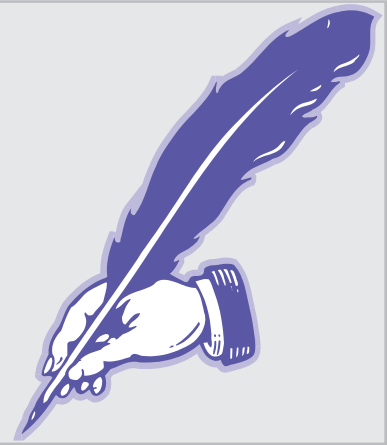


SASKATCHEWAN MENNONITE HISTORIAN

Official periodical of the
Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan, Inc.

Volume X No. 3, December 2004



MHSS President Honoured



Leonard Doell (left) receiving a heritage award from Ron Volden, President of the Saskatchewan History and Folklore Society. Photo courtesy Dennis Fisher

Our Society, the Saskatchewan Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan is proud to announce that the Saskatchewan History and Folklore Society honoured our President, Leonard Doell, on September 25, 2004.

Finn Andersenn, Executive Director, said, "The vision of SHFS is to gather, preserve and promote interest in history and folklore of the area known as Saskatchewan. Although the SHFS has been working hard to achieve these ends since its inception in 1957, we recognize that we have not been alone in this endeavour. There have been many indi-

viduals and organizations working with little or no recognition toward similar goals of their own." He went on to say, "Leonard Doell was honoured for his concerted effort to preserve the social history of Central Saskatchewan. Leonard has concentrated his research efforts in preserving the history of his Mennonite upbringing in the related communities of Hague, Osler, Warman, Aberdeen and Hepburn. However, Leonard has also recognized that these communities do not exist in isolation. As a consequence Leonard has also devoted a considerable amount of time, effort and research in documenting these communities' interrelationship with their aboriginal neighbours," he added.

Doell cont'd on p. 4

SAKATCHEWAN MENNONITE HISTORIAN

2326 Cairns Avenue
Saskatoon, SK. S7J 1V1

Editor: Dick H. Epp

Book Editor: Victor G. Wiebe

Genealogy Page Editor: Rosemary Slater

Proof Readers: Ernie Baergen,
Betty Epp, Verner Friesen,
Rosemary Slater

Advisory Committee: Jake
Buhler, Verner Friesen, Esther
Patkau

The Editor invites readers to participate
by sending news, articles, photos, church
histories and other items to him by email
at dhepp1@shaw.ca

HONOUR LIST

Helen Bahnmann
Helen Dyck
Dick H. Epp
Margaret Epp
Peter K. Epp †
George K. Fehr †
Jake Fehr
Jacob E. Friesen
Jacob G. Guenter
Gerhard Hiebert †
Katherine Hooge †
Abram G. Janzen
John J. Janzen †
George Krahm †
Ingrid Janzen-Lamp
J.J. Neudorf †
J.C. Neufeld †
Esther Patkau
Dr. Ted Regehr
Ed Roth
Wilmer Roth †
Arnold Schroeder †
Katherine Thiessen †
Rev. J.J. Thiessen †
Dr. David Toews †
Toby Unruh †
George Zacharias †

To add a name to the Honour List, nominate a person in writing. Candidates must have made significant contributions to the preservation of Mennonite history, heritage or faith in our province.

MHSS Board of Directors, 2004

President
Leonard Doell
Box 364
Aberdeen, SK. S0K 0A0
Tel: 253-4419
Fax: 665-5564
ldoell@mccs.org

Secretary/Archivist
Vera Falk
Box 251
Dundurn, SK. S0K 1K0
Tel: 492-4731
Fax: 492-4731
r.v.of.thodeandshields@sasktel.net

Treasurer
Gladys Christensen
Box 388
Christopher Lake, SK. S0J 0N0
Tel: 982-4599
christen@sasktel.net

Jake Buhler
836 Main Street
Saskatoon, SK. S7H 0K3
Tel: 244-1392
jakelouisebuhler@sasktel.net

Kathy Boldt
Box 152, RR #4
Saskatoon, SK. S7K 3J7
Tel: 239-4742
keboldt@sasktel.net

Verner Friesen
1517 Adelaide St. E
Saskatoon, SK. S7J 0J2
Tel: 373-8275

Eileen Quiring
Box 2
Waldheim, SK. S0K 4R0
Tel: (306) 945-2165

Ed Schmidt
Box 28
Waldheim, SK. S0K 4R0
Tel: (306) 945-2217
ewschmidt@sasktel.net

Margaret Snider
Box 35
Guernsey, SK. S0K 1W0
Tel: (306) 365-4274
sniderwm@sasktel.net

Victor G. Wiebe
Book Review Editor/Archivist
11 Kindrachuk Cres
Saskatoon, SK. S7K 6J1
Tel: 934-8125
wiebe@sklib.usask.ca

Board Committees

Photographer SMH
Susan Braun
Box 281
Osler, SK. S0K 3A0
Tel: 239-4201

Membership/Archives
Helen Fast
146 Columbia Drive
Saskatoon, SK. S7K 1E9
Tel: 242-5448
Fax: 668-6844
rhfastlane@shaw.ca

Cemetery Project MHSS
John P. Nickel
General Delivery
Battleford, SK. S0M 0C0
Tel: 937-2134
johnpnickel@sk.sympatico.ca

Advisory Committee SMH
Esther Patkau
2206 Wiggins Avenue
Saskatoon, SK. S7J 1W7
Tel: 343-8645

Genealogy Page Editor, SMH
Rosemary Slater
111 O'Neil Crescent
Saskatoon, SK. S7N 1W9
Tel: 955-3759
r.slater@sasktel.net

Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan (MHSS)

Room 900-110 La Ronge Road
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
S7K 7H8
(306) 242-6105
mhss@sasktel.net

Archive Hours
Monday: 1:30-4:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 1:30-4:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Is your membership paid up?

President's Message



Leonard Doell, President

The Historical Society celebrated its 30th Anniversary (1973-2003), at its Annual General Meeting held at Bethany Manor in Saskatoon on February 6-7 2004. Ted Regehr, a founding member of MHSS was the guest speaker for the occasion with an appropriate presentation entitled "Milestones and Tombstones". Our Past President, Dick Epp, reflected on the significance of this anniversary for our society. Ted Regehr introduced his new book, "Faith, Life and Witness in the Northwest 1903-2003", a centennial history of the Northwest Conference. U of S History Professor Bill Waiser spoke to the group about the Mennonite Conscientious Objectors in the Canadian National Parks. Other workshop presenters included Kathy Szalasnyj, On Caring for Church Records and Ed Schmidt on the Genealogical Use of Brothers Keeper with the Grandma Program.

Rev. John D. Friesen of Saskatoon had the devotional at our AGM. He was undergoing tests to determine the source of his sore throat, which a

short time later was diagnosed as throat cancer. Rev Friesen died a couple of months later and within the week his wife Mary had died as well. Rev. Friesen was well known as an EMMC minister, bishop and radio evangelist, who was a strong supporter of our Historical Society. We will miss his presence but are very grateful to him and his family for depositing his personal records in our archives for researchers to benefit for years to come.

One of the goals and challenges of our Society has been to connect with the various Mennonite communities throughout the province. The community of Swift Current hosted a gathering at the Mennonite Heritage Museum on May 29, 2004. Victor Wiebe made a presentation on "Keeping and Recording Church Records" and Esther Patkau a presentation on "How to write an Obituary". Both were well received. Three local people were honoured by our society for their contributions to the preservation of Mennonite History, these included Jacob M. Fehr, Helen Banman and Ingrid Janzen Lamp.

Der Bote celebrated its 80th anniversary this past year. We invited Lawrence Klippenstein of Winnipeg to come to Saskatoon on April 24 to pay tribute to the contribution of this publication to the life of our Mennonite people. It was appropriate that a celebration be held here, since the roots of Der Bote lay at Rosthern, Sask. A crokinole tournament was held in conjunction with the celebration.

The MHSS archives are open two days per week and operated by trained volunteers. Many people continue to visit the archives as they research their Saskatchewan Mennonite roots. This past year our archives gratefully received the life collections of two local historians, Jacob G. Guenter and

Johan J. Neudorf. These collections contain valuable material relating to Mennonite Historical and Genealogical data as well as personal writings. We are very grateful to our Archivist Victor Wiebe and the many volunteers who organize and catalogue material and assist our visitors.

The Chortitza Atlas edited by Heinz Bergen was published by our society this spring. It has and will become a helpful tool for those studying the Chortitza Colony in Russia. Thanks to Heinz Bergen for his hard work in gathering and organizing the material. Thanks also to Otto Klassen who helped to fund it and the volunteers who collated it.

The Saskatchewan Mennonite Historian is the official newsletter of our Society. It has helped to draw many members into joining our Society, through its attractive layout and well-researched articles. Our gratitude goes to Dick and Betty Epp and the editorial committee for the work they do on our behalf.

There is a great deal of interest in genealogy in our Society and the annual genealogy day is usually well attended. The Genealogy Day for 2004 was held on November 20 at Bethany Manor. The guest speaker was Dave Pickering of Moose Jaw, from the Saskatchewan Genealogical Society.

Our AGM will be held on February 4-5 2005 at Bethany Manor in Saskatoon. Our guest speaker will be Menno Wiebe of Winnipeg. The year 2005 promises to be a busy one for the people of the Province of Saskatchewan. It is the Centennial of the province and most communities will take the opportunity to celebrate the occasion in one form or another. The Mennonite story is one of the many stories that make up the rich history of our province.

Editorial—D.H. Epp

This issue is coming to you on the eve of Saskatchewan and Alberta's 100th birthday, 1905–2005. On the time-line of the world's civilization our 100 years represents a very short time. However, in our brief period of 100 years many things have changed dramatically. We need only to think of transportation and communication and we see the great strides that our society has made. Of course, there are events in our lifetime that we can't record as great achievements. We have not solved the problem of peace, poverty and crime and that is something we must continue to work on seriously.

In spite of the short history, there is much to be thankful for in our province. Many of our ancestors who first came here worked hard and provided many opportunities for our families and for us today. For this we must be grateful. The least we can do is to pass this story on to the next generations.

Of course, that is what our Society is all about—preserving and sharing our history. The MHSS is celebrating its 31st birthday in 2005. We urge all of you to make a greater effort to make our organization even better in the following year. It is my wish that all of us will do something to record our experiences for our future generations. Jane Marie Thibault gives us some good advice.

Doell cont'd from p. 1

Leonard accepted his award humbly and graciously, saying that there were many others who had done as much as he has in this field. He also thanked the many people who had been his mentors, and he mentioned in particular his father who had helped him in appreciating history and remaining humble about his achievements.

Leonard is well known for the books he has published. The 536 pages, oversized volume, *Mennonite Homesteaders on the Hague–Osler Reserve, 1891–1999* has become the bible for many historians and genealogists seeking information on early settlers. Leonard is co-coordinator for the Aboriginal Neighbours program for MCC (SK.).

The Saskatune Singers entertained during the evening. Carl Krause, a member of both organizations, co-ordinated the evening program.

Information for this article came from Rod Andrews, reporter for the Saskatchewan Valley News and Vera Falk. (October 6, 2004 issue) dhe

Telling the story of our lives is one of the most important activities of the later years. It reminds us that we are still emerging, a growing people. It shows us how we have changed and how we have been transformed...it is stabilization in the security of the past so that we can go beyond to embrace the future.

