decades, which led to the phenomenon of the stairlift becoming ever more widespread across the US.

On 1 January 1960, Pieter Gerrit Mulder appointed his 35-year-old son, Pieter Gerrit Mulder Jr. as the co-director of Jan Hamer & Co. Pieter Mulder Jr. had studied engineering at college in Haarlem and at the Delft University of Technology, and had furthermore gained practical experience at lift manufacturers in Vienna and Stockholm. That had also led to him mastering several languages, including Swedish, French, German and English.

On a journey through the US, Pieter Mulder Jr. saw a seated stairlift that inspired him to introduce such lifts in the Netherlands. Once he got back home, he couldn't shake the idea and sat down behind the drawing board to design Europe's first seated stairlift. In 1961, the first customer was Mrs Pais-Vreede from The Hague, a friend of the Mulder family. Pieter Mulder Jr. built this first stairlift together with Van Winssen, Bakker, Jongerden and Pastor.

However, the leap from theory to practice was not an easy one. Cees van Winssen: *"Installing the thing was a complete nightmare. Pieter had surveyed the stairs beforehand on site, but when we got there with the track, it wouldn't fit onto the stairs properly. The technician, Pieter and I found ourselves draped across those stairs until the wee hours, trying to get the track to fit. We finally decided to put the lift into the trailer again and take it back to the factory. After we finally got the track to fit properly, we stumbled on problems with the safety brake installation that nearly drove us crazy. We ended up having to take the lift back to the factory twice more before we finally got everything to work properly."*

Pieter Mulder Jr.'s determination and stubborn belief in the end result finally made Jan Hamer & Co Europe's first manufacturer of seated stairlifts, laying the groundwork for a future of the seated stairlift that would have been almost inconceivable at that time.

1961

Yuri Gagarin was the first person in space

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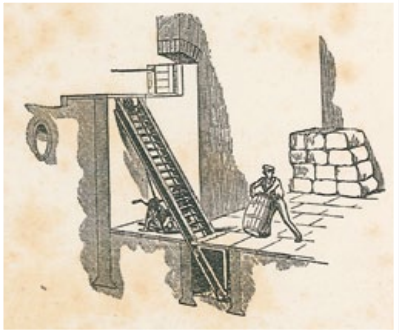

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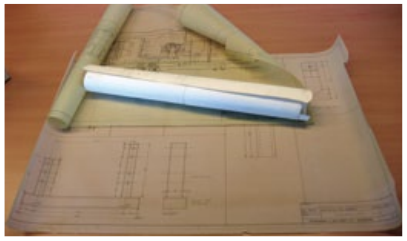

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1. Pieter Gerrit Mulder junior
2. Jan Hamer & Co's first seated stairlift
3. Specimen at Handicare museum
4. N1550 model with folding footplate

5-6. Advertisements from the US, 1954

7. The first Inclinator seated stairlift
8. Cees van Winssen
9. Jan Hamer & Co manual winch-operated lift, 1904
10. Drawing of the first seated stairlift
11. Company outing on the occasion of its 75th anniversary

Stairlifts for young and old

Pieter Mulder Jr.'s first years running the company were turbulent ones both on a business and a private level. He married Anna Maria Korsten in 1962, inviting the full staff of Jan Hamer & Co to the wedding. On the honeymoon, his wife was seriously injured in a car accident, and on 28 March 1963 his father, Pieter Mulder Sr., died at the age of 68. This put Pieter Mulder Jr. in sole charge of the company, supported by his mother, who took care of administrative matters.

In 1964, Pieter Mulder Jr. imported a stairlift from the US at the request of a customer. This stairlift, which could also be installed on a curved flight of stairs, was installed in a villa in Bussum. However, the American lift had a few limitations that prompted Pieter Mulder Jr. to design a stairlift himself, one that would be better suited to steep Dutch stairs. This resulted in the N1550 in that same year, which was a stairlift with friction wheels that could arch onto the landing. This stairlift was made compatible with curved flights of stairs in 1967, and the first one was installed at the Brenninkmeijer family castle in Germany. They owned the chain of C&A stores for which Jan Hamer & Co had already been supplying lifts.

Simon Pastor 50 years in stairlifts

Simon Pastor joined Jan Hamer & Co when he was only 14, and worked on the production of the first seated stairlift in his early days at the company. On 11 September 2011, he will celebrate his 50th anniversary in the stairlift business, a tremendous milestone. He is currently in charge of preparing tracks at the welding department, so his knowledge and experience are still at the basis of the many stairlifts we produce every day.

Pieter Mulder Jr. was a talented draughtsman and creative by nature. He not only drew the technical design of the first stairlift, but also designed the new corporate logo, among other things. He also took the initiative of advertising Jan Hamer & Co products in newspapers and magazines on a regular basis to raise the profile of the stairlift. These ads would often feature pictures of models sitting on stairlifts, and would mostly target the elderly, since they would benefit directly from having such a lift installed in their home. A stairlift would, for example, enable the man of the house to pop upstairs to treat his wife to a nice breakfast in bed on Sunday morning. But the stairlift was also presented as a solution for younger people, such as young mothers, whom a stairlift could easily transport up a flight of stairs with a baby on their lap.

huis&tuin

1966

Wat zult u wachten tot u stokoud bent als u nu al zoveel plezier van een traplift kunt hebben

Of u nu jong of oud bent: trappenlopen is buitengewoon vermoeiend. En u moet wel! Een huisvrouw heeft het wat dat betreft helemaal zwaar te verduren. De slaapkamers, de badkamer boven; hoe vaak moet u daar niet per dag zijn. Hoe vaak hebt u niet iets vergeten, zodat u weer naar beneden moet. Hoe vaak bel[illegible]kker of de melkboer als u juist boven bent.

Nee, ook jongere mensen kunnen bijzonder veel plezier hebben van een traplift. Het is gewoon geweldig fijn er een te hebben. Denkt u maar eens aan „De Zweedse gouvernante". In deze televisieserie maakt het hele gezin gebruik van een traplift.

Hoe werkt de traplift?

Een traplift is een stoel die met behulp van een electromotor langs de trap rijdt. Aan één kant van de trap een stalen rail die maar heel weinig plaats inneemt, zodat u er gemakkelijk langs kunt. Op deze rail rust de stoel met daaronder de motor. De stekker gaat in het stopcontact en de lift is klaar.

U gaat erop zitten, houdt een hendeltje vast en u gaat statig en geruisloos naar boven. Boven- en onderaan de trap stopt de lift automatisch. Een knop boven en één beneden om de lift naar u toe te halen.

Ont[illegible] op bed voor uw lieve vrouw op zondagochtend. Natuurlijk neemt u niet speciaal daarvoor een traplift. Maar toch . . .

Veilig met baby op schoot de trap op en af. Zelfs voor een jonge vrouw is de hele dag trappenlopen bijzonder vermoeiend.

De stoel is bekleed met suwide. U hebt zowel wat deze bekleding, als wat de lak betreft keus uit verschillende kleuren.

Montage duurt één dag

Omdat de lift niet aan de muur hoeft te worden bevestigd, kan geen beschadiging optreden. Ook niet aan het schilderwerk. In één dag is de traplift gemonteerd en klaar voor gebruik.

De kosten bedragen bij een normale, rechte trap ongeveer *f* 4500,-. In principe kan op elke trap zo'n lift worden gemonteerd. Wilt u weten wat bij u thuis de kosten zullen bedragen, laat dan iemand van Jan Hamer de situatie even komen bekijken.

Ook echte woonhuislift

Er zijn gevallen waarin een gewone lift gemakkelijker en zelfs goedkoper te maken is dan een traplift.

Waar tussen twee verdiepingen een open ruimte is, of kan worden gemaakt, kan een woonhuislift worden geplaatst. In ruim gebouwde trappenhuizen kan het schalmgat daarvoor worden gebruikt.

Uzelf en alles wat mee naar boven moet vervoert de traplift. Denk eens aan de stofzuiger en de mand met wasgoed.

Liftkokers en kabels zijn er niet bij. Deze lift heeft slechts aan een kant een dunne geleidingswand, waarlangs hij op en neer beweegt. Deze wand, waarin het contragewicht zit opgesloten, kan zelfs vrijstaand worden geplaatst.

De cabine heeft een oppervlakte van 70 x 70 cm, eventueel te vergroten tot 90 x 120 cm.

Nergens bevinden zich vette of bewegende delen. De lift kan desnoods in de huiskamer staan. (Dat komt waarachtig voor!)

De vloerbedekking hoeft u niet te veranderen, wandbekleding, lambrizering, plinten, leidingen; alles kan blijven zoals het is. Zelfs de poes kan veilig blijven zitten als de lift naar beneden komt, want hij stopt dan automatisch.

Ervaring

Jan Hamer en Co is de oudste liftenfabriek van Nederland; sinds 1886. Ook met trapliften is inmiddels een lange en zeer goede ervaring opgedaan.

Vooral in bejaarden- en verpleegtehuizen zijn er al heel wat geplaatst. Daar het hier meestal om normale woonhuizen gaat, waar natuurlijk geen lift aanwezig was, is men bijzonder gelukkig met de traplift.

Vaak gaan oudere mensen verhuizen, omdat hun het trappenlopen te zwaar gaat vallen. Met een traplift wordt hun huis zo comfortabel als een bungalow. Zij kunnen rustig in hun huis blijven wonen.

Kijk even naar uw trap . . . lijkt het u niet heerlijk om zittend omhoog te gaan?

Jan Hamer en Co

Coupon Jan Hamer en Co, Beyersweg 12, Amsterdam

Wilt u mij vrijblijvend
☐ folder over trap- en woonhuisliften zenden
☐ bezoeken om mijn situatie te bekijken

naam ----------

adres ----------

plaats ----------

U kunt ook de Huis & Tuin couponservice gebruiken.

Relocation to Heerhugowaard

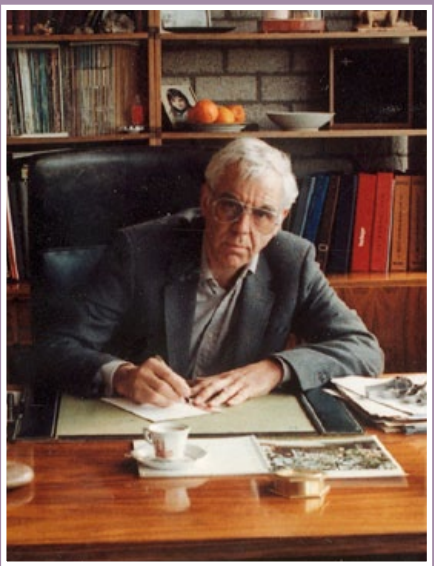
Business was going well, and the company soon outgrew the premises on the Beijersweg. However, Jan Hamer & Co's building was located on the site of Gerrit Heemskerk Staalconstructies, which would not approve an extension to the lift factory. Jan Hamer & Co therefore launched a search for a new location for its factory, a search in which all staff members were involved. Staff were bussed all over the province of Noord-Holland looking for a suitable location for both the company and its staff. They finally chose Heerhugowaard as the new base of Jan Hamer & Co, partly owing to a commitment by local authorities regarding housing for Jan Hamer & Co staff.

