

## Who was Cornelis?

Uitgeest had a great inventor. Cornelis Corneliszoon van Uitgeest was his name, also called Krelis Lootjes. It is estimated that he lived between 1540 and 1607. There are no images of him, and no one knows where his grave is located. Yet this 'meager landlord burdened with a wife and children' - as he is called in official documents - was very important to Uitgeest and the economic revival of our country on the eve of the Golden Age. In this original wood drying shed attention is paid to his person and significance.

Cornelis was the inventor of the sawmill. Until then, sawing was done by hand; heavy, labour-intensive work. Using wind it was done thirty times faster. Cornelis Corneliszoon had a traditional carpentry yard on the Meldijk at Uitgeest and was married to a flour miller's daughter. These circumstances must have given him the idea of using a crankshaft to convert the rotation of blades into a downward movement in order to set saw blades in motion. He was not an academic but a genius who used his common sense to find a practical solution to a current problem.

Cornelis also devised a water displacement pump and a way to press more oil from seeds with tilted millstones, the so-called 'kollergang'.

Fearing loss of work, the Guild of Wood Sawmillers protested against the arrival of the sawmill in Amsterdam, but Cornelis was more than welcome in the Zaan region: the beginning of the first industrial revolution. At that time, the Netherlands was recovering from Spanish rule and there was a huge demand for sawn timber; for new farms, business premises and for the construction of ships. The merchant fleet was quickly expanding and we conquered the world, thanks to Cornelis Corneliszoon of Uitgeest. It did not make him rich or famous, though.

The Cornelis Corneliszoon van Uitgeest Foundation is also planning to build an original working Paltrok Wood Sawmill here. The foundation is already there, but the necessary financial resources are not yet available.