

Name	Dr Nonja Peters
DOB	27 February 1944

“Suitcase” interview summary

Suitcase audio	9am	Friday	18 March 2016
(1)	8 minutes	21 seconds	
(2)	9 minutes	27 seconds	
(3)	2 minutes	19 seconds	
(4)	2 minutes	56 seconds	
(5)	7 minutes	24 seconds	
(6)	3 minutes	40 seconds	
TOTAL:	34 minutes	7 seconds	

Materials	Summary sheet and timed log (this document) – 6 pages
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Scans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consent form dated 18 March 2016 • Map of Netherlands showing the location of Tilburg
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Photos	<p>Suitcase exhibition photos/images <i>There are TIF and Jpg versions of all these images apart from numbers 15, 18, 21 and 22.</i></p>
1.	Birth announcement for Nonja Yvonne Huberta Maria Peters (27/02/1944)
2.	[c1920] Nonja’s paternal grandparents (Peters) in Java with their baby, Nonja’s father.
3.	[c1923] Nonja’s paternal grandparents (Peters) in Holland with their toddler, Nonja’s father.
4.	Sheet music that confirmed Nonja is a name and that she can be baptised into the Catholic Church (already in possession of the State Library of WA).
5.	[c1948] Nonja wearing a white apron and playing with wooden blocks in kindergarten in Tilburg, Netherlands
6.	[c1944] Nonja in her high chair that was decorated with beads in primary colours.
7.	[c1944] Nonja on her potty.
8.	[c1944] Nonja and her mother outside a house in Tilburg, Netherlands.
9.	[c1947] Nonja and her toy dog.
10.	[c1949] Nonja (Front right) with her friend Elsje and older girls all dressed up for a religious festival in Tilburg.
11.	[c1949] Nonja (right) with her friend Elsje dressed as flower girls for a religious festival in Tilburg.
12.	[c1948] Traditional Dutch Christmas with Saint Nicholas and Black Peter.
13.	[c1949] Nonja and her brother Eddie with Father Christmas in Australia.
14.	[1948 December 11] Nonja’s father being farewelled before he leaves Rotterdam for Australia. [Foto Randolfi, Roovalkstr 15, Rotterdam]
15.	[c1949] Women and children on board the <i>Ugolino Vivaldi</i> . {Jpg only} [Nonja is sitting at the front on the left. Behind her is her oldest cousin, Jan (“John”). Her cousin Tonnike (“Tony”) is seated next to Nonja. Seated in the front row at the far right is her cousin Sjannie (“Joan”). Nonja’s mother is wearing a necklace and leaning towards her youngest child, Eddie. Her mother’s aunt Cor is standing behind one of the Italian crewmen (who is holding Eddie).]
16.	[1949] Arrival in Australia on 24 August. Nonja’s in her father’s arms having just been pulled out of the porthole of the ship. She is holding the doll that her father bought her.
17.	[1948] Nonja’s father in his room at Graylands Migrant Camp. Photo [9] of Nonja and her toy dog is on the wall behind him on the left. To the right, is a photo of his

wife.
18. [1949] Peters and Berens mothers and children join their husbands and fathers already in WA. {Jpg only} All the children hold toys. Nonja is holding a large doll beautifully dressed in a white knitted dress and bonnet. Her cousin, Sjannie holds her dolls which is not clothed and is still in its box. <u>Back</u> (left) Berens parents, (right) Peters parents. Front (left to right) Sjannie, Tonnike and Jan Berens, Nonja Peters.
19. [1950] Judy the black cocker spaniel with a litter of puppies.
20. [c1955] Nonja aged 11 or 12 learning to play <i>Song of the Volga Boatmen</i> at Doctor's Hill, Northam (on the Goomalling Road).
21. The silver amethyst baby ring that Nonja was given at her birth. The ring sits next to her wedding ring demonstrating how tiny it was. [photo taken by JKW] {Jpg only}
22. The silver matchstick holder c1800s that Nonja uses to store her baby ring. [photo taken by JKW] {Jpg only}