Following a construction period of over a year, 4-year-old Tamara Mulder, co-founder Willem Eising Mulder's great-granddaughter, laid the symbolic final brick. After this ceremonial act, the company could finally start relocating to the new building on Marconistraat. Cor Pastor and Jan Eylander were the first to be allocated a house in Heerhugowaard, and subsequently took on the task of setting up the new factory. On 15 January 1971, the new company premises were officially opened in the presence of the mayor of Heerhugowaard, Mr A. F. Molleman. In his opening speech, Jan Hamer & Co's General Manager, Pieter Mulder Jr., called the site in Heerhugowaard the company's first "real home" in 38 years. The relocation of staff, however, did not go as smoothly as initially planned. This to the dissatisfaction of works' manager Jan van Wetering, who in his opening speech cited that after three months only two of the forty staff members had moved to Heerhugowaard. Due to a lack of housing in Heerhugowaard, the others had to commute from Amsterdam every day.

The first key development in the new building was the introduction of a new stairlift in 1973 - the N1650. This was followed by the N1665 in 1974, a stairlift for curved stairs. The design for this stairlift was made by Raymond Latten, the head of the drawing department. The track was made up of a rectangular tube equipped with a guide rail. A seat guide would run along this guide rail to keep the seat level in the curves. This track remained in use up to the year 2000.

1969

Neil Armstrong was the first person to set foot on the moon



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ZATERDAG 16 JANUARI 1971

Liftenfabriek geopend in Heerhugowaard

Kritiek op gebrek aan woonruimte personeel

HEERHUGOWAARD — **Op het industrieterrein te Heerhugowaard is vrijdagmiddag de nieuwe liftenfabriek** van de N.V. Jan Hamer en Co in het bijzijn van een groot aantal genodigden, onder wie **burgemeester mr. A. F. Molleman feestelijk geopend.**

In zijn welkomstwoord deelde de directeur van het bedrijf, de heer P. G. Mulder mee, dat de Heerhugowaardse vestiging het eerste eigen „huis" betekende sinds 38 jaar.

Daarvoor was de fabriek nl. ondergebracht in de voormalige Oostergasfabriek te Amsterdam, dat de laatste jaren zo slecht was, dat het soms bezoen net zo hard regende als buiten. En aangezien industrievestiging in Amsterdam met de nodige moeilijkheden gepaard gaat, werd ten slotte een kruisgedaan tussen aanbiedingen van industrieterrein Hoorn en Heerhugowaard, hetgeen voor de laatste gunstig uitviel.

Noodkreet

Bedrijfsleider J. van Wetering, die namens het personeel een bloemboeket fonteln in de hal van het kantoor aanbood, was minder goed te spreken over de huisvesting van zou deel van het 40 man sterke personeel, waarvoor bij vestiging van het bedrijf in de gemeente woonruimte was toegezegd. Na drie maanden waren nog maar twee personeelsleden in Heerhugowaard ondergebracht; de rest moet dagelijks tussen Amsterdam en De zodat de tap normaal begaanbaar blijft voor de overige bewoners van het huis. Deze liften kunnen door invalidenook in het kader van de Bijstandswet worden aangevraagd.

Vragen over beschuldiging adres vroeger college

HEERHUGOWAARD — **In de raadsvergadering van december 1970 werden door enkele raadsleden vragen gesteld n.a.v. een aan het toegezonden brief van de heer P. Blaauw, waarin deze burgemeester Molleman en de**

COMMENTAAR

Belofte maakt schuld

DE OPMERKING van een bedrijfsleider bij de opening van een nieuwe fabriek in Heerhugowaard heeft toch wel een vreemd licht geworpen op de methode waarop het gemeentebestuur kennelijk bedrijven naar het industrieterrein tracht te lokken. Het uit Amsterdam afkomstige bedrijf zou namelijk voldoende woonruimte toegezegd zijn voor het ongeveer uit 40 man tellende personeel. Tot nu toe hebben slechts twee van hen woonruimte in Heerhugowaard gekregen; de anderen moeten dagelijks tussen de hoofdstad en hun nieuwe werkgemeente pendelen.

In de oeste plaats zal het gemeentebestuur dunkt ons, rekening moeten houden met eerder gemaakte afspraken en de werknemers van het bedrijf bij volle pond moeten geven dat hun ten aanzien van de woonruimte in het vooruitzicht is gesteld. Anders verliest de gemeente

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Ons nieuwe bedrijf in Heerhugowaard in aanbouw

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De directie van de N.V. Liftenfabriek v/h JAN HAMER & Co. nodigt U uit tot het bijwonen van de officiële ingebruikstelling van haar nieuwe fabrieksgebouw aan de Marconistraat 16 te Heerhugowaard.

De opening zal worden verricht door de heer Ir. C. H. de Ridder op 15 januari 1971 te 16.00 uur, waarna wij U gaarne in de gelegenheid stellen ons nieuwe pand te bezichtigen.

Directie

Jan Hamer en Co

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JAN HAMER EN CO. B.V.
LIFTEN SEDERT 1886

P. G. MULDER, direkteur

Heerhugowaard
Marconistraat 16
Postbus 37
Tel. 02207 - 12944*

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1. Pieter Gerrit Mulder junior
2. “Article from the “”Alkmaarsche Courant”” newspaper”

3-4. Invitation to official opening of the factory

5. Tamara lays the last stone
6. Lift in Henri Dunant river cruiser
7. N1650 model stairlift
8. N1665 model stairlift
9. N1665 model stairlift
10. P.G. Mulder’s business card

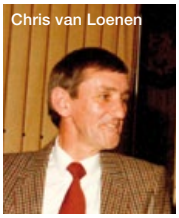
International interest in stairlifts

Jan Hamer & Co's N1665 stairlift was not only popular in the Netherlands. Across the borders, serious interest in this stairlift also grew, such as at the UK lift manufacturer Stannah. In 1975, Brian Stannah visited the Heerhugowaard plant to seal a licensing deal with Mulder. In exchange for 5,000 pounds sterling, he returned to England with a set of drawings for the N1665 under his arm. They entered into a gentleman's agreement stipulating that Jan Hamer & Co would not be marketing stairlifts in the UK and vice versa. Up to 1979, Jan Hamer & Co would receive a licence fee for every stairlift Stannah sold. Apart from that, Jan Hamer & Co became the Dutch distributor of Stannah's "Silverrail" stairlift for straight flights of stairs.

New developments at Brinkman

Meanwhile, the lift division at Brinkman in Alkmaar was growing, as Brinkman's dairy division started to slump.


Gerrit de Heer


Chris van Loenen

In 1973, Gerrit de Heer acquired all shares in the company for the sum of one million guilders, with Jan Brinkman subsequently exiting the company. After a drastic reorganisation, everyone on staff at Brinkman really buckled down. In 1975, Gerrit de Heer put Chris Van Loenen in charge of the lift division, while he himself focused on machines for the dairy industry. A new period of growth was dawning at Brinkman.

Jan Hamer & Co was a prominent player in the lift business in this period, despite its limited size compared to major international manufacturers. The company's prominence was mainly down to Pieter Mulder's network, which he built during his years as the chairman of the lift association. His excellent language skills and technical expertise always came in handy at international meetings and events, and his network also ensured he was always up to speed on the latest developments and sales opportunities.

End of an era

In 1977, the last food lift was built, which meant the end of an exceptional era. Since the turn of the century, the food lift had been a highly successful product that made Jan Hamer & Co a well-known brand. Jan Hamer & Co had installed this kind of lift in many extraordinary buildings over the years, including palaces and castles. This lift was a good example of what made the Jan Hamer & Co brand different; supplying tailored solutions in small spaces for which other vendors with their standardised products could not offer an appropriate solution.

1977

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1. Silverrail model
2. The board of the lift association
3. Jan Hamer's trade fair stand, 1982
4. Brinkman's dairy division
5. Food lift at Handicare museum

The mood in the 1980s

Around 1980, Jan Hamer & Co's range was made up of seated stairlifts, platform stairlifts, lifting platforms and home lifts. Nearly all the parts for these lifts were made in-house at the company's own workshop. The company had a small turning shop, a welding shop, a painting shop, an assembly department and an open warehouse. Stairlift production capacity was three to five lifts a week, with production of the track with the steel tube section taking about forty hours, which is highly time-consuming compared to today's production time of eight hours. The range of stairlifts was expanded with the N1750, but this model never really took off.

Jan Drommel, an engine fitter and platform stairlifts expert who joined on 1 March 1977, says:
"We would make every lift to measure, giving customers various options for special adaptations and colours. Everyone worked with great dedication on each product, almost seeing the product as their baby. It was therefore also quite usual to have the actual maker of the lift install the lift at the client's himself."

First international dealer: Sweden's MPR

In March 1981, Pieter Mulder attended the Malmö Care Exhibition, where the Swedish firm MPR exhibited a Cama-made straight platform lift. Mulder used the opportunity to talk to MPR director Anders Jönsson, which led to MPR becoming the first international dealer of Jan Hamer & Co stairlifts.

MPR had been established in 1977 to boost accessibility in buildings for the elderly and the disabled across Sweden. Up to now, MPR has, in a partnership spanning 30 years, sold a total of over 2,500 stairlifts for Jan Hamer & Co, Freelift and Handicare.

1. Factory building at Marconistraat 16
2. Model N1640 vertical lifting platform
3. Model N1620 platform stairlift
4. 26 -metre lift track for MPR
5. Model N1850 stand-up stairlift
6. Model N1750 stairlift
7. Model N900 home lift
8. Various brochures

1980

John Lennon was murdered by Mark Chapman in New York


liften
jan
hamer

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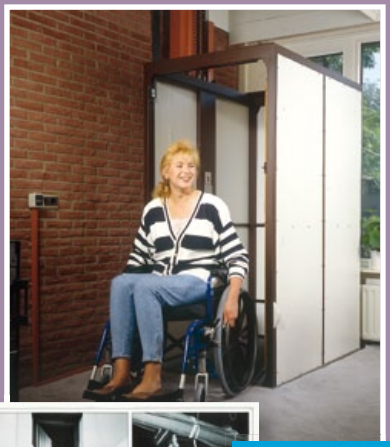

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Jan
Hamer
de ongewone
lift bouwer
Jan
Hamer:
lift bouwer
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Jan Hamer & Co.b
Jan
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Takeover by OTIS

OTIS, one of the world's leading lift manufacturers, became extremely interested in Jan Hamer & Co. Especially Jan Hamer & Co's maintenance portfolio and made-to-measure traditional lifts appealed to OTIS. On 26 June 1980, Jan Hamer & Co sold a 40% stake in the company to OTIS. When Pieter Mulder became seriously ill in 1984, he sold the other 60% to OTIS as well. That signified the end of the "family-run business" as it had been since the establishment of the partnership with Willem Eising Mulder back in 1889. Pieter Mulder, the last in a line of Mulders heading up the company, died on 2 February 1986.