May we all show our gratitude for having had the opportunity to live in a country that has been so good to us. My thanks must go to the MHSS Board for having supported me so graciously during my tenure as editor. I wish a joyous and blessed Christmas to all of our readers.

Editor Requests Leave of Absence

The hard-working, faithful editor of our Saskatchewan Mennonite Historian, Dick Epp, has asked for an eight-month leave of absence starting in January to help him meet an August deadline for the publication of a family book. Our Membership and Publication Committee, consisting of Esther Patkau, Jake Buhler and Verner Friesen, will therefore take on major responsibility in the publication of the next two issues of the Historian. The Historical Society Board is pleased to be able to grant Dick a well-deserved break from his editorial duties.

On behalf of the MHSS Board,
Verner Friesen

Glenbush, Saskatchewan, 1942



Butchering Day. L-R: Diedrich Epp, John Janzen, Helene Epp, Peter Schroeder hidden in the back. Photo dhepp

Scotiabank Recognizes Mennonite Employee

By Jake Buhler

On Wednesday evenings, Susan Braun, a 21 year employee of Scotiabank's Midtown Plaza branch in Saskatoon, can be found in the archives of the Saskatchewan Mennonite Historical Society. There she sorts through historical files and puts together sets of old weeklies like the Saskatchewan Valley News. She loves her work and has been volunteering there ever since the archives found a home at Bethany Manor in 2002.

Scotiabank has a program to recognize employees who volunteer in the community. Susan, a member of Osler Mennonite Church, was selected as an outstanding volunteer. The bank acknowledged her by giving a cheque of one thousand dollars to the Saskatchewan Mennonite Historical Society. MHSS president Leonard Doell was pleased that Susan, who also does photography at special events, was responsible for the unexpected gift of money.

Susan credits her mother for her love of genealogy and heritage. "Mother was a plain woman with a keen sense of who was related to whom and I learned to appreciate my past. In my 20s I began to cherish heritage buildings like churches and house-barn combinations." Susan grew up in the village of Neuhorst, near Osler, settled by Old Colony Mennonites in 1898.

Susan credits archivist, Victor Wiebe, for helping her to appreciate the fine points about heritage preservation. Susan enjoys interacting with people and seeing other points of view. "Volunteering helps me to achieve those interests."

Meanwhile at her place of work, her supervisor, Ann Marie Smith, is proud

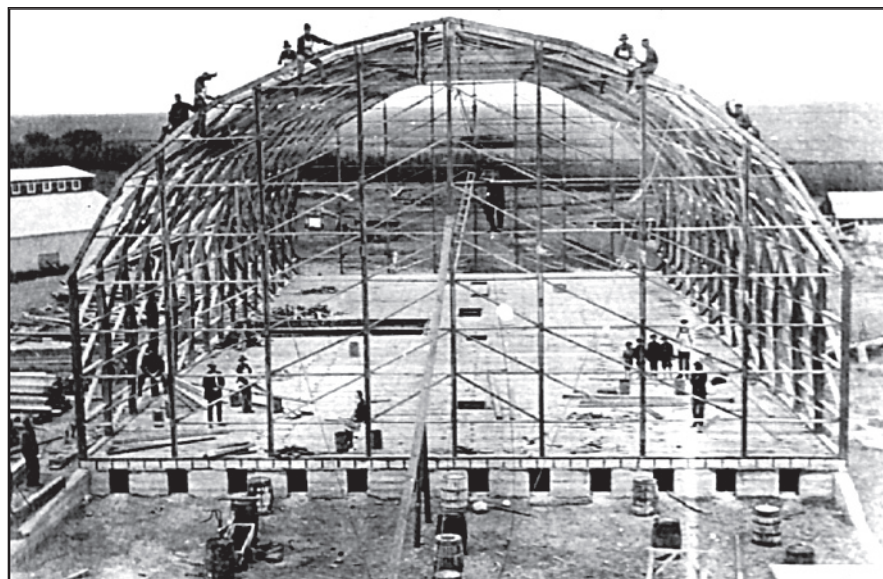


Susan Braun volunteering at the Saskatchewan Mennonite Historical Society Archives. Photo courtesy ScotiaBank, Saskatoon.

of Susan and bought her a special T-shirt. "We are one big happy family," Susan says in describing her Scotiabank colleagues.

And the Historical Society is very pleased to have Susan as a part of its family!

Barn Construction, Hanley, anno 1906



In 1905 Luella and William Rowse established the Bonvern Farm at Hanley. They built a large house and the above barn as well as an elevator. In 1925 Harry Rowse, son, sold the farm to Mennonite immigrants from Russia with the help of the Mennonite Board of Colonization. Photo Courtesy Ruby Rowse and George Krahn.

nota bena: mark well and observe

Our Reader's Page: Announcements and Questions

Annual General Meeting of the Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan

February 4th and 5th, 2005
In the Fellowship Hall at Bethany Manor
110 LaRonge Road, Saskatoon

Friday, February 4, 7:30 p.m.—Heritage Night
Guest Speaker—Menno Wiebe, Winnipeg, former Director of Native Concerns for Mennonite Central Committee Canada
His topic—*At Least Two Histories —An Encounter Between Mennonite and Aboriginal Peoples.*
Special Music

Saturday, February 5—Annual Meeting and Workshop Sessions

8:30 a.m.—Registration
9:00 a.m.—Devotional, Vern Ratzlaff
9:15 a.m.—Business Meeting and Elections
10:30 a.m.—Coffee Break
11:00 a.m.—*Workshop Session I: Menno Wiebe. Mennonite Self-Understanding Portrayed in Poetry.*
12:00 Noon—Lunch (\$6.00)
1:15 p.m.—*Workshop Session II: Wayne Dueck, Manager of McNally Robinson Booksellers in Saskatoon. Topic: It was Black and White (Stories From Our Forbears)*
2:30 p.m.—Coffee Break

What is History?

History is the witness of the times. the torch of the truth, the life of memory, the teacher of life, the messenger of antiquity.—Cicero

That which history can give us best is the enthusiasm which it raises in our hearts.—Goethe

Pembroke School District #4115 1919–1968

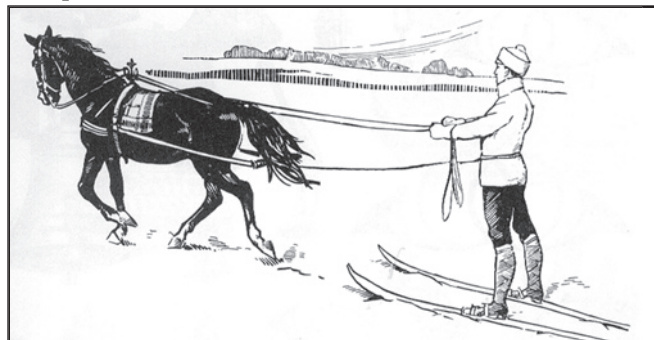
Calling all former students and teachers. A memory book and a reunion are planned for August, 2005. Send addresses of former students and teachers, pictures and recollections of your school days to Henry Janzen, 13-130 LaRonge Rd., Saskatoon, SK. S7K 8E5, ph. 306-384-9390 or email: hajanzen@shaw.ca

Mennonite History Tour of Poland, June 14-23, 2005

The California Mennonite Historical Society is sponsoring a Mennonite History Tour in the coming spring. Areas of interest along the Vistula between Warsaw and Gdansk will be highlighted, with emphasis on the Delta. For details, contact Peter Klassen at peterk@csufresno.edu or phone at 559-255-6335; or Beverly Reimer at bevstravel@yahoo.com or phone at 559-251-2714. Reservations should be made by January 31, 2005.

Membership Fees and Gift Subscriptions

When your membership expiration date on your address label is underlined you know that it has expired. Send your membership fee to Gladys Christensen, Room 900-110 La Ronge Road, Saskatoon, SK. S7K 7H8 so that you will not miss the next issue. Single memberships are \$25.00, families \$40.00. Gift subscriptions are available for friends, children, and grandchildren. We include a gift card with the first subscription. All subscription and donations to the society are eligible for tax deduction receipts.

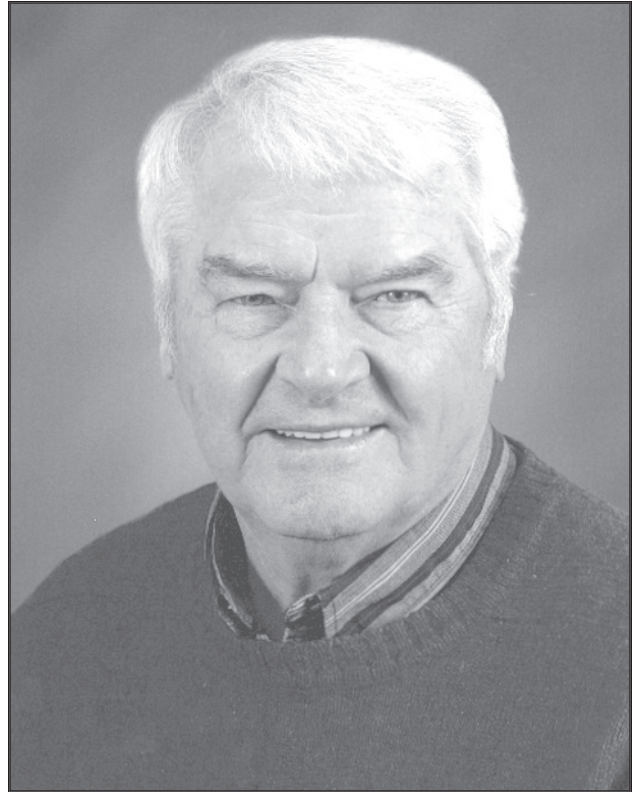


Do ou remember when?

Menno Wiebe, Guest Speaker

From 1974 through 1997, Menno Wiebe served as Director of Native Concerns with Mennonite Central Committee Canada. Before that (1964 to 1974) he was Executive Director of Mennonite Pioneer Mission with the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. At the same time Menno has done some part-time teaching in the area of native studies and anthropology at Canadian Mennonite Bible College and the University of Manitoba. He writes poetry and has written numerous drama and media scripts, and has done extensive research and writing on subjects and themes relating to aboriginal people. He has served the church and his community in a variety of capacities, usually in the area of native concerns. He comes to us very well qualified to speak on parallel histories of aboriginal and Mennonite peoples.