Interview 1 (of 1): Friday 18 March 2016**SUITCASE EXHIBITION**

Track 1	
00:00:00	Nonja Yvonne Huberta Maria Peters was born in Tilburg ¹ in the southern part of the Netherlands on 27 February 1944. Her mother's maiden name was Verhoeven. {See image 1} When Nonja left the Netherlands in July 1949 there was no allowance for people to bring their personal items in shipping containers. Nonja's party only took two suitcases and two tea chests. Consequently the children had to leave all their toys behind.
00:01:34	In 1919, her Peters' grandparents were living in Java, Indonesia. Grandfather Peters was in the Dutch Indonesian army based at Cimahi (Tjimahi then). ² Nonja's father was born in Indonesia [in 1920]. {See images 2 & 3} In Holland, traditionally the father's mother is allowed to name the first child born into the family a hierarchy follows. As she was the first grandchild in the family her grandmother named her "Nonja" which is the Malay word for 'lady' and was used as a form of address to Dutch women of high status by the Indonesians. There was some difficulty getting this name registered in the Catholic church for a baptism. Nonja has a sheet of music about Nonja walking down the road, which demonstrates that the word can be used for a name. Nonja's cousins all know this song and sing it to her even today!
00:03:24	Nonja lived with her mother's mother – grandmother Verhoeven and travelled from her house to attend kindergarten. {See image 5}
00:03:41	One of Nonja's first memories is of a high chair, which was decorated with beads in primary colours. {See image 6} There is a photo of Nonja sitting on a potty. {See image 7} . Another photo depicts Nonja's mother holding her new baby outside a house. The front door of the house opens straight onto the street and there is no front garden. {See image 8} .
00:04:25	Nonja was very upset when she had to leave her favourite toy (a fluffy dog) behind in Holland. {See image 9} . The family had a pet dog called 'Tippy'.
00:05:13	When Nonja was living with her grandmother she had a friend who lived about two doors down called Elsje. The southern part of the Netherlands was very Catholic and on religious festival days the girls dressed in white clothes and Nonja's aunts would sing. {See images 10 & 11} . The whole street would become involved.
00:06:09	At kindergarten the children played games with wooden blocks. {See image 5} Nonja was taken to kindergarten by her Aunt Gerry who was only 8 years her senior. She also shared a bedroom with her. One day a big black crow flew into their bedroom and had to be chased out by Nonja's grandfather.
00:07:17	Nonja's grandmother took her to various religious festivals such as Saint Nicholas and Black Peter. {See image 12} When she got home from kindergarten it was a habit for Nonja to have two cakes!
00:07:59	At kindergarten the girls were given a white apron to wear. {See image 5} Children attended kindergarten in the Netherlands from the age of three. Nonja had been in kindergarten for two years when she came to Australia.
00:08:21	

¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tilburg>

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Netherlands_East_Indies_Army <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cimahi>

Track 2	
00:00:00	Children were told that if they were naughty they would end up in Black Peter's bag. St Nicholas was a Spanish saint who arrived by steamboat riding a white horse. Black Peter is either a reference to a Moorish slave or a chimney sweep. ³ {See image 12} Traditional food on this occasion included different lollies and gingerbread.
00:02:06	They tried to replicate Dutch food in Australia but it was difficult. In Holland they ate chocolate paste on their bread. Their mother grated bars of Cadbury chocolate but it wasn't the same! They also ate tomatoes on bread and butter with sugar – pretending that they were strawberries.
00:03:05	In their first year in Australia, Nonja and her brother Eddie celebrated Christmas with Saint Nicholas <u>and</u> Father Christmas. {See image 13} When the family moved to Toodyay and Northam they could not celebrate St Nicholas with the Dutch community and instead only celebrated Christmas the Australian way. Nonja's mother wanted to hang on to the Dutch traditions but the children and their father wanted to 'fit in'. Nonja's father brought home Australian 'delicacies' - Weeties and Vegemite.
00:05:15	On Sundays in Holland, Nonja was taken by her uncle to visit her Peters' grandparents. Grandmother Peters taught Nonja to bottle preserves. She also taught her to cook Indonesian food. Her grandmother would bake a special pudding for Nonja. Until other grandchildren arrived, Nonja was the centre of attention! Nonja felt a deep sense of loss for the grandparents, aunts and uncles that were left behind in Holland. Just before Nonja left for Australia her grandfather Verhoeven died aged 54. Her mother had a very traumatic time and did not want to leave Holland.
00:09:27	