Jan Hamer & Co's last passenger/goods lift

In April 1985, the Jan Hamer & Co factory produced its last passenger/goods lift. This lift had a lifting capacity of 2,200 kilograms, a lift height of 18 metres, and a 26-metre shaft. The shaft was built at the factory under the supervision of Simon Pastor. Peter Luken was the draughtsman responsible for drawing the lift shaft, and he recalls with a smile: *"It was initially not at all certain we would be able to ship this massive lift. Colleagues predicted it would not be possible to get the lift out of the factory, as it would not fit through the door on a lorry. Fortunately, it turned out on the day that the lorry did just fit through the factory door. There was a space of at least a centimetre and a half between the load and the edge of the door frame. In other words, made to measure."*

First interest from Norway

On 3 May 1985, OTIS Liften BV's General Manager, Mr Drilling, entered into a contract with Ingeniør Christen Smith, owner of the company of the same name. The deal made Christen Smith the first and only official dealer of Jan Hamer & Co lifts in Norway. On 8 January 1997, two Christen Smith employees, Mr Knut Bjartland and Mr Jørn Horgen, acquired the stairlift division and continued independently under the name KWS, which was subsequently taken over by Handicare on 31 March 2010.

Jan Hamer & Co's 100th anniversary

The Jan Hamer & Co company celebrated its 100th anniversary in 1986, which was reason to take all staff members on an outing to the Kröller-Müller Museum and Arnhem's Open Air Museum. The day of celebration was concluded with a dinner dance in Zaandam for all staff members and their partners.

1986

Nuclear disaster at Chernobyl

Bij Jan Hamer een grote klus klaar . . . . .

In april is in de fabriek van Jan Hamer te Heerhugowaard een grote klus geklaard. Een personen-goederenlift van 2200 kg hefvermogen, vijf stopplaatsen en een opvoerhoogte van 18 meter. Maar dan wel kompleet met een zelfdragende stalen schacht van 26 meter hoog. De installatie was bestemd voor een nieuwe veevoeder-fabriek in België.

De schacht werd in 11 sekties gebouwd van vierkante en rechthoekige stalen buis met een enkelwandige stalen beplating. De sekties waren stapelbaar door middel van proppen (zogenaamde "pen-en-gat" konstruktie).

Het transport naar Gent werd geregeld door Piet Broersma en de Fa. Mulder B.V. te Alphen en vond in drie ritten per semi-dieplader plaats.

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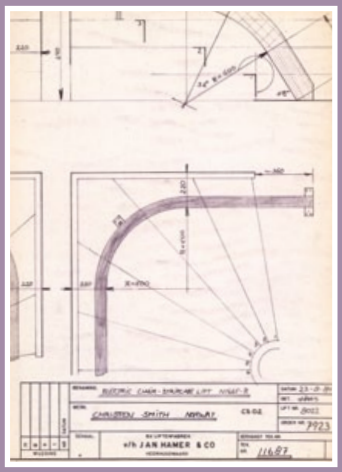

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1. The last passenger goods lift
2. Pieter Gerrit Mulder junior
3. Knut Bjartland and Jørn Horgen

4-6. 100th anniversary festivities

7. The first stairlift order from Norway
8. 100th anniversary plaque

Brinkman and Jan Hamer & Co merge

In the 1980s, column lift production at Brinkman grew to about two hundred lifts per year. However, personal circumstances forced Gerrit de Heer to make a difficult choice, which finally saw him sell the company to fully focus on caring for his ill wife. Mr Drilling of OTIS had already been eyeing Brinkman's lift division for some time, and after submitting the best bid, the takeover by OTIS was sealed in July 1983.

A decision was made to merge both OTIS subsidiaries under the name Liftenfabriek Brinkman Jan Hamer B.V. in October 1986. Jan Hamer & Co's building on Marconistraat in Heerhugowaard was extended from 1,000 square metres to 2,500 square metres so it could house both companies. The board was made up of Nic Stunnenberg, who took care of commercial affairs, and Chris van Loenen, who took on operational affairs. Both companies' maintenance portfolios were integrated into OTIS' maintenance portfolio, which also saw all service engineers transfer from Brinkman Jan Hamer to OTIS.

The merger of these companies brought an end to the traditional Jan Hamer lift and also led to the sale of Brinkman's dairy wing. Liftenfabriek Brinkman Jan Hamer focused on the production of column lifts and lifts for the elderly and disabled, which included stairlifts.

The merger was a success and propelled first-year growth of 20% in the column lift segment, and as much as 50% growth in the stairlift segment. Consequently, space became tight at the Marconistraat premises, forcing the company to rent additional space at the Stet company in Castricum, which also took care of transportation of the column lifts.

Special initiative

In May 1989, a group of Brinkman Jan Hamer employees set out to help a poverty-stricken family in Poland. The initiative was taken by one employee, Gerrit van Dorrestein, who organised food and goods transports to Poland in his spare time. In their own time, the group of employees built and installed a stairlift for the two disabled children of the penniless family in the Polish town of Kozie.

1989

Fall of the Berlin wall

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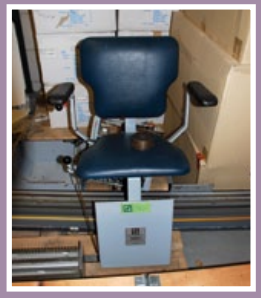

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1. Liftenfabriek Brinkman Jan Hamer B.V.
2. De Heer and Drilling sign the agreement
3. Bicycle transportation using the N1665
4. Stairlift for Poland
5. Nic Stunnenberg
6. Chris van Loenen
7. Production at full steam
8. Model N3000 seated stairlift

A true designer stairlift: the Ergolift

In the early 1990s, Wim Duchhart, General Manager of OTIS Nederland, saw a great future in stairlifts, but he wanted to move away from the traditional “hospital look” and turn the stairlift into a stylish piece of furniture. He brought in industrial design firm Ninaber Peters Krouwel, well-known for their designs of Dutch coins and letter boxes. They were commissioned to restyle the stairlift and they made an enthusiastic start.

On 2 March 1993, Brinkman Jan Hamer’s Ergolift was officially unveiled to the press and general public. It was a revolutionary stairlift thanks to its ergonomic and aesthetic design and combination of design and functionality. The seat was made of elastic and low-maintenance integral foam with laterally adjustable armrests, meaning the seat could be adapted to any user. The international jury at the Industrie Forum Design Hannover awarded the attractive and functional stairlift the top prize in the “household” category.

Conquering the German market

After landing that important prize, the German market was next to be conquered, with the help of the Kleindienst company in Augsburg. They were the first German dealer of Brinkman Jan Hamer lifts. Garaventa Kleindienst & Reha-Lift GmbH, the result of the merger of Kleindienst and Rehalift in 2006, is today in 2011 still one of the largest Handicare stairlift dealers in Europe.

Another step forward for the stairlift

In 1994, the Ergolift II was launched in the Netherlands, constituting a real innovation in the market. For the first time, the information needed to keep the seat level was no longer applied to the track, but rather included in the stairlift’s motor unit. Keeping the seat level happened using a what is known as a curve disc, which contained the information about the course of the track. That made this stairlift the mechanical frontrunner of the current generation of curved stairlifts - the Van Gogh, Rembrandt, and Vermeer, where information is recorded on an electronic data card.

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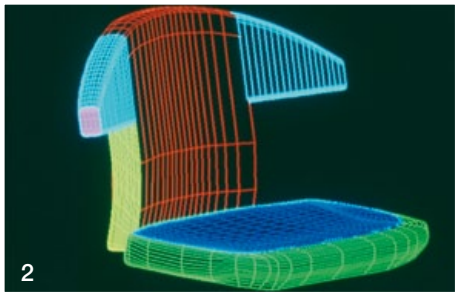

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1-2. Design drawings for Ergolift
3. Ergolift prototype
4. Visit of Kleindienst
5. Ergolift on spiral staircase
6. Ergolift brochure
7. Foam model of Ergolift

Impending closure of Liftenfabriek Brinkman Jan Hamer

Late in 1992, OTIS' European HQ ordered Wim Duchhart to cease production of column lifts and stairlifts and close the plant in Heerhugowaard. But in February 1993, Duchhart heard that competitor Kone was developing a new column lift. With that information in hand, he managed to convince the management at OTIS HQ in Paris to keep manufacturing the column lift.

In mid-1993, both directors, Chris van Loenen and Nic Stunnenberg, retired. Some turbulent times ensued, with the day-to-day running of the company temporarily in the hands of Piet Hogenhout, Herman Meeuwsen and Irene Hoogstad.

In 1994, it seemed inevitable that the factory would have to close its doors after all. Column lift production was moved from Heerhugowaard to the OTIS plant in France. The board at OTIS' European HQ in Paris did not believe in the stairlift as a product for the future. Or in the memorable words of one OTIS official: "OTIS is not a pharmacy". The end seemed at hand, but Wim Duchhart still believed the company had a future. Wim Duchhart: *at hand, but Wim Duchhart still believed the company had a future. Wim Duchhart: "I believed in the people and the stairlift itself as a product. I realised the population was ageing, and that the group of elderly people in society would only grow, and with that dependency on mobility aids such as stairlifts."*

'Olympic escalator walk'
In 1995, Brinkman Jan Hamer supported the Dutch team in the Olympics for the mentally challenged in the United States. Brinkman Jan Hamer employees walked against the direction of movement of the escalators at a shopping centre in Heiloo for half an hour to raise money. With this sponsored performance they ended up raising 5,000 guilders.

Wim Duchhart's efforts finally paid off when the company made a successful restart. Jan Verweij's Vehold company officially acquired OTIS' stake in the Liftenfabriek Brinkman Jan Hamer in 1996, which meant the future of the company in Heerhugowaard was secured. Mart Hester, who had joined as general manager in February 1995, continued to be in charge of day-to-day management in the new set-up.

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Zwoegen op de roltrap voor het goede doel

HEILOO — Er is gisteravond heel wat eerlijk zweet achtergelaten op de roltrap in winkelcentrum 't Loo. Hoewel een aantal van hen in het werk — het plaatsen van stoeltjesliften — niet anders doet dan trappen lopen, begonnen de medewerkers van de Heerhugowaardse liftenfabriek Brinkman Jan Hamer toch voornamelijk ongetraind aan hun speciale marathon voor het goede doel.

