

Professor Pieter Van Vollenhoven

Pieter van Vollenhoven is married to Princess Margriet, one of Queen Beatrix's three sisters. Professor Van Vollenhoven and Princess Margriet have four sons: Prince Maurits, Prince Bernhard, Prince Pieter-Christiaan and Prince Floris.

Youth and education

Pieter van Vollenhoven was born in Schiedam on 30 April 1939, the son of Pieter van Vollenhoven senior and Jacoba Gijsbertha van Vollenhoven-Stuyling de Lange. He has one brother.

Professor Van Vollenhoven attended primary school in Rotterdam and went on to the Montessori Lyceum, passing his secondary school leaving examinations in 1959.

He then enrolled at Leiden University, where he studied Dutch law. His special subjects included the statutory organisation of industry and the organisation of the Dutch police. He graduated in 1965.

At university, Professor Van Vollenhoven took a very active part in student life and held the position of assessor secundus on the committee of the Leiden Students' Association in 1963 and 1964. He was also president of the Netherlands Students' Sports Trust in 1964.

Marriage and family

Pieter van Vollenhoven met Princess Margriet of the Netherlands at Leiden University.

Their engagement was announced on 10 March 1965 and on 10 January 1967 they were married in The Hague. By Royal Decree, Professor Van Vollenhoven became a member of the Royal House.

Children

Princess Margriet and Pieter van Vollenhoven have four sons: Prince Maurits, born in 1968, Prince Bernhard, born in 1969, Prince Pieter-Christiaan, born in 1972 and Prince Floris, born in 1975.

Work and official duties

On graduating, Professor Van Vollenhoven worked for a short time as a legal officer with the Council of State.

National service

He was called up for national service in the spring of 1966 and served in the legal department of the Staff of the Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Netherlands Air Force in The Hague. In the same year, he conducted an investigation of aircraft accidents for the Air Defence Command at Zeist.

In 1967, Professor Van Vollenhoven received Air Force Pilot training at Gilze-Rijen and obtained his Military Pilot's Licence. In 1968, he was commissioned as reserve officer (pilot) in 300 Squadron at Deelen airbase.

After completing his military service, Professor Van Vollenhoven had a number of work experience placements with enterprises such as the Nederlandse Heidemaatschappij, Akzo and KLM.

Official duties

As a member of the Royal House, Pieter van Vollenhoven has many official duties. With Princess Margriet he nearly always takes part in the reception of foreign heads of state on official visits to the Netherlands.

Safety

Professor Van Vollenhoven is closely involved in the field of safety assurance, both at home and abroad.

In 1975 he was invited to act as advisor on road safety to the Minister of Transport, Public Works and Water Management.

He has chaired the following organisations:

- the Road Safety Council
- the Railway Accidents Council
- the Community, Safety and Police Association
- the National Road Safety Fund
- the Council for the Promotion of Safety Impact Studies
- the Transport Safety Board and
- the Dutch Safety Board.

He is also Honorary Chair of the National Organisation of Police Volunteers.

Professor of Risk Management

On 1 October 2005, Pieter van Vollenhoven was appointed Professor of Risk Management at the University of Twente. He is one of the University's first professors from practice. With these new appointments, the University wishes to benefit from the knowledge and expertise of experts from the business community, government and the health care sector. With his expertise and experience, Professor van Vollenhoven can make a valuable contribution to teaching and research in the field of risk management, in particular the role of independent policy research.

Dutch Safety Board

Since February 2005, Professor Van Vollenhoven has been Chairman of the Dutch Safety Board which is responsible for independent safety investigations in the broadest sense. It carries out investigations not only in the transport sector, but also in sectors such as defence, industry, health care, nature and the environment. The Safety Board's predecessor was the Transport Safety Board, which Professor Van Vollenhoven also chaired. This body carried out independent investigations into the causes of serious accidents or incidents in all transport sectors.