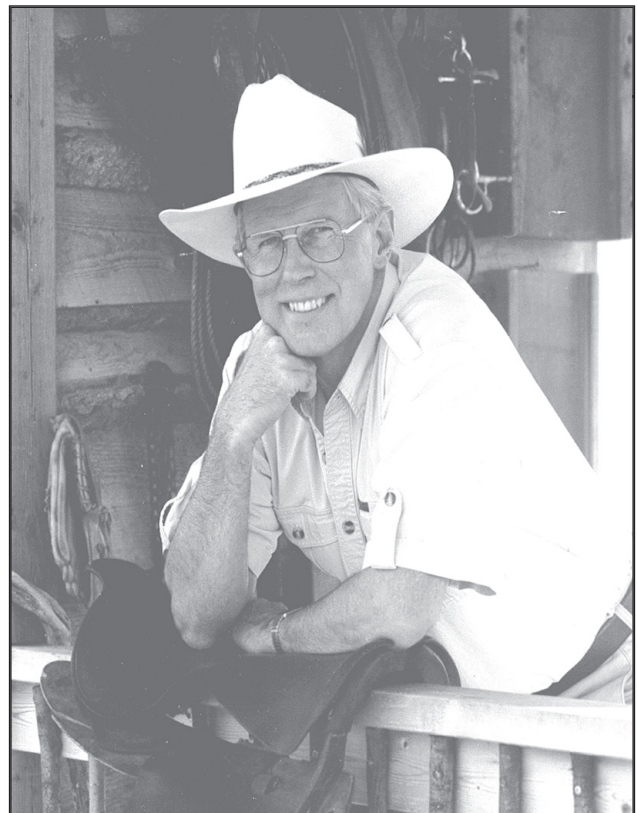
Photo: Menno Wiebe, right column



Story Telling Workshop —Wayne Dueck

Wayne was born in Rosthern after WW II. He is a graduate of Rosthern Junior College, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas and the School of Social Work, UBC, Vancouver. He was employed as Social Worker with Government of Saskatchewan and taught Social Work at the University of Regina 1968–1977. He owned/managed Bookworm's Den Ltd. 1977 - 1997. Now Wayne is Manager of McNally Robinson Booksellers, Saskatoon. His passions include music, literature, photography, prairie and family history, horses, his family, travelling, and storytelling. In 2002 he built a Hermitage on their acreage and has collected, and has been given, 100s of items for display. Each item has a story attached to it. E.g. (harness from the barn at the Sheldon Farm; WW II American Cavalry saddle, marbles and Russian currency brought by his Grandfather Dueck from Russia, etc., etc. etc.) For several decades, Wayne has carried in his wallet the following paragraph. Unfortunately, he does not know who wrote it!

I want to be thoroughly used up when I die. The harder I work, the more I live. I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle to me. It's a sort of splendid torch, which I've got to hold up for the moment and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.



Wayne Dueck looking out of the Heritage Museum on his acreage. This photo courtesy of Fong Photography, Saskatoon.

Helen Banman (Swift Current) –Life Member of MHSS

I cannot remember but my parents, Johan and Helena Friesen, always told me that I was born on April 13, 1923 in a village called Little Reinfeld in the McMahon, Saskatchewan district. So I have celebrated that date as my birthday for 81 years already.

I received all my education in Iris School in the McMahon district. It was a big two-room school and most of the time we were 80 students or more with only two teachers. We had some great times playing ball and other games. Christmas was always special. The teachers spent much time and effort putting a program together. The Christmas tree was always decorated with real lit candles, as there was no electricity. The picnic at the end of the school year was one of the big events in our school days. The teachers would go to different farmers in the morning of the picnic day and pick up fresh cream, with which they made ice cream for the picnic. By the afternoon it would be ready and we would each get a cone. What a treat!

As a teenager we had bushels of fun creating our own entertainment. Wiener roasts were a favourite with us. Softball games were always part of any picnic. The gramophone provided most of our music for us. Special events occurred once in awhile and one that we always enjoyed was the trip to Lac Pelletier resort for the afternoon.



Helen Banman working with her spinning wheel.



Helen Banman, Life Member from Swift Current.

I married George Banman, a farmer. I was kept quite busy raising a family of four and helping with milking, feeding and butchering broilers, etc. We also had a huge garden and we had regular customers in the city to whom we sold our vegetables. After the children were older I hauled grain or operated the combine. During all our years of farming I took at least one hot meal to the field for George when he was working on the field, always packing enough for the children and me. We ate the meal together as a family.

After we retired from farming I developed many hobbies such as collecting salt and peppershakers. I have collected 4, 836 sets from all over the world. I decorated many, many wedding cakes. I also do genealogy for other people and myself. I also have a huge stamp collection. In my spare time I volunteer at the Mennonite Heritage Museum in Swift Current, which I enjoy very much. My husband and I have done extensive travelling. The highlights of our travels, as we look back on them, are our four trips to South America. There we visited Iguaçu Falls in Brazil and my cousin in Paraguay, whom we had not seen in 36 years. We also visited George's brother and family as well as cousins in Bolivia.

I am very thankful for the four children and all the grandchildren and great grandchildren that we have and for their good health. Furthermore, I am very grateful for the wonderful people that I have met and all my good friends whom I have known throughout my lifetime. I have been blessed with good health and am thoroughly enjoying my life. *

Roger Epp Appointed Acting Dean of Augustana University College

On July 1, 2004 Roger Epp became acting dean of Augustana University College when it merged with the University of Alberta in Edmonton. Augustana College originally (Camrose Lutheran College) was founded in 1910 by the Alberta Norwegian Lutheran College Association and became a college of a national church in 1957. It was renamed in 1991 to reflect the Augustana declaration of faith published in 1530 in Augsburg, Germany.” Roger has taught there since the early 1980s.

Roger is a member of the MHSS and originally comes from the Eigenheim district, near Rosthern. Many will remember him from his column that he wrote for the *Canadian Mennonite*. His father taught for many years in Hanley and his mother now lives in Saskatoon.

Epp sees the affiliation with the University of Edmonton as a positive step. He says,

“It’s important for us as people teaching in an undergraduate setting to be generalist and interdisciplinary, to ask the big questions about the fields of study we teach in. We have to find a way to build research agendas out of what we do, out of this culture and this location.”

Congratulations, Roger! For more information go to the website: www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/augustana Information gleaned from the University of Alberta *folio*, Volume 41 Issue 11, February 20, 2004. dhe.

Life Member Dies in Tragic Car Accident

We just learned that John J. Janzen, a Life Member of our Society and a long time Pastor in the Neuanlage Church, near Hague, and his wife, Agnetha (Ens) died tragically in a car accident near Beisecker, Alberta. John is a long-time member of the MHSS and has been very active in the Hague Museum. A few weeks ago John and I had lunch together and we were preparing an article

about the Hague Museum, which hopefully, will appear in the next issue of our journal. The Janzens will be missed. Our condolences go to the bereaving family. May God bless them. dhe

MHSS Hosts Genealogy Workshop

48 people showed up at Bethany Manor on Saturday, November 20, 2004 for an MHSS Genealogy Workshop. Doors opened at 9 to provide opportunities to browse through displays of material from the MHSS archives as well as materials brought by individuals. MHSS had a table of new books for sale, including the just released ‘Sommerfelder Gemeinde Buch’, something everyone with roots going back to the 1870’s Mennonite immigra-



Dave Pickering, Moose Jaw, was guest speaker at the Genealogy Day. Photo by Susan Braun.

tion to Manitoba will want to check out. As well, Leonard Doell brought six boxes of used books for sale, many now out of print, all treasures he had lovingly collected over the years, which attracted a great deal of interest.

At ten o’clock, Ed Schmidt introduced Dave Pickering, our presenter for the day. The workshop was advertised as

Genealogy cont’d on p. 11

SHARON CHURCH: CELEBRATION OF FAITH AND HERITAGE

EXCERPT FROM DOREEN SNIDER'S ARTICLE

It was during the winter of 1903-1904 that Peter and John Jansen of Nebraska, USA, land agents for the Saskatchewan Valley and Manitoba Land Company, travelled to the Mennonite settlement surrounding Berlin, Ontario. That area was fast becoming overpopulated and farmland for expansion was no longer available. So it should not surprise us that a delegation of five men made the journey west in May of 1904 to inspect what was then known as the Quill Lakes Mennonite Reserve as a prospect for future settlement. However, it being early in the spring and finding sloughs



Sharon Mennonite Church 2004

filled with runoff water and having difficulty exploring the territory, they returned home with a less than favourable report.

In June 1904, a second group made the same trip. By that time the water had gone down and they, with the assistance of John Jansen, immediately reserved a sizable block of newly surveyed unbroken territory in what was known as the Quill Lake Mennonite Reserve. In 1905 the settlers occupied the homesteads of 160 acres, which were purchased for an entry fee of \$10.00 and a commitment to reside on it for six months in each of the following three years.

On the 17th day of April in 1905 a travel weary group of newcomers arrived at the new station that was later to become Humboldt. They had travelled via the Canadian Northern Railway from Berlin (now Kitchener), Ontario for 17 long days; the men much of the time with the livestock in the freight cars and the women and children in a passenger car at the back end of the train.

The following morning, having re-assembled their wagons, they set out for the homesteads some 35 miles to the southwest. Some rode in the wagon, some on horseback and others came on foot to bring the cattle. There were no roads, no fences or telegraph lines to show them the way; only winding buffalo trails

Early on the first Sunday morning, the group was called together by the minister, Rev. Eli Hallman who had accompanied them, to meet for worship on the land assigned to Deacon Aaron Biehn. Purple crocuses peeped out of the dry grass and pussy willow branches waved in the wind. Crows cawed in the poplar trees. The meadowlarks' cheery notes accompanied the singing of the hymns.

If we had been there on that sunny morning in May 1905 we would have seen a group of some 30 newly arrived Mennonites from Berlin, Ontario. We would have noticed the women dressed in long dark print dresses, their gathered skirts almost covering their black cotton stockings and laced up shoes. Their long hair is neatly brushed back in a coil and covered by a white prayer head covering. The men wear broad brimmed black hats with round crowns. Their plain black coats are buttoned straight up the front to a neckband, having no collars or



Interior view of Sharon Church.

lapels. Young girls wore long braids and gingham dresses and the boys wore plaid flannel shirts and knee pants. There were probably not more than twenty adults who were there to become charter members of the congrega-

tion. Several months later when farms had been established, fields planted, homes built, and road allowances clearly marked, a business meeting was called. Plans were laid and a site was chosen for the building of a church. Meanwhile the faithful gathered in homes and then after 1907 in the Waterloo School. In 1911 Rev. Hallman created a building at the cross roads donated. The name Sharon was adopted and the dedication took place on December 10th.

Now ninety-nine years have gone by. Good times and some hard times have passed. The time has come to close the doors at Sharon Mennonite Church. On Sunday morning, June 27, 2004 the last service was held at the old church. A picnic lunch and fellowship gathering were enjoyed at the home of a former pastor, Jim and Belle Mullet, following the morning service. The official closing celebration was held Saturday, July 10 and Sunday, July 11, 2004. Rather than a sad time, it was an opportunity for visiting and reminiscing, as well as a homecoming or reunion. A supper, as well as special music and



The annex of the Sharon Church

sharing, a program and worship service took place. Over 300 were registered.

Many walked pensively in the cemetery, remembering loved ones gone before. There were some tears, many hugs and lots of laughter as long forgotten events were brought to mind. The ancient pulpit was brought up from the basement and served once more on the podium. Strangers approached cautiously trying to read another's nametag, not to admit not recognizing them. Many changes were mentioned, both from the stage and in conversation. The old hymn books with the shaped notes, the seating arrangement, men on the right side, women on the left, the little chairs we sat on as children at the front of the church, the Amen corners for the elderly,

the addition of the balcony, the introduction of musical instruments, the sound system, conference held in the

horse barn, coloured glass windows, modes of transportation from horse and buggies to today's fast air-condi-



Sharon Church Cemetery

tioned vans, the headroom brought across the road to the new cemetery when the church was built, and much, much more.