Toch renden ze met hun achttienen mooi drie keer vijf minuten tegen de roltrap op. Het precieze bedrag aan toegezegde sponsorgelden is nog niet bekend, maar er wordt gehoopt op een totaalbedrag van ƒ 5000,-. Dat is dan opgehaald bij familie, vrienden en bij klanten en leveranciers van het bedrijf.

Het goede doel is de uitzending van een Nederlands team naar de Special Olympics 1995, het internationaal sportevenement voor verstandelijk gehandicapten dat in juli wordt gehouden in de Verenigde Staten. Vier ruiters van de Vereniging Paardrijden Gehandicapten Opmeer maken deel uit van het Nederlandse team.

□ Marathonlopen op de roltrap in 't Loo.

Foto Studio Wick Natzijl

1. Wim Duchhart
2. Mart Hester
3. Column lift and printed circuit board
4. Production at Heerhugowaard
5. Newspaper article on escalator challenge
6. World record' attempt
7. Team Brinkman Jan Hamer

Focus on stairlifts

Owing to sweeping changes to legislation and safety requirements, the home lift, platform lift and the platform stairlift were scrapped from Brinkman Jan Hamer's range in 1996. The production and assembly area was rearranged and the whole building on Marconistraat was used for stairlift production from that moment on. In 1996, a total of six hundred stairlifts rolled off the production line. The company was on the verge of a period of tremendous growth in the stairlift market.

The time had come for the company to stop importing the straight 'Silverrail' stairlift and to develop its own straight stairlift alongside its successful curved model. This decision was also prompted by the fact that Stannah, which built the 'Silverrail', had set up its own sales office in the Netherlands in the mid-1990s, and preferred to no longer supply to Brinkman Jan Hamer. The company decided to launch a development project for its own straight stairlift, and was helped on its way by a good tip-off. Knut Bjartland of the Norwegian dealer KWS advised Dick Beerepoot of Brinkman Jan Hamer to get in touch with the Wessex company in the UK. Dick Beerepoot explains: *"Wessex was ceasing production of their straight stairlift. Brinkman Jan Hamer was therefore able to purchase the drawings, machines and goodwill of their product, and started producing its Ergolift Straight soon thereafter. And the deal included Wessex becoming the UK dealer for our curved stairlifts*

Freelift stands for freedom

With the company fully dedicated to stairlifts, Mart Hester decided it was time for a new powerful name for the company. A name that better reflected the product the company produced. On 1 December 1997, the name Liftenfabriek Brinkman Jan Hamer was changed to Freelift. The idea behind that name was that people would preserve their freedom by purchasing a stairlift.

Freelift®
NEEM ELKE TRAP MET GEMAK

1. The full Freelift workforce
2. Pedro Bakker builds the Ergolift
3-5-6. Ergolift Straight model
4. Team of engineers in new outfit

1996

Dolly the sheep, the first cloned mammal, was born

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Global expansion for Freelift

Hans van Eerd, Freelift's Commercial Director at the time, was the driving force behind the company's global growth. His enthusiasm and effort led to a meteoric rise in the number of dealers across the world.

Hans van Eerd says: *"Our company's strength was, and still is, the harmonious collaboration with our dealers abroad. Communication and a good working atmosphere are key there. From the early years of our international growth we have been organising regular dealer days or inviting dealers to visit the factory. The first official Freelift dealer day was held in 1999. Dealers from various countries were invited to Heerhugowaard for a two-day meeting. On the first day, we presented all our innovations, while the second day was a day of relaxation that saw everyone go 'off the road'."*

The Classic seat

In the year 2000, the successful Ergolift seat was replaced by a new model - the Classic seat. This seat combined the ergonomic features of the Ergo seat with an even more attractive design. What is more, the Classic seat was directly available in various appealing colours, so that customers could choose. Up to the present day, the Classic seat is the company's most successful seat and is sold across the world.

Birth of Freelift France

The first dealers in France were the Siminor company and Jan Schouten. These partnerships lasted from 1985 to the early 1990s. After that, Unilev became Freelift's official partner. Unilev was a partnership of a number of French companies, intended to increase accessibility of private and public buildings. Freelift France was founded on 5 September 2000 with a view to supporting Freelift's network of dealers that covered the whole of France. The Unilev members were also incorporated. Orders for stairlifts would come in at the office in Amiens, where they would be processed and passed on to local dealers. In 2008, Freelift France moved from Amiens to Paris, where a warehouse, a showroom and a training area were added to the offices.

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1. Invitation to dealer meeting
2. Off-roading
3. 1999 dealer meeting
4. Advertisement in Notre Temps
5. Visit by Toyo Koken
6. Dealer meeting in France
7. Freelift France in Amiens
8. 1999 dealer meeting

Freelift's new curved lift - the Van Gogh

In 2001, Freelift laid the basis for today's successful product - the Van Gogh. The first Van Gogh was installed in the home of Mrs Heemskerk in Naarden.

This new product was a real innovation in the stairlift market. The rectangular steel tube was replaced by a round one, which was bent by a machine. This cut track production time by eighty percent. Furthermore, the lift was no longer powered by 220V mains electricity, but by batteries that could continue to power the lift during power cuts. To keep the seat level, a new patented electronic control system was even developed. The combination of the attractive design and straightforward installation (by one technician in just three hours!) made the Van Gogh Freelift's showpiece and most successful product.

Formation of Freelift Ltd.

Unfortunately, stairlift sales in the UK through Wessex did not prove to be a resounding success. But the British market did offer plenty of opportunity, partly thanks to the British government heavily subsidising stairlifts. That finally inspired the company to set up its own operations in the UK.

Anne Handy, one of the driving forces in the UK relates: *"In mid-2001, Robert Kane and Mike Holburn set up Freelift Ltd, choosing Newcastle as their base. As the former owners of the British stairlift factory Bison Bede they brought in a great deal of market knowledge, and also managed to persuade various Bison Bede employees to join Freelift. Freelift's own subsidiary in the UK turned out to be a successful format from the start. Both direct sales and sales through dealers surged, with Freelift stairlifts finding their way to many British consumers. This resulted in the British market becoming Freelift's largest market in 2005."*

1. The first brochure for the Van Gogh
2. Van Gogh model
3. Installation drawing for the first Van Gogh
4. Export to Japan
5. Start of track production
6. Quality check of the first Van Gogh
7. Freelift's promotional vehicle in the UK
8. Stuart Briggs (centre) and Robert Kane (right)

2001

Terrorist attack with two airplanes flying into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York

Freelift Van Gogh: het toppunt van comfort en design

Alles aan de Van Gogh-stoeltraplift is ontworpen om ruimte te besparen, uw interieur te verfraaien en het comfort maximaal te verhogen. De nieuwe Freelift Van Gogh is het summum van design en gemak. Vrijwel geruisloos en súperlicht doet deze stoeltraplift zijn werk. En zendergestuurd: dus volledig draadloos.

Snoeren, kabels of kabelgoten behoren bij deze luxe traplift tot de verleden tijd. En ook van de aandrijving is praktisch niets te zien. Met de compacte, enkele buis met minimale afmetingen behoudt u maximale ruimte op de trap. De superslanke Van Gogh wordt speciaal op maat gemaakt en past dan ook perfect in ieder interieur én op iedere trap!

Minimale afmetingen, maximale ruimte op de trap. De constructie bestaat uit één compacte buis zonder hinderlijke snoeren, kabels of kabelgoten, en past in élk interieur, op iedere trap.

De elektronisch geregelde snelheid biedt optimaal comfort. Met Softstart en Softstop bent u verzekerd van een schokvrije en vrijwel geruisloze loop.

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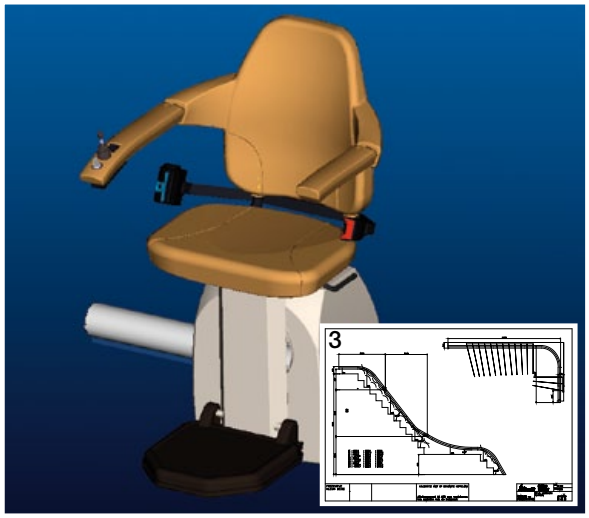

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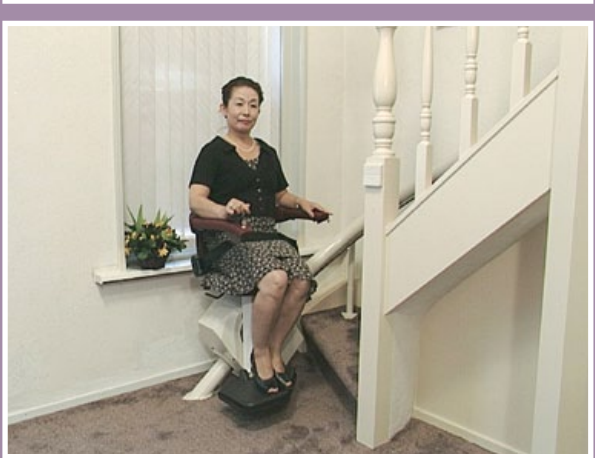

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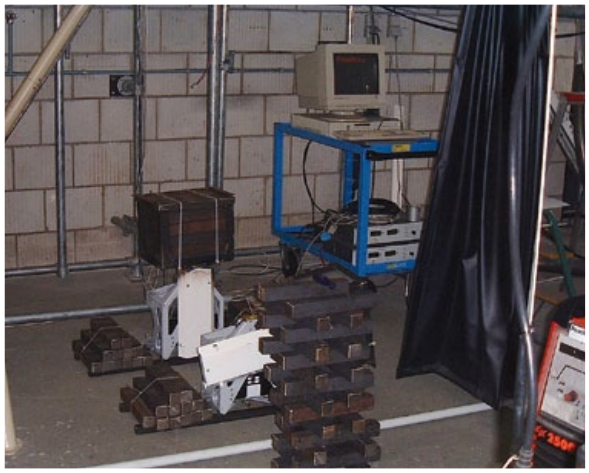

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Relocation to Newtonstraat

Freelift kept growing fast, and the Heerhugowaard premises soon turned out to be too small to be able to handle all incoming orders. Due to the lack of space, part of the operations had already been moved to various locations in Den Helder and Heerhugowaard, but that did not make for an ideal situation. The company decided to invest heavily and build a new factory on Newtonstraat in Heerhugowaard, with a production area totalling over 10,000 square metres. This was over four times as much as at the old premises. After 31 years in January 2002, Freelift left Marconistraat to move to the new site. The building was designed to be highly energy efficient. One green measure was the installation of a heat pump system with advanced technology for heat recovery and ventilation.
General Manager Mart Hester in his opening speech: *"It was certainly not a done deal that Freelift would stay in Heerhugowaard. We had attractive offers from Germany and Heerenveen. But the investment premium did not weigh up against the fact that Freelift would then lose a lot of its staff. After all, the strength of our company lies in the people that work here."*

After the speech, Sylvio Maduro presented the board, on behalf of all Freelift staff, with a stairlift-inspired artwork, to commemorate the official opening of the new building.