Track 3	
00:00:00	Nonja's father left for Australia on 11 December 1948 on the <i>SS Volendam</i> ⁴ from Rotterdam. {See image 14} He left with Nonja's mother's uncle, Toon [Anthony] Berens who was his friend. Seeing them off (from left to right) are: Grandfather Verhoeven; Aunt Tilly (Father's sister); Nonja's father Jan [John] Peters wearing an army coat and plus fours ⁵ ; Nonja's mother Jo Peters-Verhoeven; Grandfather Peters; Uncle Marcel (father's brother and twin brother of Tilly); Toon Berens; Tante [Aunt] Cor and Ellie (later marries Marcel) and Jan [John] Berens. Jan was the oldest of the children going to Australia and he was the only one who was allowed to see the men off.
00:02:19	

Track 4	
00:00:00	The children had no toys on the boat. {See image 15} On arrival, Nonja's father pulled her out of the ship through the porthole. {See image 16} The men brought milk arrowroot biscuits to the wharf as well as Mills & Wares biscuits from Fremantle. Nonja was presented with a large celluloid doll. The little boys were given toy cars. The doll was dressed in beautiful clothes that had been made by Mrs de Rooy the wife of a Dutch Sri Lankan with

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zwarte_Piet

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/netherlands/11996588/Dutch-Black-Pete-makes-annual-arrival-to-howls-of-protest.html>

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SS_Volendam

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plus_fours

	whom Nonja's father was boarding in Bay View Terrace, Claremont (having left Graylands Migrant Camp). He was so excited to see his family again as he had missed them so much. {See image 17} Nonja's cousin Sjannie was also presented with a doll but her doll was in a box and was not dressed. {See image 18} The joy of Nonja and the resentment of Sjannie is captured in the photograph!
00:02:27	When the family were reunited once more, Nonja's father brought home two cocker spaniels and Nonja was thrilled to have pet dogs again.
00:02:56	

Track 5	
00:00:00	Nonja was very sad when the family dog 'Tippy' was given away to another Dutch family. In Australia, Nonja was particularly fond of the black cocker spaniel, Judy, who was often having puppies. {See image 19} These dogs provided love and friendship to Nonja and helped her to settle in Australia. Nonja began to learn English from the Gannaway children, an Irish family who rented half of the house in Subiaco, Nonja's parents rented the other half. The first books Nonja remembers were stories about Dick and Dora and Nip and Fluff. Later on, she enjoyed Snugglepot and Cuddlepie. Nonja has no recollection of being read stories when she lived in the Netherlands.
00:03:20	Her grandmother used to recite a prayer to Nonja at night. Both grandmothers were church goers and religion and music was an important part of her life in Holland. The grandparents enjoyed listening to Richard Tauber. ⁶ Her father played a saxophone and a clarinet and he preferred jazz music and always had his own band. Nonja played a Tonette at school. ⁷ {See image 20}
00:05:07	Nonja sings Dutch nursery rhymes to her grandchildren when they are babies. In one song the baby is jiggled up and down on your knee pretending it is a horse. They are riding to the fair and they are going to bring biscuits back for the child.
00:07:24	

Track 6	
00:00:00	Nonja has kept a silver baby ring with an amethyst stone (her birth stone). The ring was a Christening gift and was part of her for a long time. {See image 21} It can be seen on the middle finger of her right hand in the photo of Nonja at Kindergarten.) {See image 5}
00:00:53	The next significant memory Nonja has of the ring was when it was cut off her finger in Subiaco as it had got too tight. She kept the ring in a silver container (c1800s) which had belonged to her in-laws and was made to hold matches. {See image 22} . Her parents gave her money to buy a replacement ring when she was turned 21 years old. The baby ring was cut off Nonja's finger when she 6 years old.
00:02:55	The severing of the ring was symbolic of cutting ties with the Netherlands and the loneliness that Nonja felt in Australia when she first arrived.
00:03:40	

⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Tauber

⁷ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tonette>

Items	Suitcase exhibition items – for the case
1.	Piece of Indonesian batik
2.	Sheet music (already in the possession of the State Library of WA)
3.	White apron
4.	Alphabet board
5.	Beads – red, blue, yellow
6.	Potty.
7.	Fluffy toy dog
8.	Christmas card.
9.	Gollywog (Black Peter)
10.	Lollies and gingerbread
11.	Celluloid doll
12.	Biscuits
13.	Letters
14.	Jar of Vegemite
15.	Box of Weeties
16.	Jar of chocolate paste [from Dutch shop and other Dutch goodies]
17.	Jars of preserves and jam
18.	Dick and Dora – reader
19.	Book of nursery rhymes
20.	Musical instrument