I'd like to close now with a few words from Alvah Bowman's booklet, "that it may be treasured by the children and grandchildren of the hardy pioneers who maintained their fine neighbourly spirit and never lost their faith in God and His faithfulness towards men, His creation."

Genealogy cont'd from p. 9

beginner genealogy, but might have been more aptly entitled, "Things I wish I had known when I was beginning my genealogy." Dave's presentation was very well organized and held everyone's attention throughout the two time slots allotted for the speaker. The talk was well illustrated with overheads and supported with lots of handouts. The information was extensive enough that everyone present could leave feeling they had learned something.

A question period and sharing time followed each of the presentations. Coffee and cookie breaks and a delicious noon lunch rounded out an excellent day. We should give kudos to our MHSS board members who worked so hard at organizing and carrying off this valuable and educational workshop. The day flew by. — Rosemary Slater



RJC— One Hundred Years of Learning

Celebration Week-end Events

29–July 31, 2005



German English Academy student body 1905. How many do you know? Photo courtesy dhe. Can you help us with the names?

Celebration Weekend Events

July 29–July 31, 2005

Friday, July 29, 2005 Registration 6:00–800 p.m.

Centennial Celebration on outside stage 7:30 p.m.

Saturday July 30: Breakfast 7:30 Keynote speaker: Roger Epp Alumnus 1976
Speakers: Peter Peters and others to be announced; Choir, Unveiling of Centennial Projects, Meals, Campfire singing, etc.

Sunday July 31: Breakfast 7:30; Worship service with John Rempel, Faculty Member at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, IN.

For full details of this weekend contact
Rosthern Junior College, Roots and Wings, 410 6th Avenue, Rosthern, SK. S0K 3R0.

A belated Christmas and New Year's wish from all of us on the MHSS board and the SMH volunteers. Our paper will be out early in the new year. dhe



German English Student body 1910, in the Rosthern Town Hall. Photo courtesy Reuben Epp, Kelowna. Can you help us with the names?

Institutional Celebration?

If your church, school, business or organization is having an anniversary celebration let us know about it so that we can tell the story in our journal. Photographs are always welcome.

When writing about your event make sure to include names of people who have been instrumental in the organization, and don't forget dates. Thank you. dhe

Our Readers Write

They used to call it “softball”—when I played the game!

By Dennis Fisher

Editor’s Note: Dennis Fisher sent this article to us after reading the story about the Osler Monarchs in the last issue. Thank you, Dennis! dhe

Easter Sunday, and we listen to Carl and Genevieve Ens on a local radio station. They talk about the holiest of days and Jeannie and I, remembering them for decades, start to reminisce. She was Genevieve Lepp then, born a pretty woman. They both taught school in the Hague area, at Blumenthal, a little Mennonite village. When I think of Carl, I think of sports and softball. Carl, along with several brothers, played great ball for a team called the Osler Monarchs. Carl and his brothers made this team what it was. Carl was the first pitcher in this area to use the “windmill” delivery. He was over six feet tall and had long, lanky arms. That ball came to the plate at 1000 miles per hour—nearly. His control was not 100% so you never saw a batter standing too close to the plate. They just did not have time to get out of the way of an errant pitch!

Carl taught his students to play ball, likely every single one of them. I remember those days with joy. We played our ball in the big town of Hague, no little Mennonite village! There was Wes Heinrichs, George Newlove, my cousin Harvey Hildebrandt, Bruce Wiebe and a few others I need to be reminded of. We were all good friends and schoolmates. Harv pitched, “Chub” Newlove caught, and the rest of us played infield. We didn’t really play that well. Maybe the school board never thought of health and recreation when they hired teachers. They never hired a good coach—like the nearby schools of Blumenthal and Paschendale!

We had fun though and we looked good. We scraped together a little bit of money. I think my brother “Tiger” threw in a few bucks and we bought some sweaters. They were maroon in colour and we even had numbers on the back! I think all of those numbers, everyone of them, were retired! We found out that the numbers did not do the trick. Carl’s team would come to play a game at Hague.

The big truck would arrive with the whole school population in the back. All healthy Mennonite children, strong

farm kids and a good coach—Carl! Their uniforms had stripes. They were stripes that you found on bibbed overalls. They did not have matching caps either and some seemed to have forgotten their shoes! What kinda game was this going to be?

It was time for the Blumenthal team to have a little practice on the diamond. The players would disperse to their respective positions. What goes on? What are all those girls doing on the team? We never had any girls on our team. Maybe you don’t have all that much choice when you work from a one-room schoolhouse in a hamlet. (I’ve now downgraded it.) But the truck was full. Carl could have made a team of just Friesens or Fehrs, I bet, and all boys. Oh well, if he wants to have his girls on his team he’ll have to learn.

Nope! Nope! —We had to learn! When Carl gave them a little warm-up we started to learn. They could all throw to a given spot, they could catch with two hands, (we’d learned to catch with one-hand...most of the times), they could bunt, watch for good pitches and they even knew about double plays, imagine that! Well, we played, and we lost and we learned.

They played dirty. They bunted, they stole bases, they threw us out at second, the girls hit some runs, they even slid into second and third, or home in their flour sack skirts! I call that dirty. They sure had a good coach! That was Carl. He was good! He was good and they must have loved him. Whenever one of their batters got on first, and most of them did, Carl would signal a “steal.” I can hear him saying to a student, “Helen, when you get to first, run to second on the first pitch. If Newlove can throw it straight, the second baseman likely can’t catch it...trust me!” He was right and it was both maddening and humiliating. In any case, they were lucky and they beat the heck out of us. We had to change our “luck” and we had a plan. The secret was in the uniforms. We bought some white material, like light canvas, from Friesen’s Store. We had our mothers make us ball pants. We put maroon stripes down the sides and we were ready for the next ball

The next big truck that came to our schoolyard was from George Miller's school of Paschendale which was the school that served the hamlet of Hochfeld (Highfield) northwest of Hague. Carl and Genevieve's school was Venice. Isn't it ironic that Mennonite people with a strong pacifist faith, had their schools named after famous war battles. Perhaps some politician had something to do with it, eh? Back to the game!

Repeat performance! The pants did not do the trick! George Miller must have talked to Carl on the phone. How else would he have five girls on the team? How else did they learn to bunt, steal bases, wait out bad pitches, catch outfield hits on the run and beat the pants off us. Maybe it was the pants. You see, when you have white pants as part of your nice uniform, that means you can't slide, fall or otherwise get dirt or grass stains on your pants. Maybe that cost us! We had nice pictures of our ball team, though!

Readers Write: Airplane

Dick, I think the aircraft in the photo, taken at Blumenheim in 1933, may be a Stinson SM-2AA Junior, a plane that was owned by M&C Aviation in 1930 and was known as "Lady Wildfire" (not really a Menno name!)

If you could send me a larger, clearer image, I might be able to be more positive. (Sorry, none available!) The early plane was known in the industry as a "Detroit".
Best regards. —Dennis J. Fisher

An Anecdote from anno 1690

Editor's note: I found an old weathered article by J.C. Wenger in my files and I thought I would share these three short paragraphs from the article. dhe.

A small group of Mennonites had settled in Germantown, before 1690(?). One of their numbers, Direk Keyser (1635-1708), a silk merchant who had come from Amsterdam, used to read a sermon to the little church group from a book. Word later reached some of the Shippack brethren that Keyser had so far departed from a life of simplicity as to be wearing a silk coat!

This caused so much heartache that they saddled their horses and rode all the way to Germantown to bring him once more to a life of self-denying discipleship. When the brethren arrived at his home they found him working in

the garden with his silk coat. He was overjoyed to see his country brothers. With a beaming smile he hurried to the brethren, wiping his hands on his coat.

When they in turn saw how little he cared about external grooming, as even to wipe his soiled hands on his coat, they simply visited pleasantly with him, then rode home to Shippack—without ever divulging why they had come!

Manitoba Historical Leader Dies

Delbert Plett, long time editor of the Flemish Mennonite Historical Society journal, the *Preservings*, died of liver cancer on November 4, 2004. In spite of his illness he completed the December 2004 issue, which arrived at the subscribers homes shortly before his death. This last issue marked the culmination of a lifetime of working on preserving the history of the Mennonite people. This work will continue through his foundation, The D.F. Plett Historical Research Foundation, Inc. The motto of his paper is: "A people who have not the pride to record their own history will not long have the virtues to make their history worth recording; and no people are indifferent to their past need hope to make their future great." —Jan Gleysteen

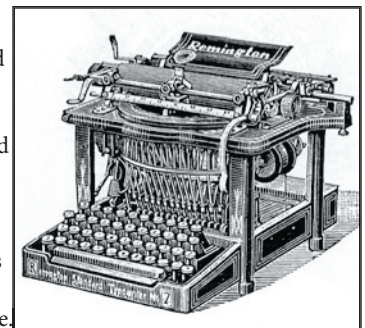
Delbert will be missed in historical circles across Canada. Although he was a lawyer by profession most of his life focussed on Mennonite history. Many of the books that he published have been distributed in Germany, South American and North America. Our Society is grateful for all the things he has done for us and we extend our sympathies to his family.

His funeral was held on November 10th at the Blumenort EMC Church in Blumenort, MB, with the internment at the Steinbach Heritage Cemetery. dhe

Typewriter vs. Computer

The old typewriter shown on the right of this note was once the mainstay of every office and home. It was quite the machine—it had upper and lower case letters; it could print \$ signs and other symbols. Today you see these machines in museums or they are hidden in someone's attic. The modern computer has taken over the whole operation of the typewriter and then some.

It can be operated by almost anyone and it does thousands of other functions as well. It can store information, photographs, complete encyclopedia, make calculations, do layout for the editor of this paper, and even check his spelling. Imagine the changes made from 1905 to 2005! Celebrate Saskatchewan's birthday with pride. dhe



CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS STORY FINALLY TOLD

by Annemarie Plenert

Winnipeg, Man. — About sixty years ago over 10,000 Canadian conscientious objectors, many of them Mennonite, chose alternative service instead of fighting in the Second World War.

Their story has been largely relegated to short print-run books and contributions to archival collections. In 1996, Conrad Stoesz, now archivist and researcher at the Mennonite Heritage Centre, contacted the federal government to obtain conscientious objector (CO) records but was told the files had been destroyed.

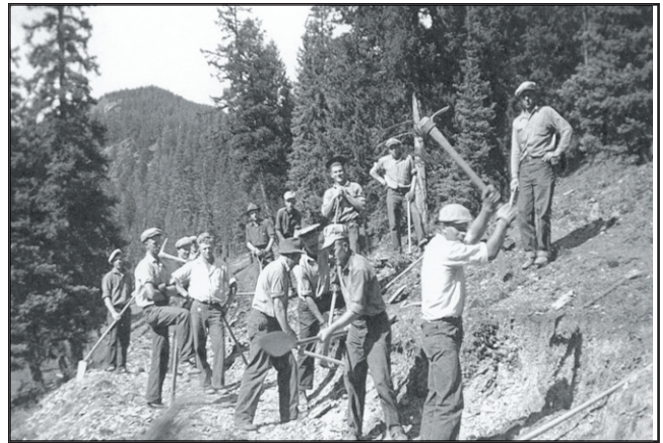
This revelation planted the seed of an idea that has now grown into a comprehensive 700 page web site called www.alternativeservice.ca. The web site tells the stories of men who, instead of fighting, built roads and bridges, fought fires, taught school children, mined, logged, farmed, worked in manufacturing and in the medical field. By law, most of their earnings were sent to the Red Cross for relief work. The website makes comprehensive use of rare archival documents and photos, film footage, and audio recordings. It also tells the stories of families and churches that supported COs.