During the open day in June 2002, all of Freelift's international dealers visited the new premises and were introduced to the company's new products. That was the day the Mondriaan was unveiled - a lift for straight flights of stairs with the smallest track in the world, with all the running gear integrated into the track. Anders Jönsson of the Swedish dealer MPR made the symbolic last journey on the Ergolift Straight. That same year, the Freelift Mondriaan had its world premiere before the British public at the Naidex trade fair in Birmingham.

1. Mayor Vermeer and Mart Hester driving the first pile
2-5. Building site on Newtonstraat
6. Factory building at Newtonstraat 35
7. "Article from the ""Alkmaarsche Courant"" newspaper"
8. Sylvio Maduro presents gift
9. Anders Jönsson makes last ever journey on Ergolift Straight
10 Mondriaan model

2002

The Euro adopted as the common currency in twelve European countries

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Stad & Streek 4 — De stand van zaken — Onder redactie van Roel van Leeuwen 072-5196375 — DONDERDAG 24 JANUARI 2002

Freelift zet hoog in met nieuwe fabriek

Van onze verslaggever

HEERHUGOWAARD – Luisteren naar wat de klant wil. Dat is de basis van het succes van Freelift, zegt M. Hester, algemeen directeur van de Heerhugowaardse stoeltraplifteafabrikant. Daarom moeten de producten geluidsarm, veilig, betrouwbaar en ook nog esthetisch verantwoord zijn. Een filosofie die zijn vruchten afwerpt. Een nieuwe stoeltraplifteafabriek aan de Newtonstraat was voor Freelift noodzakelijk om aan de groeiende vraag te voldoen.

Burgemeester E. Vermeer van Heerhugowaard sloeg vorig jaar mei de eerste paal voor de nieuwe stoeltraplifteafabriek. In nog geen jaar tijd is de eerste fase van het nieuwe bedrijfsgebouw aan de Newtonstraat gereed gekomen. Een twee bouwlagen tellende fabriek met een totale productieruimte van een kleine 10 000 vierkante meter. Ter vergelijking: het oude pand was ongeveer vier keer zo klein.

„In ons pand aan de Marconistraat in Heerhugowaard barsten we uit onze voegen", vertelt M. Hester. „Daarnaast hadden we nog een pand in Den Helder en zat onze research & development afdeling in een ander pand in Heerhugowaard. Dat werkte toch lastig."

Binnen drie jaar moet ook de tweede fase zijn voltooid. In dit gebouw zullen de kantoren, die nu tijdelijk bij de fabriek zijn ondergebracht, worden gehuisvest: alzmede het bedrijfsrestaurant en een showroom.

Kenmerkend voor het gebouw, dat ontworpen is door Sander Bouma en door aannemer N. Groot is neergezet, is dat het extreem energiezuinig is. Zo wordt er gebruik gemaakt van een warmtepomp met energiepalen en van een systeem van warmteterugwinning via ventilatie. Ook is er in het hele pand daglichtafhankelijke hoogrendementsverlichting aanwezig.

Effectiever

Het nieuwe bedrijfsgebouw was voor Freelift pure noodzaak waar de ambities liggen er niet om. Freelift wil op termijn wereldmarktleider worden in de stoeltraplifteebranche. En daarvoor is een fabriek nodig waarin niet alleen een hoge productie kan worden gehaald, maar waar ook effectiever kan worden gewerkt en dus goedkoper.

„We hebben getinventariseerd wat we in huis moeten hebben om de grootste van de wereld te kunnen worden", aldus Hester.

De routing is nu zodanig dat er effectief kan worden gewerkt in de fabriek. Benzeen komen de buizen binnen. Die worden gebogen en ook vindt het lassen en de poedercoating beneden plaats. Op de eerste verdieping bevindt zich de assemblagerichte. „De rails maken we zelf, de onderdelen zoals de stoel en de aandrijving kopen we in en het assemblageen doen we zelf zodat we zelf de kwaliteit kunnen beheersen. We moeten topkwaliteit leveren om marktleider te worden", aldus Hester.

Knelpunten

Aan de Newtonstraat zijn er geen knelpunten meer zoals in de oude fabriek. „We hadden een overhaadkraan en daar kwamen de goederen in en uit. Met de vrachtwagens was het ook een puinhoop. „Daarnaast groeien we hard. Onze fabriek was geschikt voor een man of zestig. Nu kunnen er makkelijk een man of 150 werken."

Momenteel werken er in totaal zo'n honderd man bij Freelift.

De faciliteiten zijn nu op orde, maar volgens Hester is het vooral belangrijk dat Freelift blijft luisteren naar de klanten.

„Belangrijk is ook om te weten waarom klanten nu bijvoorbeeld geen stoeltraplift kopen, waarom ze tegen beter weten in de beslissing uitstellen. Je ziet dan bijvoorbeeld dat de vormgeving van het product belangrijk is. Het moet er fraai uitzien en niet de uitstraling hebben van een gehandicapten-hulpmiddel. Het gaat toch om je huis. Vroeger was dat niet te verenigen, maar nu besteden we veel aandacht aan kleuren en design."

Freelift speelt in op deze vraag met liften met veelzeggende namen als 'Van Gogh', 'Rembrandt' en 'Mondriaan'. Niet alleen herbergen deze stoeltraplliften alleen door Freelift zelf ontwikkelde technologische snufjes (zoals draadloze sensoren) waardoor ze veilig, betrouwbaar en geluidsarm zijn, ook zijn de stoel en de buitenkl leverbaar in drie kleuren.

Deze stoeltraplliften zullen ook meer en meer aan het buitenland worden geleverd. Freelift verwacht dit jaar al veel van de markt in Japan en ook bereid het bedrijf zich voor op de bestorming van de Amerikaanse markt. Hester ziet veiling kansen. „De markt wordt alleen maar groter vanwege de toenemende vergrijzing.

Stoeltraplliften

De afgelopen jaren groeide het bedrijf steeds met veertig procent. Hester: „In 1995 maakten we 650 stoeltraplliften per jaar, dit jaar zo'n zeeduizend en in 2004 willen we tienduizend liften per jaar maken.

Het is overigens niet zo vanzelfsprekend dat Freelift in Heerhugowaard is gebleven. „We hebben een aantrekkelijk bod gekregen om ons in Duitsland te vestigen. We zouden een aanzienlijke investeringspremie krijgen. En dat geldt ook voor Heerenveen. Het probleem is dat je je mensen niet kwijt wil bij zo'n verhuizing. En de kracht van ons bedrijf vormen toch de mensen die hier werken."

□ Algemeen directeur M. Hester van Freelift op de afdeling Research & Development al-waar de verschillende stoeltraplifteo worden ontwikkeld.

Foto LPhoto/Wilfrieke Kerstjes

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2002
2011

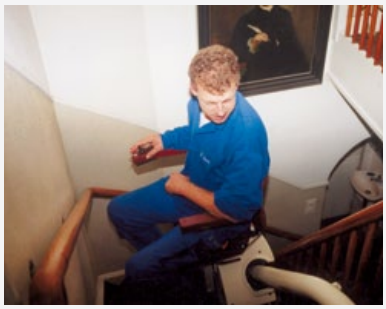
Extending the product range

At the start of the 21st century, the Newtonstraat site was the place of work for over one hundred Freelift employees. Employees from different countries, each with specific skills, who brought in the right expertise to ensure every stairlift could be made to measure. The company's rapid international growth also brought new challenges for its production. As volumes grew, the need arose to introduce serial production, giving the company greater efficiency in delivering its products as quickly as possible. And that while continuing to offer customers a wide range of options and a unique customised stairlift as the end result. Alongside this focus on product improvements, continuous optimisation of production processes became the basis for the current business.

Rembrandt takes the inside curve

In 2002, the company introduced a new take on the stairlift: the Rembrandt.

Since 2002, this stairlift, named after the Dutch master painter Rembrandt, made it possible to also install Freelift stairlifts in the inside curve of a flight of curved stairs. This was useful for when, for example, obstacles in the outer curve impeded installation of the stairlift there. The first ever Rembrandt was installed at the home of the Bicker-Caarden family in Den Bosch. Co Reus, the engineer who installed the new 'masterpiece', was the first person to go for a ride on the Rembrandt.



Select seat brings greater comfort

Freelift traditionally sold stairlifts in countries where subsidies were granted for the purchase of a stairlift, countries such as the Netherlands, the UK, and the Scandinavian countries. But the phenomenon of the stairlift gained ever more widespread fame over the years, bringing it to the attention of consumers who were willing to purchase a stairlift with their own money. This created a demand for products with a more luxurious look and greater comfort. Freelift jumped at this chance and developed the 'Select seat': a seat with luxury fabric upholstery available in various colours and with many extras as standard. It also offered the unique Comfort option, which equipped the seat with a convenient stand-up feature. This joystick-operated feature helped the user when sitting down or getting up by automatically tilting the seat. That was yet another innovation that made Freelift stand out among the competition.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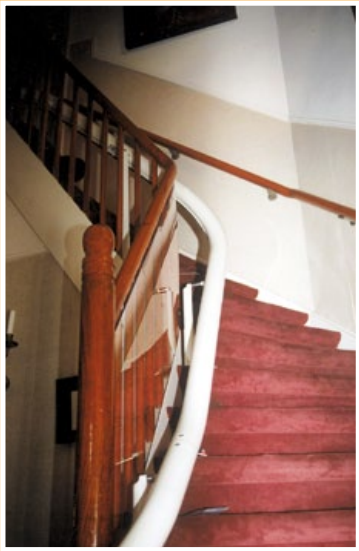
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1. Development of new models
2. Track welding
3. Seat assembly
4. Powder coating the tracks
5. Motor unit assembly
6. Quality inspection
7. Track welding
8. 24-hour service
9. Select seat with stand-up feature

10-11 The first Rembrandt

Innovator in the stairlift industry

In the first decade of the 21st century, Freelift expanded its production facilities considerably to be able to keep up with steadily increasing demand for its products. One example of that expansion was the purchase of an automated powder coating installation in mid-2002, which enabled in-house colour coating of tracks for the stairlifts. In December 2003, the first of three robots joined the company to support the track welding process. These robots were designed specifically for Freelift and brought quality consistency to the welding and also accelerated the production process, resulting in short delivery times for customers.

