

The Church of Oudemirdum

In the southwestern part of the Dutch province of Friesland you find the old State Reformed Church of Oudemirdum (see picture).



In the newspapers of the region, *De Balkster Courant* and *It Pompeblêd*, this church building is very much in the news, because it has been discovered that all the woodwork is under the attack of gnawing beetles (in Dutch: “*de bonte knaagkever*”).

These small animals ruin everything and therefore it will be necessary to renew/replace all the wood.

This church was built in 1790, enlarged in 1883 and again in 1926; only the west side of this building is original.

During the years of the occupation by France, the so-called “Bataafse Republiek” (1794-1806), the property rights of the tower (with bell) were split up with the church building, which meant the tower is owned by the government, the church is owned by the Reformed congregation (of which 15% tax had to be paid to the government). So this means that the government has to take care of the tower, but the congregation of the church building is responsible for its complete restoration.

In the beginning of 1900 the church received an organ as a gift. It was used for the first time in May by organist H. A. Leffring.

The ministers of the church since 1790 were quite different in their opinions; some conservative, some modernist. It is interesting that, according to the archives, each time a conservative minister came, the church was almost too small for the number of people at the Lord’s Day; but when there was a modernist minister, most members stayed home (modernists called themselves to belong to the “Groninger Richting,” who did not believe that the Scriptures were the Word of God and they said that the Devil did not exist.).