The web site was officially launched on May 26. At the launch, Esther Epp-Tiessen representing Mennonite Central Committee's peace and justice desk, said, "Conscientious objectors gave us the gift of showing another way, and this website is an example of their gift." MCC together with



Cutting cedar for firewood. MHC photo from the Jake Kroeger Collection

Mennonite Church Canada, the Department of Canadian Heritage through the Canadian Culture Online Program, as well as the Canadian Council of Archives, the Manitoba



Building the road along the Miette River near Camp Gekie in Jasper Park 1941. MHC photo from the Peter Unger Photography Collection.

Mennonite Historical Society and private donors helped fund the project. The project cost about \$20,000, plus significant volunteer contributions.

Dr. David Schroeder, one of the site's contributors, briefly told his story to the 50 plus people gathered to commemorate the launch. After he was drafted, he applied for CO status, and became an orderly at St Boniface Hospital.

He spoke about how conscientious objection led many men to lives of service in society. Of the twenty-eight COs that worked in the St. Boniface hospital with him, twenty-five of them pursued careers in social service. "In the long run, I am more convinced that I made the right choice. We need to address the futility of war."

Henry Borne worked in a forestry camp at Radium Hot Springs with other CO's. The conditions could be challenging. "We ate elk meat from animals that were ready to die. That's what the boys got. Old tough elk meat! Boy, you had to have good teeth."

Borne described the reaction of some people to the CO stance. One of the cooks accused them of cowardice, saying, 'Our men are out on the front lines and you're just fooling around here in the bush.' What could we do? We just shut up and did our work and kept on going."

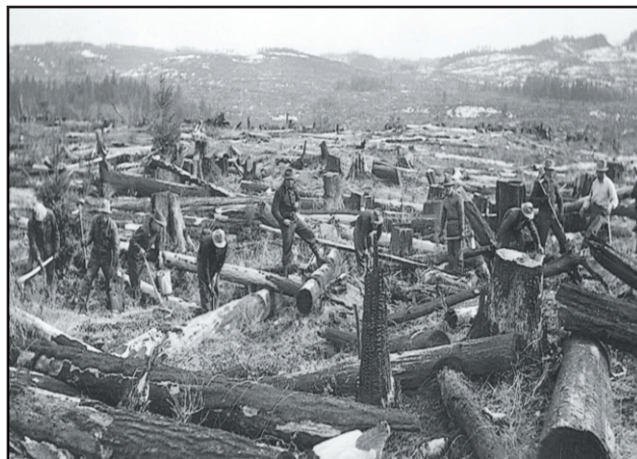
In a section called "Hard Questions," content developers respond to frequently asked questions and accusations leveled at pacifists such as, "What is the difference between being a pacifist and a coward?" Schroeder's own thought-



Getting around on a log boat. MHC photo.

ful responses to the tough questions bring integrity to the entire package.

Developers paid close attention to making the language on the site accessible to a wide age range. "We developed the content keeping in mind that students in at least two grades in Manitoba have units in their curriculum that relate to the Second World War. Our hope is that teachers and students,



Planting trees on Vancouver Island after snags (shot stumps) have died or have been burned out. MHC photo.

in addition to others, will visit the site to learn more about peaceful alternatives to war," said Stoesz.

Mennonite Church Canada is made up of 35,000 church members, 232 congregations and 5 area conferences. For more information, contact Dan Dyck, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, (204) 888-6781, dddyck@mennonitechurch.ca.

Editor's Note: I wish to thank the Mennonite Heritage Centre for sharing their photos and articles with us. Unfortunately we could not publish everything they have. It is a fabulous collection, I have interspersed some of the photos in the article by Annemarie Plenert, although they do not match her script but they tell us about the work the CO's in the early forties had to do. They planted over 17 million trees on Vancouver Island and who knows how many they planted in the National Parks s? We urge our readers to go the the MHC website and see the stories on their own. Thanks also to Jack Driedger, Saskatoon for his story and Marianne Harder for her recollection of her father's story. dhe.

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER BY MARIANNE HARDER

My Dad, John J. Dyck, was a Conscientious Objector, not only in wartime but also during peace. He was born while WWI was raging, experienced part of the Russian Revolution, and worked in Jasper during WWII, after appearing in court, before a very harsh judge, to explain his faith position for peace. Towards the end of his life he wrote, "I am a conscientious objector to everything that belittles the power and the glory of God my Savior, and the saving grace of my Jesus." 1983. This story is based on my memories of a winter in approximately 1948.

Darkness had settled over the farmyard in early evening, as the sky was lowering. The fire crackled in the wood stove. The kerosene lamp on the table in the living room was lit. The children were cozily clustered around their mother as she sat in the rocking chair, their favorite spot for story time. They waited in eager anticipation; the Bible storybook lay open on her lap.

Their father was still outside, finishing up the last of the chores. The cows had been milked, fed and watered. The milk had been separated and the calves and kittens fed. He tossed some hay into the horse manger. All was in readiness for the night.

As Father came out of the barn he checked the barbed wire gate to their driveway. Yes, it was closed. The young stock

would not be able to leave the corral. They had been cared for earlier, while there was still light. The lantern that he carried cast a faint glow, enough to light the path to the house.

As he took one last glance around, he heard the jingle of harnesses. A horse-drawn caboose was coming down the road. This was a rare occurrence at this time of night. Would it come down the driveway? Sure enough! Who would it be? With lantern in hand, he waited at the gate, planning to open it for them to pass through.

The horses were running flat out, and as the caboose approached, he could hear angry voices, yelling more and more loudly. The caboose careened to a frenzied halt at the gate, the horses rearing. He now stood blocking their path. Three men spilled out. They stumbled drunkenly, shoving and cursing. Threats filled the darkness. "Kill him. Kill him, now." Through the caboose door, left ajar, a metal rod glinted in the dim light.

Indoors, the children heard the commotion and ran to the windows, but their mother hurried them to the far corner of the room. They sat in the now darkened living room, the blinds pulled, the lamp extinguished. Frightened, they waited... "O God, our help in ages past. Our hope..."

Outside, Father talked quietly, firmly, trying to create calm and convince the drunken brawlers that it would be best if they went home. Somehow, he had to get them far away from his family. The men remained aggressive and totally confused about their whereabouts; it was impossible to reason with them. Finally, with heart pounding, he got into the caboose with the intent to take them back to the main road. "Go south. Just follow the road, turn left at the dead end. You should be home in an hour."

My Military Call

By Jack Driedger

Like all Canadian men during World War II, I received my call to report for military training after my eighteenth birthday.

My brother, who was 4 years my senior, enlisted in the Canadian Army under restricted enlistment as a conscientious objector. This meant that he would not be asked to bear arms when he was shipped overseas. Most men under restricted enlistment served in the medical corps.

I grew up in the Old Colony Mennonite village of Blumenheim, eight miles south of the town of Hague. Practically all of the lads in our area asked to be placed in

Would they let him out of the caboose at the corner? Would they leave? Anything could set their tempers flaring again. He shivered, but not with the cold. Suddenly, memories flashed through his mind.

He was a small child in far-off Ukraine, trembling in fear in the dark locked summer-kitchen, held prisoner with his brothers and his mother while his father and other elders of the village were being interrogated by marauding bandits. In the neighboring village all the men and boys had just recently been murdered. It was impossible not to think about that as a possibility. A shot rang out.

"O God, our help ..." They waited...

He was a little boy, held captive in the arms of a wild stranger, galloping away from his plundered village. Savage screams filled the air. Would he ever see his family again?

He shook his head, shivering again. Would that his children be spared such trauma!

Meanwhile, his family waited in the interminable darkness...and waited... Would the strangers return? Where was Dad?

All was still. Footsteps crunched on the snow; the door burst open. With a rush of cold air, Father was in the room. Alone!

Of course I don't know what Dad thought that day, but I imagine... and of course some of the stories that have been passed down about Russia have been changed in the telling and remembering. However, I tell the story of that night, mingling some of my brother's memories with mine—*A Night to Remember*.

alternative service, rather than report for military training.

My aforementioned astute brother advised me to apply for a postponement when I received my military call. There was always time to declare my conscientious objector status later, if need be. Conscientious objectors were not popular in those days, to put it mildly.

When I received my call I went to the family doctor in Hague, as requested, to see whether I was physically fit for the armed services. Due to my hearing impairment as a result of scarlet fever at age four, as well as having an

ingrown toenail, I was medically exempt from military training for the time being. I did not have to ask for postponement nor declare my conscientious objector status.

Since I was the last of my parent's children to leave home, my father and I operated the family farm. Farm labour was considered an essential service during wartime.

Some time after receiving my Certificate of Medical Examination, which stated that I was not required to report for military training, my father and I travelled to the town of Warman to be interviewed by a representative of the Federal Department of Agriculture.

A couple of months later, my father and I were working in the hayloft. My father went down to fetch a tool. He seemed to take forever. I kept working by myself while I waited for him. When he returned, he told me a federal government agent had called to ask a lot of questions about me.

I never was required to report for military training. I presume this was for two reasons: I was deemed not physically fit and I was performing an essential service on the family farm.

After Dr. Hamm of Hague had examined me, I received a Certificate of Medical Examination stating that I was "not required to report for military training for the time being."

DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR **MINISTÈRE DU TRAVAIL**
 NATIONAL SELECTIVE SERVICE, MOBILIZATION SECTION **SERVICE SÉLECTIF NATIONAL, DIVISION DE LA MOBILISATION**
CERTIFICATE OF MEDICAL EXAMINATION **CERTIFICAT D'EXAMEN MÉDICAL**

DATE: November 22, 1944.

REGISTRAR, Warman "M".
 National Selective Service,
 Mobilization Section,
 CLIMBIE BUILDING,
 125 SOUTH STREET,
 REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN.

WHEN WRITING
 ALWAYS GIVE
 THIS NUMBER → M-200606
 LE NUMÉRO S'ENSUIT

DOCKET NUMBER
 22 NOVEMBRE
 EN ÉCRITURE

REGISTRAR, Warman "M".
 Service sélectif national,
 Division de la mobilisation,
 EDIFICE CLIMBIE,
 125, RUE SOUTH,
 REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN.

**Mr. Jacob M. Driedger,
 OSLER, Saskatchewan**

This is to certify that the above named man has been medically examined pursuant to an Order under National Selective Service Mobilization Regulations, and that, because of the physical condition, he is not required to report for military training, for the time being.

The holder of this certificate shall retain the same in his possession and shall deliver it to the Registrar for cancellation when the Registrar so requires.

This certificate does not relieve the holder of his obligation to submit himself for medical re-examination if so required. The above regulations provide for a penalty of fine and/or imprisonment for any person guilty of transferring this certificate or of refusing to surrender it to the Registrar when requested.

Les présentes certifiées que le susnommé a été examiné médicalement à la suite d'un ordre émis en vertu des Réglements sur le service sélectif, national (mobilisation), et que, par suite de son état de santé, il n'est pas tenu de se présenter à l'entraînement militaire, pour le moment.

Le porteur de ce certificat devra le garder en sa possession et, sur demande du registraire, devra le remettre à ce dernier pour annulation.

