

A magic lantern trove: Toverlantaarn Museum

Recently, Lead CI Martyn Jolly and colleague David Wills had the rare privilege of visiting [Toverlantaarnmuseum Scheveningen](#) in The Hague, owned and operated by Mr Henk Boelmans Kranenburg.



Mr Henk Boelmans Kranenburg with some of his mechanical slides.

To say the Mr Kranenburg's house is crammed with magic lantern material is an understatement. The ground floor features a magic lantern theatre complete with two triunial lanterns, every horizontal surface is covered with magic lanterns, and every inch of the wall is covered with framed prints relating to magic lantern culture. Hundreds of mechanical slides, and work bench, are house behind the projection area, while hundreds more are housed in the basement. On the first floor an almost complete library of magic lantern books is housed. Almost complete because it is still missing Elizabeth Hartrick's important book on the magic lantern in Australia — a lack which will be rectified very soon! Mr Kranenburg and Martyn were

able to discuss various techniques for staging magic lantern shows, and repairing damaged magic lantern slides. Mr Kranenburg has been building his collection for a quarter of a century, and like a master chef bringing dish after dish out from his kitchen, he showed us important objects from the collection, such as mechanical slides with lever mechanisms going back to the 1720s, which still worked. In honour of our visit Mr Kranenburg was even able to find an antipodean connection in his collection, he had acquired a beautiful set of large format astronomical slides from New Zealand, the slides were evidently purchased by a New Zealand educational institution from a London optician, then later de-accessioned to find their way back to Europe.



Mr Henk Boelmans Kranenburg's projection platform.



A mechanical slide from the 1700s.