On 11 May 2004, the Birmingham Evening Mail ran an article on Freelift, focusing on the 'Designer chair'. This seat was tailored especially to the needs of the UK market. The most eye-catching features of this new seat were its straightforward operating handle and its single-action folding. The 'Designer chair' was later added to the product line under the name 'Basic seat' and in subsequent years became Freelift's best-selling seat after the 'Classic seat'.

Across several floors with the Vermeer

As developments kept coming thick and fast, the first stairlift that could serve more than two floors was launched in 2004: the Vermeer. The first one immediately became a museum piece, as it was installed in a museum in Bergen in the province of North Holland. The museum's two old Ergolifts, which had served the visitors to the museum well over the years, had to make way for the new stairlift. Engineers Co Reus and Norman Swenneker installed the new Vermeer stairlift on the inside of the stairs. All floors of the Kranenburg Museum were now accessible to everyone without having to change stairlifts on intermediate floors. The new stairlift was officially put into operation at a ceremony led by the mayor of Heerhugowaard, who went by the same name as the stairlift: Vermeer. Famed Bergen solicitor, poet, and writer Chris Veraart tasted the pleasure of the stairlift's inaugural journey.

1. Powder coating the track supports
2. Welding robot
3. The first Vermeer
4. Assembly of the first Vermeer
5. Mayor Vermeer unveils the Vermeer
6. Basic seat with children's drawing print on upholstery
7. Chris Veraart makes first journey on the Vermeer
8. Article in Birmingham Evening Mail


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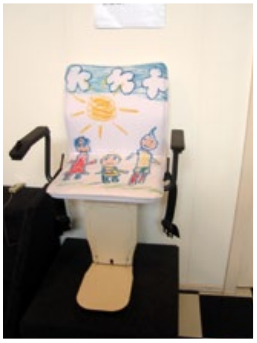
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BIRMINGHAM Evening Mail

NEC SPECIAL EDITION

TUESDAY, MAY 11, 2004

SEE US AT STAND 559 NAIDEX 2004

Freelift®

PRESENTED WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF...

The Stairlift that Keeps You in Control

A Freelift demonstrator shows how easy the stairlift is to use

The new chair is comfortable and ergonomically designed

MAIL NEC REPORTER

FREELIFT Ltd hopes to increase its market share and presence in the UK stairlift market with the introduction of a new chair entry to its line of straight stairlifts created exclusively for the Local Authority market.

Featured at the NAIDEX home healthcare exhibition at Birmingham's NEC, Freelift's Designer Chair, bears the distinguishing signature label of Dennis V (Vowgindeweg), Freelift's top ergonomics engineer.

According to Freelift, occupational therapists and other professionals from Local Authorities requested a different type of seat that was durable, easy to maintain, and simple to use.

"The Designer Chair is a direct response to market demands." It has been created literally from the ground up using the latest ergonomics technology at Freelift's Research & Development department.

"We have combined a modern design with a remarkably competitive price," said Barry Henderson, Freelift sales director.

Freelift is confident the Designer Chair with its complete range of features will become an instant favourite.

Impression

Its unencumbered European styling, presents a nicely shaped chair with clean lines and shape, presenting an impression of lightness through a sturdy slim design, all in a compact stairlift system. Ergonomic design of many components provides easiness of operation - one handle does it all, additional features like footrest linkage, and washable fabrics are just a few of the benefits this chair has to offer.

"Our years of experience gives us a wealth of insight into what makes a seat not only functional, but comfortable and safe," says Henderson.

The Designer Chair may have been engineered to produce a competitive sales price, but Henderson insists that it's not a one-style fit all proposition.

"Customers may choose seats from a range of colours. Even the fabric used on our chairs has been specially selected for its rough texture, a feature that prevents the user from sliding off the chair. Also, the fabric is wear and flame resistant and can be cleaned easily."

ERGONOMICS - NEW STANDARD

Every aspect of the chair has been studied and tested. Whether it is the length of the armrest, the distance between the seat and the footrest, or the position of the control toggle switch the Designer Chair has been built using the latest ergonomic designs and research. There are no more struggles to use or store away the chair. One single movement folds the armrest, seat and footrest simultaneously. The control toggle switch slides between the fingers and is operated by moving the hand from side-to-side. Ideal for sufferers of a rheumatic condition, or limited mobility.

SAFETY TOP PRIORITY

The compactness of the stairlift's design ensures there is maximum space for other residents going up and down the stairs. Like a car, the stairlift can only be operated when the key switch is turned on. This switch is fitted underneath the armrest and easily adapted for either left-hand or right-hand use.

Once the toggle switch is released the stairlift stops instantly. And the chair's control switch has priority over the remote control unit fitted at the bottom and top of the stairs, ensuring that the user of the stairlift is in control.

For comprehensive expert advice and more details on any of Freelift's line of stairlifts, call at stand number 559 at NAIDEX, or visit www.freelift.com, or call freephone number 0800 612 1361.

MEET THE DESIGNER

See Dennis V, the mastermind behind Freelift's Designer Chair, at Stand 559. He and his team are responsible for developing other innovative stairlift seat designs including the Classic Chair, the Salad Chair, as well as the Comfort Chair, with the intelligent Stand-up function.

8

Socially responsible staff

Throughout the company's history, there have been many occasions on which staff members donated their time to help install stairlifts for exceptional people in need of a helping hand. In may 2004, for example, Freelift Ltd installed a stairlift in Country Durham in the UK for three-year-old Jaide. Jaide suffered a number of disorders, one of which caused her to grow fast and be very heavy for her age. This made it hard for her to get around, let alone go up and down the stairs, and that while her parents could no longer carry her. Seeing as the family was not eligible for funding or support from their local council, Freelift decided to take it upon itself to improve the lives of Jaide and her parents. Within a short time span, Freelift Ltd staff members installed a 'Mondriaan' at Jaide's home, enabling her to go up and down the stairs without the help of her parents.

TV appearances

In the Netherlands, Freelift contributed to the TV show "Hart in Actie" (Heart in Action) on two occasions. In August 2004, Freelift installed a stairlift for 'Captain Jan'. While the presenter of the show, Wendy van Dijk, distracted him by taking him for a boat trip in Den Helder, Freelift installed a stairlift at his home in Delft, free of charge. In early November 2006, Freelift made another grand gesture by gifting a stairlift to the Roek family in Almere. Mr Roek had been in a traffic accident and lost his mobility. Despite numerous requests, local authorities would not subsidise a stairlift for him. But then his neighbours took action and called in Hart in Actie's Natasja Froger, who in turn contacted Freelift. Freelift staff built and installed a customised stairlift for Mr Roek, again without charging a penny for it.

Social commitment in Germany

In Germany too, Freelift showed its socially responsible side. The company responded to a request from the 'Nestwärme e.V.' organisation and helped make eleven-year-old Corinna's life a little easier. Corinna suffered from spina bifida, i.e. a split spine, which she had already been operated on fifty-five times. Freelift helped out by installing a Rembrandt at her parents' house. The stairs at her home were therefore no longer an obstacle, meaning that she could continue to live in her own home.

1. Article in Evening Chronicle
2. Mondriaan stairlift for a Greek dog
3. Sponsored stairlift for Alkmaar sports centre
4. TV show helps the Roek family

Donation helps disabled youngster get up stairs

Gift gives girl great big lift

By OWEN MCATEER
owen.mcateer@ncjmedia.co.uk

YOUNG Jaide Armstrong is going up in the world after a donation to the Chronicle's charity for sick and disabled children.

Jaide, three, suffers from several disorders one of which causes her to grow fast and be very heavy for her age.

It means her mum Julie, 30, and dad Mark, 28, are unable to carry the youngster up and down the stairs at their County Durham home.

The family had applied to the Chronicle's Sunshine Fund for a stairlift and by co-incidence Freelift Ltd, which manufactures the devices, had contacted the fund offering help.

As a result, this week Jaide's new stairlift was installed at her home meaning she can get up and down the stairs as she wishes.

Mum Julie said: "Her new stairlift is fantastic. She is very tall and very big so carrying her has become difficult, especially up and down the stairs.

"It is going to be a safer way to get her up and down the stairs and will make a big difference to both her and our quality of life."

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Growth opportunities in Germany

The German city of Düsseldorf has been the home of the world's most important trade fair for stairlifts: the Rehacare. Vendors and manufacturers come together here every year to unveil their novelties and products before tens of thousands of visitors from all over the world. These visitors are, of course, mainly consumers and dealers from Germany itself who are looking for new products such as stairlifts. That has also made Rehacare a rich source of new contacts for Freelift every year, contacts that have helped propel Freelift's international sales.

The foundation of Freelift Treppenlifte GmbH

Being one the largest markets of private customers for stairlifts in Europe, Germany offers more opportunities than just the annual Rehacare trade fair. In order to be better able to seize these opportunities, Freelift set up its own German operations in 2005, based in Kleve. After completing all the required preparations, Freelift Treppenlifte went on sale in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia in March 2006. Freelift's two salesmen in Germany, Frank Voss and Drasko Pavlovic, initially focused on obtaining potential customers through the so-called 'Sanitätshäuser'. These are domiciliary care outlets where elderly people can purchase items to help them be able to continue to live in their own homes. In an attempt to draw attention to the fact that stairlifts were also available from the local Sanitätshaus, Freelift Treppenlifte placed ads in newspapers and even advertised on trams in Essen and Mülheim.

A creative solution

That Freelift experts are capable of impressive achievements became apparent once more in an inventive solution they came up with for a German customer. A Freelift dealer managed to install a Freelift stairlift on a hinged ladder in a garage, enabling the owner to continue to use both the garage and his beloved hobby attic.

Alongside its own direct sales across the Ruhrgebiet, Freelift started rolling out a national network of stairlift dealers in 2006. These experienced dealerships with highly driven experts brought further fast growth of Freelift stairlift sales across Germany.

2006

The official Rembrandt year in honour of the 400th anniversary of his date of birth

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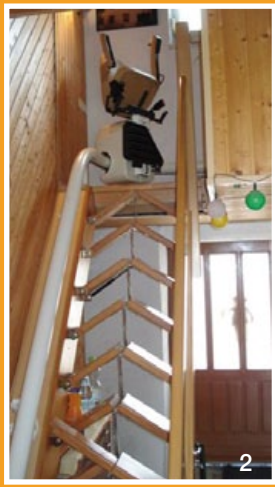

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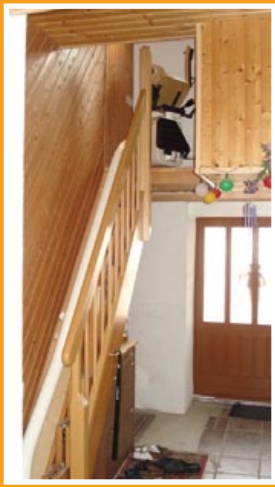

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1. Freelift Treppenlifte at a trade fair in Essen

2-3. Seated stairlift on hinged stairs

4. Dealer meeting of German dealers

5. Tram in Essen with Freelift advertising

6. Freelift at the Rehacare trade fair

7. Freelift team at the Rehacare trade fair

The world's leading stairlift supplier

After over ten years, Freelift parted ways with its General Manager Mart Hester in December 2005. His successor was Jeroen Meier, under whose leadership Freelift became one of the world's leading stairlift suppliers. Despite the economic downturn that started in 2008, Freelift continued to grow. Both in numbers of stairlifts produced, and in numbers of employees and dealers.