Ce certificat ne dispense pas le porteur de se présenter à un nouvel examen médical devant son Commandant militaire. Les Réglements militaires plus haut indiqués stipulent qu'un condamné qui ne s'y conforme pas pourra être puni d'amende et/ou d'emprisonnement. Toute personne coupable d'avoir transféré ce certificat à une autre personne ou d'avoir refusé de le remettre au registraire à la demande de ce dernier.

A. MacNamara
 Deputy Minister and Director
 of National Selective Service.

A. MacNamara
 Sous-ministre et directeur
 du Service Séléctif National.

Certificate No.
 Certificate No.

OSLER, SASK., JUNE 1940.

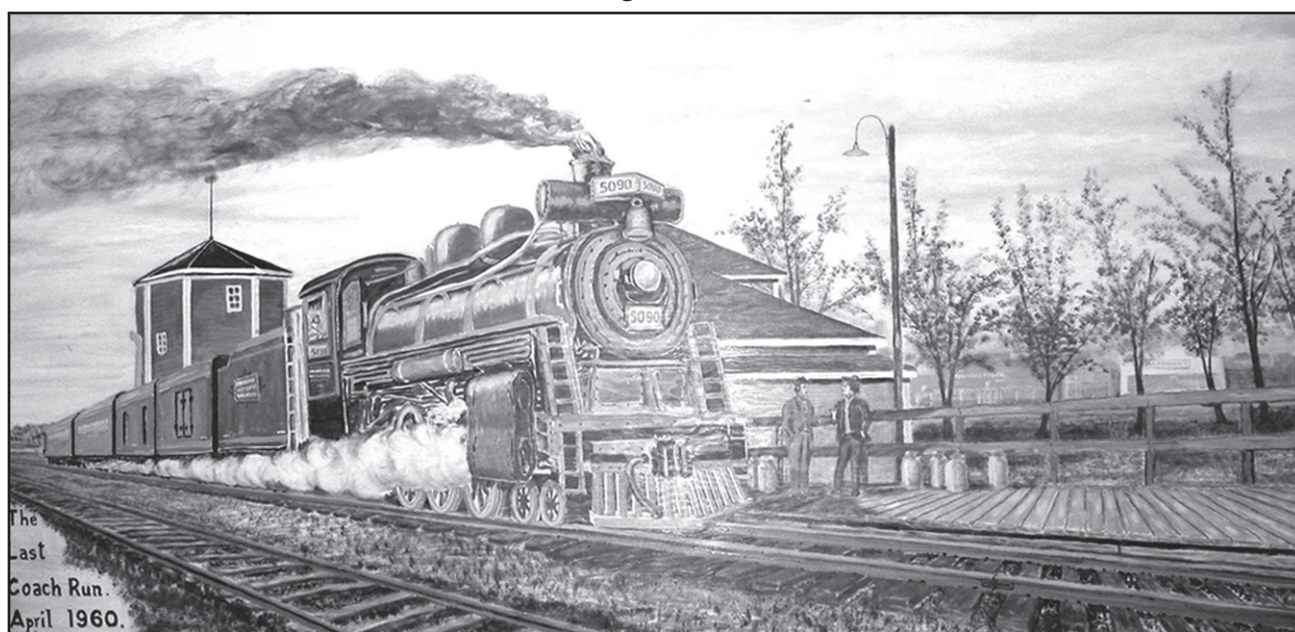
To Whom It May Concern:

This is to certify that the Bearer of this Note
Jacob Driedger of *Osler*, P.O.
 is a Mennonite, a member of "The Old Colony Mennonite Church
 of Neuanlage", Hague Saskatchewan.

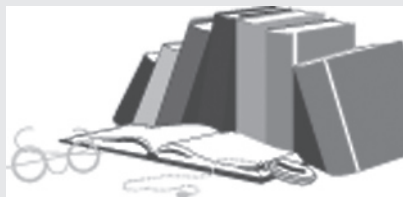
Bishop: *Johan M. Loeppky*

This note, signed by Bishop Johan M. Loeppky, indicates that I was "a member of the Old Colony Mennonite

From the Hague Museum



J. E. Friesen's painting of the train and water tower in Hague. Watch for the article on the Hague Museum in the next issue. dhe



Mostly About Books

by Victor G. Wiebe

Book Editor

Friesen, Victor Carl. *Forever Home—good old days on the farm*. Fifth House Ltd., A Fitzhenry and Whiteside Company, Calgary, Alberta, 2004. 228 pp. pb. 1995, Available at McNally Robinson. Reviewed by Pat Cooley.

Victor Carl Friesen's *Forever Home (good old days on the farm)* is a collection of reminiscences of his childhood spent on a farm near Rosthern, Saskatchewan during one of the most trying times for farmers—the Depression Years. To call this work merely a series of recollections does not describe it entirely. Granted, the book describes a number of vignettes through his boyhood eyes, but these vignettes are very logically arranged. First were the familiar places around the farm—the kitchen table (center of activity), the house (continually being added to), the root cellar (an underground cornucopia) and the hayloft (a young boy's haven) were all described in great detail. Then were descriptions of activities around the home, the farmyard chores as well as seasonal activities. The fall centered on harvest and the joys of a young boy enjoying his ringside seat to the threshing event. During the winter it was skating (even using his sister's skates) and cross-country skiing on homemade skis. Once he started school his world enlarged and included the activities of his one room school and the trips to town and to the river during the summer heat. His perception of the personalities of their cattle and the pride he took in his 'watering' chore marked him as a true 'cow' boy, not the movie kind.

His use of detailed descriptions and his ability to appeal to all the sense's makes the book come alive. For those who have lived his life—they need only to close their eyes and hearing his words brings back their childhoods. For those of us who were raised in an urban setting and in a time quite different from his—the world he describes takes on structure, and we can visualize that world of his boyhood. This ability qualifies Victor Carl Friesen as a social anthropologist.

A 'familiar essay' type style of writing makes the book easy to read. Short chapters allow the reader to pick up, or reread, any section without losing the gist of the book. The many literary references to the 'pastoral' beauty of the rural lifestyle confirm his love of the farm as well as his love of literature.

Much of what we read about the Depression Years highlights the tragedy of those years. Victor Friesen's book highlights the survival techniques of that time. Survival, in the terms of the book, meant enjoying and being thankful for what you had—more than enough food, ingenious minds to invent games and construct stilts and skis and warm invigorating family times around the table or organ. This book is a great tribute to his hard-working parents, especially his mother. Social history needs to have both views in order that future generations can properly understand the era. The vivid descriptions he uses, employing almost all of the senses in each scenario, wonderfully chronicles that time period.

Adolf Ens. *Becoming a National Church, A history of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada*. CMU Press, Winnipeg, Manitoba; 2004, 258 pp. Reviewed by Ed Schmidt.

Much of history is like standing in front of a mirror and looking to see what is in the background. Of necessity, to pick and choose is the prerogative of the committee and its presenter, but the events cannot be relived. This is a century of history—1903 to 1999—of the birthing process of a Canadian National Denomination. The compilation of maps, charts, tables, photos and accompanying footnotes reference the goal of this June 1, 2004 release by the Mennonite Church Canada and Canadian Mennonite University Press.

The perspective I bring, according to Ens, would have to be viewed as non-participant in the original formation of the Canadian Mennonite Conference. The reasons for

this observation are summarized in a later article separate from this book review.

In publishing this book Adolf Ens gives a good extraction from a lot of accumulated files. He begins by stating that the “basic scope and outline for this history was developed over a period of years by the History-Archives Committee of the Conference...” The scrupulous adherence to Canadian Publishers is evident in the Bibliography. Ens develops the first third of his book around a few primary persons, such as Peter Regier and David Toews in Saskatchewan and the brothers H. H. Ewert and Benjamin Ewert in Manitoba with some of their peers. He does not distract from recognizing that all four of these share a common Prussian root and, in addition, three of these four have a Kansas or Western District of the General Conference Mennonites Church support base. The different religious and cultural journeys these four brought with them from their experiences are not insignificant.

The process of forming, the new twenty-first century National Church will likely encompass a significant letting go of hopes that may have earlier been present for Mennonites in Saskatchewan and Alberta and decisions that may yet be ahead in British Columbia and Manitoba. The formation of the Mennonite Church of Eastern Canada has earlier modeled a process, which Ens engages in the last few chapters. The goal to formulate a National Denomination is in process and Adolf Ens has given it some definition that was not obvious before the release of this book.

The General Conference Mennonite Church was organized on the principle of congregational autonomy and lacked bishops or synods to lay down rules for multiple congregations. In this context, the General Conference Mennonite Church goal to call denominations into unity ultimately did not succeed in Canada. It would be easy to accept a perception that, in Saskatchewan, there was a Rosenorter “Gemeinde” and in Manitoba a fragment called the Bergthaler “Gemeinde”. It appears that Ens catches the significance of the “Gemeinde” structural perception brought by the historical-committee that this book uses to describe the origins of this new National denomination. When the writings of the General Conference Mennonite Church are reviewed, the concept of “Gemeinde” as an extended community of congregations under a unified Bishop was not present in its 1859–1860 formation and application.

The leadership in the formation of the two-province Central Canada Mennonite Conference in 1903 had the same Flemish roots but their journeys through the nineteenth century were quite different from the groups they were leading. The three denominations immigrating to Manitoba between 1874 and 1878—the Kleine Gemeinde, Bergthaler, and Old Colonists—were all of the “Flemish Ordnung” but had developed Russian roots. The Old Colonists did not have leadership among the twelve delegates in 1873. Adolf Ens relates how the presence of the Ewert brothers resulted in the Flemish Bergthaler denomination of Manitoba being split off from what became Sommerfelder, Reinlander, etc. Only a small portion of the Manitoba Mennonite denomination retained the name “Bergthal Gemeinde” and became part of the yet to form Canadian Mennonite Conference and at the same time for many years did not become a part of the General Conference Mennonite Church. At the time of formation, the “Rosenorter Gemeinde” had not yet been forced by the later Eigenheim withdrawal to give itself definition, but in its formative years joined the General Conference Mennonite Church. In chapter six Ens catches this differentiation.

In chapter seven he identifies Mennonites who have become participant in the Ontario formation of the Mennonite Church of Eastern Canada. There are histories of Mennonites in Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia. The closest Ens comes to recognizing a historical work in Saskatchewan is Walter Klassen’s work on the Eigenheim Church. This contains the decision of a congregation to not be a continuing member of the Rosenorter “Gemeinde”. That event resulted in Eigenheim being more similar to the other General Conference Mennonite Church congregations that were formed in Western Canada. Eventually all of the participating “Gemeinde” achieved these nuclear congregational definitions with many looking back and longing for the leadership of a multi-congregational Bishop.

It is noteworthy that there does not exist a comprehensive history of Mennonites or Anabaptists in Saskatchewan, Canada. In a larger context Frank Epp included some strands. A few other strands, such as the Krimmer Mennonite Brethren, which no longer exist, the Evangelical Mennonite Church, the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church and the Bergthaler “Gemeinde” and numerous congregational Church histories have been published but are not referenced. Currently, with the

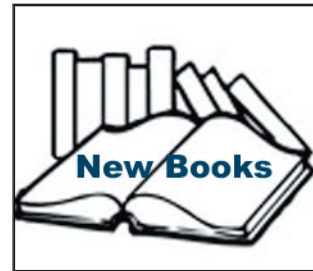
transitions from the close of the twentieth century, if a history is attempted, it will be a postmortem treatise; a new body, Mennonite Church Saskatchewan, has gone beyond anything that existed. There are now many other Mennonite or historically Anabaptist related expressions present in what was the North West Territories in 1903.