The Community, Safety and Police Association

Professor Van Vollenhoven is also Chairman of the Community, Safety and Police Association, an independent organisation that advises on safety issues. The Association is interested in every aspect of safety assurance involving or of importance to the police. Its mission is to contribute to the public debate on improving safety and safety assurance.

International

Professor Van Vollenhoven also occupies a number of international posts in the field of transport safety. He is co-founder and a member of the Board of Directors of the European Transport Safety Council and co-founder and Chairman Emeritus of the International Transportation Safety Association, in which all transport safety boards are combined. From 1990 he spent a few years acting as advisor to Dr Karel van Miert, the European Commissioner for Transport. In 2004, Professor Van Vollenhoven was invited to join the Group of Experts on Accident Investigation, which advises the European Commission.

Historic buildings

Professor Van Vollenhoven chairs the National Restoration Fund and in this capacity is involved in the preservation of objects and structures of cultural and historical value. By providing grants, the Fund enables the owners of these buildings to carry out maintenance or renovation work.

Nature

As chair of the National Green Fund, Professor Van Vollenhoven is involved in funding projects in nature conservation, forestry and landscape preservation in the Netherlands.

In this way, the Fund is helping to complete the national ecological network. Most of the projects are government-run. The Fund pools and manages government funds, enabling the money earmarked for nature development to be used more efficiently. It also supports private investment in nature conservation, by for instance providing grants to enable farmland to be returned to its natural state or to improve existing habitats.

Victim support

Professor Van Vollenhoven chairs the Victim Support Fund and in this capacity supports fundraising activities for the Victim Support Offices, which provide services for the victims of crimes and road accidents.

Money collected during fundraising campaigns is used to fund training for volunteers, information campaigns and special projects, such as support for the victims of domestic violence and the families of road accident victims, mediation between culprits and victims, and pilot projects with victim support in other countries.

Relations between the Netherlands and Curaçao, Aruba, St Maarten, Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba and between the Netherlands and Canada

Professor Van Vollenhoven is a member of various committees that work to strengthen relations between the Netherlands and Curaçao, Aruba, St Maarten, Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba, and between the Netherlands and Canada.

Relations between the Netherlands and Curaçao, Aruba, St Maarten, Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba

Professor Van Vollenhoven was appointed chair of the 2004 Committee in June 2002, the year in which the Committee was set up. Its aim was to enhance and deepen relations between the Netherlands, the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba, raising their profile in the public eye in the run-up to the celebrations to mark the 50th anniversary of the Charter for the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 2004. The 2004 Committee was an independent body with members from the Netherlands in Europe and the Caribbean, who sat on the Committee in a private capacity. The Committee's concluding report was presented to the governments of the countries of the Kingdom in The Hague on 15 December 2004.

The Kingdom Relations Committee was established in mid-2009 on the initiative of Professor Van Vollenhoven. Its members serve in a private capacity and live in the Netherlands and the various islands. Their objective is to strengthen the societal ties between the Netherlands, Curaçao, Aruba, St Maarten, Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba. The Committee encourages direct collaboration between civil society organisations in the fields of education, public health, security, culture, the environment and nature management. For more information, go to: www.comitekoninkrijksrelaties.org

Leisure pursuits

Professor Van Vollenhoven is a great music lover. He is also interested in the culture, flora and fauna of the Arctic.

Music

In 1986 Professor Van Vollenhoven formed a trio – De Gevleugelde Vrienden – with two of the country's leading pianists and gave some twenty concerts a year both at home and abroad in aid of the Victim Support Fund. De Gevleugelde Vrienden were awarded four gold discs. Since the

death of one of the members of the trio, Pim Jacobs, Professor Van Vollenhoven has continued to give concerts with pianist Louis van Dijk and Koos Mark's big band.

Other interests

Professor Van Vollenhoven is interested in the culture, flora and fauna of the Arctic. He and Princess Margriet went on a tour of the national parks, and spent time with the Inuit in the north of Canada, where they travelled by dogsled. They recorded their experiences in a book published in 1980.

Professor Van Vollenhoven's favourite sports are golf and diving. In February 2002 he obtained his diving instructor's certificate.

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