Collaboration anniversary

In 2007, Freelift celebrated the 25th anniversary of its long-standing collaboration with Sweden's MPR. On the occasion of this anniversary, MPR's full workforce visited Freelift in Heerhugowaard. After an introduction to the latest developments at the plant, the visit was wrapped up with a nice meal at a Japanese restaurant in Alkmaar.

Interest from Italy

In 2007, Freelift's Jeroen Meier sealed a deal with Italy's Vimec, a considerable player in the Italian lift market. They had shown great interest in Freelift's products, which was quite surprising, seeing as Vimec itself manufactured stairlifts with a so-called 'twin tube system'. Yet the Italians were so impressed with the Freelift Van Gogh and Rembrandt that they decided to shut down their own production line for stairlifts for curved stairs and switch to Freelift's 'single tube system'. A new seat was developed for Vimec in close collaboration between both companies. This seat was eventually marketed under the name 'Capri'.

1. Freelift and Jan Hamer & Co in one building
2. Jeroen Meier knights Anders Jönsson
3. Vimec sales staff listen carefully
4-5. The Capri in Vimec's showroom
6. A visit from Dolphin Stairlifts general director Rob Edwards (centre)
7. Visit to historic windmill with Dolphin Stairlifts

2007

US mortgage banks caused a global economic meltdown


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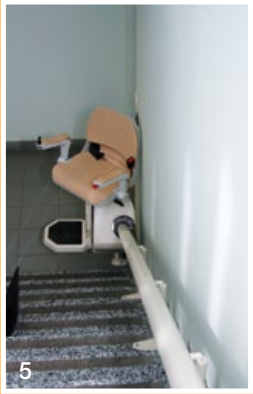
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Handicare takes over Freelift

December 2007 saw the dawning of a new age for Freelift. After years of investing in the successful and growing company, shareholders Vehold and Greenfield Capital Partners sold their stake in Freelift to the best candidate: Norway's Handicare.

The story of Handicare

In the middle of the 1980s, three wheelchair users met by chance in a Norwegian rehabilitation centre. As wheelchair users they had recognized all the shortfalls of the wheelchairs they were using and decided to make wheelchairs that were custom-made for the user and comfortable to use. In 1986, the three new partners founded their company 'Rullestolekspertene' (the Wheelchair Experts), working from a small garage. One of the founders, Tom Myklebust, still develops new mobility products for Handicare today.

Over the years, Handicare, as the company is called since 1995, has steadily developed its business both organically and through acquisitions and mergers with various, long established companies and strong brands in the healthcare sector. And, simultaneously, the Handicare product range has expanded considerably.

The Handicare Group has meanwhile become one of the leading healthcare companies in Europe with sales companies and manufacturing organisations in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, the UK, France, Poland, Canada, the US, and China. In addition, Handicare brand products are distributed through a comprehensive network of professional dealers and distributors in 30 countries around the world. Handicare's broad geographic reach does not take away from the fact that Handicare products are designed to satisfy specific local market needs. They provide solutions and support that allow people to remain in their home environment and live independently as long as possible.

Handicare is driven by a passion to make people's everyday life easier by identifying with the users' individual needs and offering a wide range of well-designed, highly functional stairlifts, mobility products, transfer aids, bathroom safety solutions and car adaptations. Why? Because by providing solutions, Handicare can truly make a difference to people's daily lives. And in life… every day matters.

2008

Barack Obama was elected as the first black president of the United States

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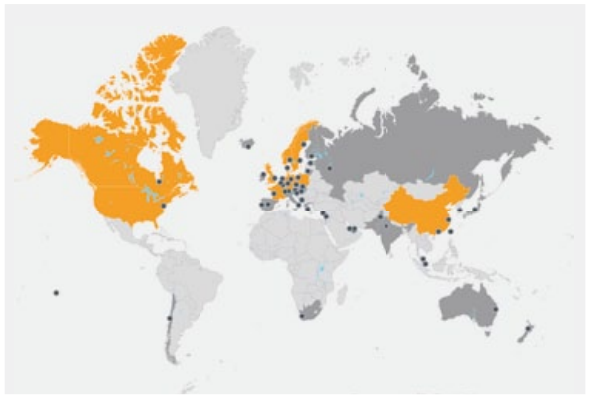

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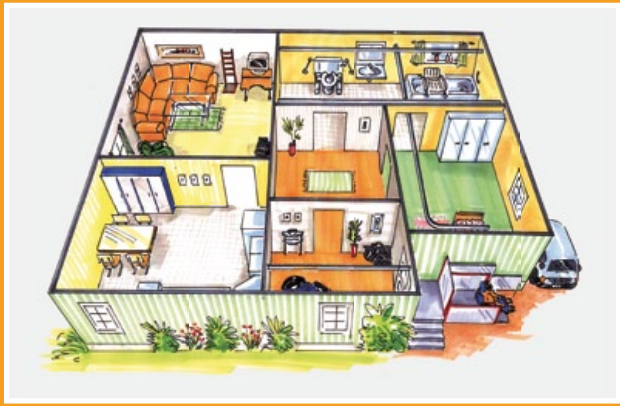

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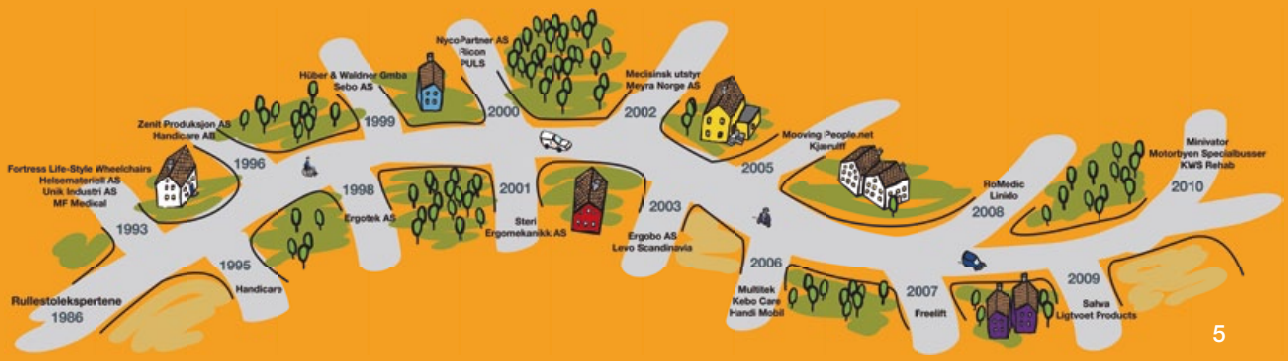

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handicare

1. The three founders
2. Tom Myklebust
3. Handicare across the globe
4. Making everyday life easier
5. Handicare's growth
6. Handicare's product range

Progress through advanced technology

In 2009, the straight stairlift was modernised. The Mondriaan's steel track was replaced by a modern aluminium track, and this stairlift was rebranded as the Picasso. This radical innovation not only led to an even more attractive design, but also triggered new interest from the market.

PhotoSurvey surveying system

No flight of stairs is the same, so before a stairlift can be made to measure, the stairs will have to be surveyed, which is a tricky job when you only have traditional surveying means. Freelift has therefore developed an advanced and professional system in-house to measure stairs, called PhotoSurvey. In only twenty minutes, the surveyor will shoot digital photos of special markers he's laid out on the steps of the stairs at the customer's home. After copying these photos onto a laptop PC, a special piece of software will use the markers to calculate all the dimensions of the stairs in question. The resulting data is then sent to the factory via the internet, after which the production process commences right away. PhotoSurvey has not only made it easier and quicker to survey a flight of stairs, it has also greatly reduced the chance of errors in measurements.

Bending machine

A major leap forward for the company came in January 2010, when it took its own bending machine into operation to manufacture tracks for curved stairlifts. This machine was developed especially for Freelift and bends and finishes tracks through a range of computerised processes. With this considerable investment, an important part of the production process was brought in-house, and production and delivery times were cut further.

A good atmosphere as the basis for good teamwork

Besides hard work, enjoyment and relaxation with colleagues have also always been very important at the company. The various outings and activities, which are meanwhile all organised by the company's own personnel association Feelfree, allow employees and their partners to also interact on an informal and social level. The pleasant atmosphere among the company's staff is further evidenced by the fact that we are a close-knit team of committed employees, of which thirty-two have been working at the company for over ten years, and thirteen even for over twenty-five years!

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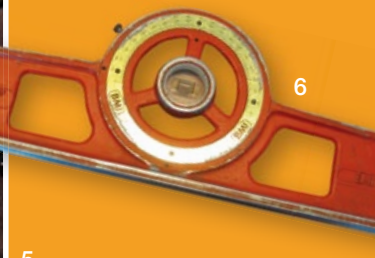

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REDACTIE.AC@NHD.NL Heerhugowaard

Werknemer John van den Berg bewerkt de rail van een traplift. FOTO APOTOUCK MEEDERS

Geen stoeltraplift van Freelift is hetzelfde

DOOR ROB BAKKER

HEERHUGOWAARD - Niederland met zijn bouwtradite van smalle hoge woningen zonder ruime trappenhuizen, is de bakermat van de stoeltraplift.
Ruim veertig jaar geleden deed het apparaat z'n intrede. Het Heerhugowaardse bedrijf Freelift, voortgekomen uit de Lifttenfabriek Brinkman Jan Hamer, behoort inmiddels wereldwijd tot de marktleiders in deze sector. De vergrijzing en de trend om ouderen zo lang mogelijk zelfstandig te laten wonen, bieden het bedrijf gunstige toekomstperspectieven.

HNWEEKT

In deze rubriek komen bedrijven uit Heerhugowaard voor het voetlicht. Vandaag: Freelift, wereldwijd leverancier van stoeltrapliften, gevestigd aan de Newtonstraat op bedrijventerrein Zandhorst.