The political chaos, epidemics, war and revolutions rearranged the boundaries of Europe in the first half of the twentieth century. In the middle of this time, large migrations did come to Canada in two waves; these migrations were not shared with the United States. The first wave started in 1921 and the second peaked after the Second World War. Adolf Ens catches this significance. The Canadian Mennonite Conference was reconfigured into the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. This was the period of time when the American Home Missions resources from the General Conference Mennonite Church began to lose their significance. It also resulted in significant stress being applied to David Toews. The effects this migration had in the second half of the twentieth century brought to a close the organization known as the General Conference Mennonite Church by February of 2001. In Canada this will in many subtle ways facilitate the "letting go" of the original "Gemeinde" Flemish roots; it has given birth to a new denomination that defines its purpose as being "missional" in its goals and this by its very concept will birth something new. The goals may not be significantly different than the purpose of forming the General Conference of Mennonites of North America in 1860 but the expression will vary.

On pages 72 and following Ens traces the dynamics of why the Canadian Conference of Mennonites did not succeed in developing "a higher Bible school" or a College in Rosthern, Saskatchewan according to the Canadian Mennonite Conference resolution in 1945. Following a new Conference resolution in 1947 the Canadian Mennonite Bible College opened in the Bethel Mission Church basement in Winnipeg. Early in Canadian Mennonite Conference history the two provinces had two finishing schools in Gretna, Manitoba and Rosthern, Saskatchewan; various Bible Schools were added over the next half-century. Now, recognizing that the original resolution of 1945 was simply abandoned, Ens closes this section with the comment: "However, locating the school in Winnipeg marked the beginning of a shift of the Conference 'centre' from Saskatchewan to Manitoba." With the passage of David Toews in 1947, major transitions were bound to take place similar to those that occurred

when H. H. Ewert died in 1934.

In more recent years numerous congregations have chosen to not be a part of the newly emerging Mennonite Church Canada denomination. Time and process will clarify what will be the shape of this new national Mennonite denomination as it pursues its "vision and goals" from a centralized office in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Adolf Ens has faithfully laid out the foundation that the History-Archives Committee considered important. *



Flemming John and Michael Rowan. *Folk Furniture of Canada's Doukhobors, Hutterites, Mennonites and Ukrainians*. University of Alberta Press, Edmonton; November 2004; price \$60.00. Available University Bookstore.

With over 100 colour photographs, *Folk Furniture of Canada's Doukhobors, Hutterites, Mennonites and Ukrainians* offer a stunning visual record of the culture and values of these four ethno-cultural groups. The authors take an interpretive approach to the importance of folk furniture and its intimate ties to people's values and beliefs. Photographer James Chambers beautifully captures both representative and exceptional artifacts, from large furniture items such as storage chests, benches, cradles, and tables, to small kitchen items including spoons, breadboxes, and cookie cutters. (From U of A website)

Unger, Henry; Martens, Martha; Ens, Adolph. Eds., *Sommerfeld Gemeinde Buch: Registers of the Church at West Lynne, 1881-1935*. Fourth Volume of the West Reserve Historical Series. Winnipeg, Manitoba: Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, 2004. 530 pages, includes biographical references and index; ISBN 0-9736877-0-3; Suggested retail price \$30.00. Available from Mennonite Heritage Centre, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd. Winnipeg, MB, R3P 0M4 or e-mail: archives@mennonitechurch.ca

Note: This volume reproduces the first five volumes of the church registers that came to be known as the Gemeinde Buch of the Sommerfeld Mennonite Church. This involves Bergthal families that settled in the Eastern part of the West Reserve, many having relocated from the East Reserve after 1878. This would make a good Christmas gift for the genealogist in your family.

Janzen, (Koslowsky) Elsie; Janzen (Dyck) Helen, et al. Altona School District No.859, 1904–1963, *In Commemoration of our Pioneers*, self published, Saskatoon, 93 pp. Spiral binding, 2004.

Friesen Rudy, with Edith Elizabeth Friesen. *Building the Past Mennonite Architecture, Landscape and Settlements in Russia/Ukraine*. Raduga Publications, 2004; 752 pp, 1,100 photos and illustrations, bibliography and index. \$45.00. Available from McNally Robinson Store, 3130 8th St. East, Saskatoon.

Epp, Dick H. *From Between the Tracks*, Eppisod Publishing 2326 Cairns Ave., Saskatoon. Printing Service, University of Saskatchewan, pb. 161pp, 80 photos. November 2004. \$20.00. Available from Eppisod Publications, 2326 Cairns Ave., Saskatoon, SK. S7J 1V1.

Journal of Mennonite Studies

The Journal of Mennonite Studies has been published since 1983. Its first editor was Harry Loewen who was followed by Royden Loewen, the present editor. Associate Editor is Al Reimer and Book Review Editor is Abe J. Dueck and Kathleen Venema. Copy Editor is Peter Pauls. This publication is a Canadian interdisciplinary journal. The Chair of Mennonite Studies at the University of Winnipeg publishes it annually. Every person interested in Mennonite history should read this journal. Subscriptions for individuals is \$20.00 per year and may be obtained from Dr. Royden Loewen, Journal of Mennonite Studies, The University of Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2E9 or roy.loewen@uwinnipeg.ca

The Government of Saskatchewan Advisory Council's vision:

"To encourage and assist the people of Saskatchewan to participate in celebrating Saskatchewan by commemorating our past, recognizing our present, and nurturing hope and opportunity for our future."

MHSS Cemetery Website by Al Mierau

Saskatchewan Mennonite Cemetery Finding Aid:
<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~skmhss/>

From January 01, 2004 to December 06, 2004 there were:

9,697 new visitors and they viewed a total of 41,809 pages on the cemetery site.

New Visitor (definition): A visitor that comes to the site for the first time ever. All subsequent visits or page views by the visitor are not considered an all-time unique visit.

The number of visitors was directed to our site by the following search engines:

www.google.com	1,290
www.google.ca	1,220
www.saskgenealogy.com	1,251
www.mennonites.ca	367
www.search.msn.com	352
Bookmark or direct	871
Other	4,346

The "other" category is comprised of various search engines not mentioned above, as well as links to many other sites that are involved in genealogy. I notice that the Google engine in Australia, United Kingdom, and some other countries, range from 30 to 48 entries for each of those countries. The Google engine for Germany brought in 269 new visitors.

To locate an individual obituary from the internet simply go to: <http://www.legacy.com/legacy.asp>

When the page shows up type in the last name of the deceased in the yellow search box. The obituary will appear.

A Dowry?

My Mother refused to marry Father until she had her *Reise Schuld* paid and had purchased a sewing machine. Have you a story to tell? Remember it is Saskatchewan's 100th birthday!

We want to collect these stories for future generations. Send yours to the Editor, dhe.



THE HEPBURN MUSEUM OF WHEAT

The information for this article was compiled from information received from Victor Peters, Curator of the Hepburn Museum of Wheat, and various other sources. dhe



The artist, R. Andres, has painted the Hepburn elevators the way they were during the 1940s when elevators were still needed. He has painted them appropriately on a plowshare that once was used to till the soil to grow the wheat.

Grain elevators—stark yet colourful signposts of the prairies—have become the most obvious and most admired symbol of western Canada. As the only structures to make their presence felt on the endless plains, they are the one example of architecture that is instantly recognized as western and as a visual metaphor for the backbone of the prairies economy—grain farming. —Brock V. Silversides in the introduction to Hans Dommasch's book *Prairie Giants*.

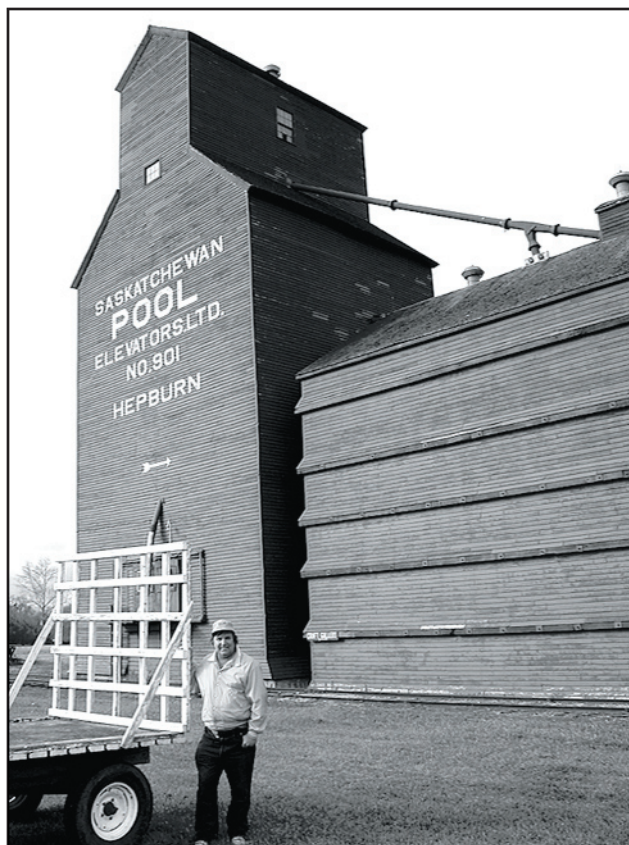
The wood clad elevator that served the community of Hepburn for 73 years is now the *Hepburn Museum of Wheat*. It was built in 1928 by C.H. Nelson, contractor for the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool at a cost of \$16,423.80. The dimensions are 32 feet by 33 feet and towers to a height of 78 feet 6 inches. The great height of the elevator facilitated the movement of grain by gravity, which is the cheapest form of power. The 2 x 4s, the 2 x 6s and the large beams that hold the building together came from British Columbia. The elevator had a capacity of 35,000 bushels of wheat, which was stored until grain cars were available.

Every Pool elevator was identified by a number, which kept a tally on the number of elevators the company had constructed. In 1925 the Pool built their first elevator and by 1928 they completed the Hepburn elevator, which bore

the number 901 which meant, that in Saskatchewan, the Pool had built 901 elevators. It reminds all of us of the tremendous faith the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool must have had in farmers. These giant sentinels were a sign of progress and prosperity in the Canadian West. In its best years, Hepburn had four elevators. We must remember that other private companies also built elevators during this time. In 1938 elevator growth in Saskatchewan peaked at a total of 5,758 licensed elevators.

Today almost all of the elevators have been taken down. The Hepburn elevator now stands as a sole reminder of our agricultural past. It can be seen from afar and still leads the visitor to the town. Some compare the elevators to be like the lamp in the window to guide the wanderer home. Those who were able to buy a Robert Hurley painting will be able to cherish the prairie scene, with its elevators dominating the landscape.

The community of Hepburn began when the Mennonites first arrived in 1894. There was a major influx in 1901 and another influx in the 1920s when the Mennonites came from Russia after the revolution. Those who settled east of Highway #12 came mainly from Manitoba or from Russia as part of the Hague-Osler Mennonite Reserve. The ones who settled in the west side came mainly from Minnesota, South Dakota and Nebraska until the influx from Russia came in 1920s. These families were the pioneers who became part of the early establishment of the Hepburn community.