Vandaar dat Freelift volop wil groeien. En dat kan gemakkelijk in de hypermoderne vestiging aan de Newtonstraat, verzekert directeur Jeroen Meier. Vijf jaar geleden trok Freelift in dit 'op de groei gekochte' pand. De oude vestiging, een rindje verderop aan de Marconistraat, is inmiddels in gebruik van kringloopbedrijf Rataplan.
Ze'n 140 werknemers heeft Freelift in Heerhugowaard. De daar gemaakte stoeltrapliften worden vervolgens over alle landen van Europa, plus Australië, Nieuw-Zeeland en Japan verspreid.
Directeur Jeroen Meier zoekt de uitbreidingen voorshand in de personele sfeer. Gemakkelijk gaat dat niet, want technisch personeel is schaars.
Om drie onderdelen draait het bij Freelift: de rail waarlangs de stoel zich verplaatst, de motor en de stoel zelf. De rail moet perfect passen in de woning en de stoel moet precies op maat zijn van de gebruiker. Een stoeltraplift is maatwerk. Zelfs de kleur van de stoel mag de klant zelf bepalen.
Vooralgaand aan de fabricage wordt thuis bij de klant heel wat meerwerk gedaan. De gegevens worden door een computer in een tekening verwerkt, die de exacte buiging van de rail langs de trap aangeeft. Aan die rail wordt een 'landbeugel' gelast, waarop de machine en de stoel werden gemonteerd. Freelift probeert zich van zijn concurrenten te onderscheiden door de traplift op één in plaats van twee rails te laten lopen.
Veel aandacht is besteed aan de beveiliging. Dat kleinzoon stiekem met de traplift van opa gaat spelen is niet mogelijk. Evenmin is het mogelijk dat de lift verder gaat als de gebruiker de bedieningshendel loslaat.
Freelift heeft een eigen afdeling productonewikkeling. Zestien montagepploegen rijden voor Freelift door het land. Voorlopig heeft het bedrijf de handen aan vel aan de stoeltraplift.

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1-2. The Freelift Picasso
3. PhotoSurvey is easy to use
4. The bending machine at Freelift
5. Jos Koopman surveying the stairs manually
6. P.G. Mulder's measuring tool
7. "Article from the ""Alkmaarsche Courant"" newspaper"
8. Jan Hamer employees with over 25 years of experience

A new name for a new company

In 2009, the board of Freelift revealed its intention to change the company's name to Handicare. Taking the parent company's name would create the opportunity of growing along with the global brand Handicare. A project team was set up to start preparations for the name change.

In March 2010, Handicare made an important move in the stairlift market with the acquisition of UK stairlift manufacturer Minivator. A decision was made to merge the operations of Freelift and Minivator, and to make this official, both companies changed their name to Handicare on 1 July 2010. This instantly made Handicare one of the three largest players in the stairlift market, with a presence in the Netherlands, the UK, Germany, France, Norway, Shanghai, and the US. The merged assortment of curved stairlifts was a very complete one, with both single tube and twin tube systems. The assortment for straight stairs saw similar sudden expansion, growing to as many as five different models, with a choice of different seats, upholstery, colours and options.

Freelift's full staff participated in the ceremonial lowering of the Freelift flag and raising of the Handicare flag by three loyal Freelift employees. The Handicare name was thus officially adopted while everyone enjoyed a nice glass of champagne. Jeroen Meier and Simon Pastor subsequently unveiled a memorial plaque by the entrance, with a concise history of the company.

The history of Minivator in a nutshell

The first Minivator stairlift was built in the 1970s by Dunstable Toolmakers. It was built for a family member who needed help getting up and down the stairs. Dunstable Toolmakers subsequently sold the successful design for this stairlift to Sunrise Medical, which started racking up serious sales. In December 2000, the stairlift division went solo with fifty-three workers after a management buy-out, changing its name to Minivator Limited and investing further in the product. With the arrival of new investors in 2004, the company grew into the Minivator Group, and saw rapid growth that led to the acquisition by Handicare in 2010.


Freelift
handicare
handicare
handicare

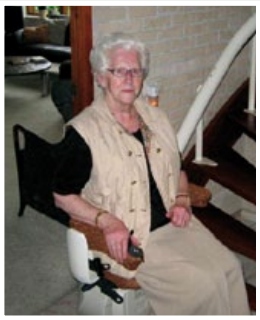
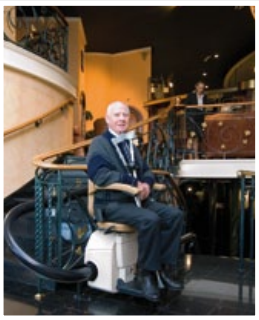

MinivatorTrapliften
Minivator 1000
Minivator Simplicity (+)
Rechte trapliften
handicare
FreeliftMonte-escaliers
Freelift Monte-escaliers
en courbe
handicare
Minivator 2000
Curve stairlifts
handicare

A selection of over 60,000 satisfied customers



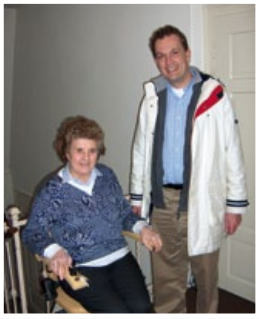




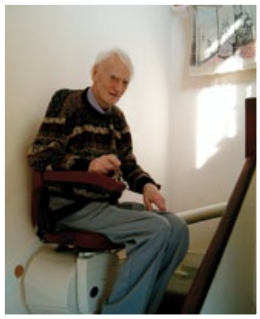





Mrs Latten on her Van Gogh. Mrs Latten is the widow of Mr Latten, who back in the 1970s was the chief engineer behind the development of the N1665 stairlift.

















Mrs Mulder and Tamara Mulder on a visit to Handicare. They are still proud of the stairlift that was introduced in Europe by their husband and father Pieter Gerrit Mulder in the 1960s.





An eye on the future

Congratulations!

Handicare Stairlifts celebrates its 125th anniversary this year. At the very same time Handicare celebrates 25 years of history. A lot has happened with Handicare since three wheelchair users started up in a small garage in Norway in 1986.

Market conditions

Many western countries are seeing their populations age. This trend is expected to have positive effects on Handicare's business. With the number of elderly people increasing, fewer people to take care of them, and a constant need to reduce costs in order to run a more rationalised healthcare system, cost-cutting and time-saving solutions will be preferred. Homecare is considered to be the preferred alternative both in terms of "quality of life" and cost effectiveness.

Handicare Accessibility

Freelift products are currently one of the cornerstones in the future growth of Handicare internationally. Together with Minivator products we are able to offer the market stairlifts within many different categories, and we supply a broader and better portfolio than ever. The combination of Minivator and Freelift products enables us to build a stronger position both in the UK and in all other European markets, as well as a better position for growth elsewhere. The business unit in the US has seen rapid growth over years, and Minivator's set-up in China is an asset not only for stairlift products, but for the total Handicare Group for the future. Handicare has recently grown considerably in Italy, France and Germany, and we aim for this to continue.

Today, Handicare Accessibility products consist only of stairlifts. In the future we will grow our business into related product segments, and we foresee a continued focus on operational improvements combined with potential acquisitions.

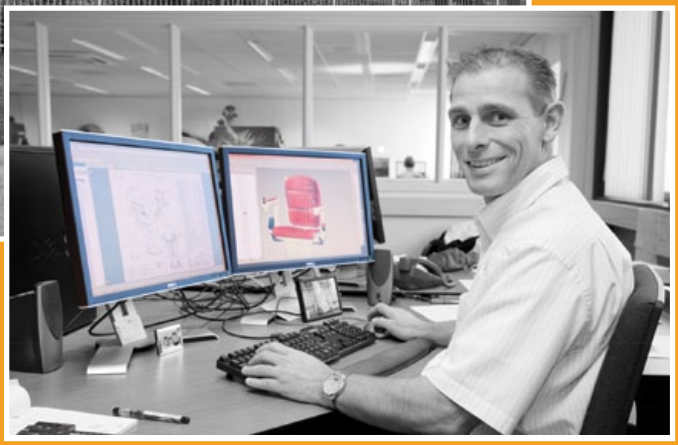
Happy Anniversary!

In our Stairlift business, 125 years of experience make for a solid basis for the future. We will however not only look back, we will focus on the future. A famous person once said: "Let us focus on the future, as that is where we are to spend the rest of our lives".

I am proud to have the former Freelift as a part of the Handicare family. I am proud that we share the same values, and amongst them maybe the most important one: the passion to make everyday life easier for the users of our products.

Per Gunnar Borhaug
CEO Handicare Group


handicare



Afterword by the editors

Dear reader,

First and foremost we hope you have enjoyed reading our anniversary book, or will enjoy reading it.

This book sheds light on our rich history with a range of innovations, successes and sometimes also setbacks, while also being an homage to all hardworking, dedicated, sometimes even genius (former) colleagues who within a time span of 125 years have made our company what it is today.

With great pleasure, we have delved into our company's extensive history for over two and a half years, as part of which we had many interesting conversations with (former) colleagues and business partners. By spending many evenings and weekends searching on the internet, in archives and in second-hand bookshops, we managed to dig up a large number of extraordinary pictures and brochures from our past. All in all, we gathered enough stories, anecdotes, memories and images to write a book of a thousand pages, but that would be overdoing it. After all, with the book you have in your hands now, we intend to give you greater insight into our company's history and the origins of our wonderful product, the stairlift, in an enjoyable and light-hearted way.

We had a lot of help mapping our company's history, and we would therefore like to thank the following people for their contribution:
Jan Eylander, Wim Duchhart, Gerrit de Heer, Jan van Wetering, Cees van Winssen, Mrs Mulder-Korsten, Tamara Weissink-Mulder, Ton Baars, Willem Best, Henk Schmidt, Hans Hoogerdijk, Mrs Van Loenen, Mrs Latten, Jan Drommel, Hans van Eerd, Simon Pastor, Tilly Wessel, Peter Luken, Fred Kaal, Per Gunnar Borhaug, Jeroen Meier, Anne Handy, Chiel van Hoof, Meindert Stokroos, Gerrit Kouwenhoven, Kelly Jongejeugd, Leontine Delleman, Fred van den Eijkhof, Richard van der Pas, Eric Fielmich, and last but not least our partners Saskia Handgraaf and Carin Beerepoot.

Kind regards,

Marcel Bloemraad & Dick Beerepoot

Employee in the spotlight

Mr Steenbergen is the oldest living employee of Vulcanus / Jan Hamer. He worked at our company from 1929. In our anniversary year, he reached the respectable age of 100. When asked whether he was interested in a stairlift, he responded: “can you see me in one of those”.

Utmost care and attention has gone into compiling this book. Handicare Stairlifts accepts no liability for possible inaccuracies.

Acknowledgements

The following sources were used:

Archives:
Regionaal Archief Alkmaar
Stadsarchief Amsterdam
Regionaal Archief Zutphen
Noord-Hollands Archief Haarlem
Streekarchief Hattem
Archief TU-delft
Bedrijfsarchief Handicare

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Kaas in de lift
Bouwkundig Weekblad 1887 – 1918
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Het Nieuws van den Dag
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In de lift 1982 – 1995
National Geographic
Alkmaarsche Courant
Huis & Tuin
Evening Mail
Evening Chronicle

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