Victor Peters, Curator for the Hepburn Museum of Wheat, stands by the hay rack in front of the elevator-museum.

They made their living from farming directly or as business people associated with farming. The museum tells much of their story.

Credit must go to Victor Peters, president and curator of the *Hepburn Museum of Wheat*, and to his board and community supporters for their foresight in saving this last landmark and seeing the value in preserving it. The seed for this idea of using the elevator as a museum came from a remark made by a local teacher when he mentioned that the children were unfamiliar with the history of agriculture in their own community. This idea germinated when they used it to convince the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool and the CNR officials to help them make a museum out of their elevator and land respectively.

The Hepburn committee knew that the Pool had donated an elevator to the Western Development Museum in North Battleford, so why not donate one to Hepburn for a museum? They approached the Pool to donate the elevator and the money it would have taken to demolish the elevator to help with the upgrading of the landmark. The Pool agreed and also gave them some videos on grain.

They then contacted the CNR for the land and two grain boxcars. The CNR agreed to sell them the land and the two boxcars for \$500.00. However, they removed the switch from the track, which meant that the two boxcars could not be brought here by rail. The committee is still pondering how to get the boxcars back to Hepburn.

On July 31, 1991 the community organized a closing ceremony for the elevator, which also marked the beginning of the *Hepburn Museum of Wheat*. About 375 people from the town and community volunteered to help. Twelve were elected to the Board to oversee the development of the museum.

In 1994, when Hepburn celebrated its 75th Anniversary Homecoming, they combined this with the official opening of the museum. It was a real success story. During the years of preparation articles and machinery were donated and put into place. The interior was cleaned and broad staircases were built to the grain bins on several levels which are now devoted to the various displays of the wheat story, such as grading, cleaning, etc. The pool office in the little building, attached to the elevator by a boardwalk, is still very much like it was when it was in active use. The annex has been developed into a Visitor Centre. One room has been dedicated as the local Craft Gallery.

To give the readers an idea of what they will see when visiting the museum a few things are listed here: a complete display of Saskatchewan Wheat Pool calendars; railroad memorabilia; farming tools used in handling and grading wheat; a complete grain processing procedure; an old Russian straw fork, a cleaning mill for removing wild oats from the grain and much, much more.

On the grounds they are renovating the old Marion School into its original condition complete with desks and equipment. They have a windmill and an array of farm machinery from the different eras. Each year they seed a plot to wheat, which is then used for demonstration on the Threshing Day.

In short, the museum tells the story of wheat from seed to flour, introducing all the steps from breaking the soil to grading, milling and the way the Wheat Board sells the grain to the rest of the world. We are all familiar with the term that was given to the prairie communities with their array of elevators as being the *breadbasket of the world*.

Visitors will be delighted to see the insides of a grain elevator and learn how the grain that the farmer brought to the elevator was looked after. The old grading equipment will be an eye-opener. Our thanks to people in the Hepburn



The tract of land around the elevator is being used for machinery display and threshing. The rural school is already on the site and other projects are to follow.

area who had the vision to save this rich heritage that is so rapidly changing and getting lost and forgotten.

The greatest challenge the museum faces is getting volunteers to help man the museum and to set up displays etc. Volunteers are in strong demand. Individuals who have items, photographs, etc. that tell the story of wheat should be in contact with Victor Peters. They need help from all of us to preserve this important part of our history for future generations. Victor is an active member of the MHSS.

The museum is closed during the winter months but is open from Victoria Day to Labour Day on Saturdays only, but it will open for groups by appointment on other days. For more information write to the Museum of Wheat, P.O. Box 69, Hepburn, Saskatchewan, S0K 1Z0. Telephone —306-947-2026

As I have witnessed the beauty and the grandeur of country elevators, so have I witnessed their destruction. Miles and miles of railroad tracks have been abandoned. The lifeline of the elevators on these lines has been stolen away; they have been rendered purposeless. Chunky

concrete elevators are replacing some of the traditional structures on active lines with enormous appetites for storing large quantities of grain. As each slender prairie giant is pulled to the ground in the midst of splintering wood and clouds of dust, it marks the end of an era.—Hans Dommasch, *Prairies Giants*.



Die Drei Kleine Piggen

By Author Unknown

Editor's Note: This story was contributed by Dennis J. Fisher. He writes as follows: "On Sept. 19, 2004, Jeannie and I attended the 80th birthday celebration of John Doell. Loving family members presented a programme that was informative and entertaining. The story of *Die Drei Kleine Piggen* was narrated by John's son, Leonard Doell and Christopher Cox. Leonard does not know the author of this hilarious version, so I too cannot offer proper credit. Any one who speaks or has some knowledge of High German will surely enjoy reading this version.

Esins upon a Zeit da waren drei kleine Piggen. Each decided to go sein own way und build sein own Haus. Denn sie waren so much like many Brüder nicht so keen on living together. Der erste kleine Pigge built sein Haus von Stroh, because er war ein lazy Pigge und not too hept on der work. Er belongs to ein labour union and worked nicht mehr than one needs to, and viel times drew unemployment.

Der sweite kleine Pigge build his Haus von sticken because er worked near a forest und bringt each abend sein station wagon full mit holz und sticken. Sein Haus war besser denn sein Bruder, und er hat also running Wasser.

Der dritte kleine Pigge war ein guter worker. Er worked long und hart mit sein Haus, denn es war constructed als by an contractor, only der dritte kleine Pigge did all die Arbeit himself. Er worked den ganzen Tag und also into das Abend at least zu zwölf Uhr midnight. Sein Haus war constructed von brick, und hat hot running Wasser, Luft conditioning, TV und die latest modern conveniences und equipment, wenn er hat sein Haus gebuildt. Seine Brüder lachten und lachten, und woneren why er nimmit so viel time und work sein Haus zu builden.

Sie waren lang finished and spielten golf, und gehen on dates mit ihren girlfriends. Aber der dritte kleine Pigge warned them. "It ist nicht funny!" When der grosze, boese Wolf kommen, er will ihren Haus down blowen"

Es war nicht zu viel Zeit later wenn der grosze, boese Wolf came zu das Haus der ersten kleine Pigge. Der Wolf pulled up mit seinen Volkswagon, because Deutsche Wolfs always come mit Deutsche cars. He knocked on die Tuer des Haus den kleine Pigge, that vom stroh gebuildet war, und sagt: "Ich bin der grosze, boese Wolf, der GROSZE boese Wolf. Open die Tuer, or I will deinen Haus down blowen!"

Der kleine Pigge war sehr scared und weiss nicht what er should tuhen. Aber er decided to bluff und sagt: "Nicht bei das Harr meine chinny-chin-chin, das geshaved ist mein Sunbeam electric razor!"

Wenn der Pigge opened nicht die Tuer, der grosze, boese Wolf, huffed und puffed (aber auf Deutsch) und er down blowed das stroh Haus that to dem lazy Pigge belonged. Aber der lazy Pigge hat fast tracks gemacht und went schnell to das Haus seinen Zweiten Bruder.

They each have their 'hello' gesagt (auf Deutsch) wenn der zweite Bruder asked why er so schnell gekommen because er nimmer before so schnell gerunt. Die erste Pigge explained das der GROSZE, BOESE Wolf sein Haus hat down geblowen. Down geblowen with one deutsches huff und puff.

Not so lang später kommt ein Volkswagen zu das Haus, das von sticks und holtz gebuildet war.

"Ach Mensch!" said the zwei kleine Piggen, es ist der GROSZE, BOESE Wolf. Sie warren so scared their hair hatte gray geturned, und ihre Schwänzen or tails, were nicht mehr curled, but straight als ein broom handle. Und der Wolf sagt: "Ich bin der grosze, boese Wolf, der GROSZE, BOESE WOLF! Open die Tuer or I will deinen Haus down blowen. Die Piggen thought sie warren all right und der zweite Pigge sagt: "Nicht bei das haar mein chiny-chin-chin that is geshaved mit mein chromium blade Shick injector razor!"

Der grosze, boese Wolf schnorted. "I will huff and puff und blow down your Haus" He blowed und blowed und die Sticken flew loose von der siding. Die kleinen Piggen felt the heisen wind von dem grosze, boese Wolf against their cheeks und they speed wie crazy to das Haus that belonged zu dem dritten Bruder. Before haben sie loud gelacht because der Bruder immer worked, und sie spielen golf und dated girls. Aber now gehen sie so fast wie their legs gerunnen can zu der Haus ihren Bruder. Der dritte Bruder war in sein Brick Haus, tut schlafen und schnoren like only ein Pigge can.

Er war auf gewaked from der pounding on die Tuer. He opened the Tuer und laszt die gescared Brüder in. Und chust in time. Hier komt der Volkswagen mit dem gro

Drei Piggen cont'd on p. 31

BOOKS FOR SALE

Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan Inc.

- *1880 Village Census of the Mennonite West Reserve*, John Dyck and William Harms eds., pbk, 500 pgs. Mennonite families living in the West Reserve in 1880, cross references to other sources, photographs. **\$30.00**
- *Bergthal Gemeinde Buch*, John Dyck ed., pbk., 439 pgs. Contains the Bergthal Colony church register 1843-1876, Quebec ship passenger lists 1874-1880 and 1881 Federal census data for East & West Reserves. **\$25.00**
- *Church, Family and Village – Essays on Mennonite Life on the West Reserve*, Adolf Ens, Jacob E. Peters, Otto Hamm, eds., pbk, 310 pgs. Includes articles on the Sommerfelder Gemeinde. **\$20.00**
- *David Toews, A Brief Sketch of His Life & Work 1870 – 1947*, Helene Sarah Friesen, booklet, 21 pgs. **\$3.00**
- *David Toews Was Here*, Helmut Harder, 2002, pbk., 360 pgs. A biography of David Toews. **\$24.00**
- *Holding Forth the Word of Life*, John D. Friesen, pbk., 1989, outlines the life and ministry of John D. and Mary Friesen. John D. Friesen served as moderator and vice-moderator of the EMMC for 18 years. **\$2.00**
- *Mennonite Historical Atlas*, William Schroeder, Helmut Harder, Second Edition, pbk., 183 pgs. **\$25.00**
- *Mennonite Homesteaders on the Hague-Osler Reserve*, Leonard Doell, ed., hdc, 536 pgs. Homestead records of the Hague-Osler Reserve and 1901 Canadian census records for that area. Cross referenced to the Bergthal Gemeinde Buch and the Reinlaender Gemeinde Buch. **\$45.00**
- *Sommerfeld Gemeinde Buch, Registers of the Church at West Lynne 1881-1935*, edited by Henry Unger, Martha Martens and Adolf Ens, pbk, 530 pgs., 2004, Vol. IV of the West Reserve Historical Series. Reproduces the first five volumes of the church registers of the Sommerfeld Mennonite Church of Manitoba. **\$30.00**
- *Writing Your Memoirs*, Esther Patkau, booklet, 21 pgs. A paper presented at a workshop for Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan, 1997. **\$3.00**

Books are available from

Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan Inc. Rm. 900, 110 LaRonge Rd., Saskatoon, SK. S7K 7H8

You will be invoiced - shipping and handling costs are extra.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY, SASKATCHEWAN
CELEBRATE THE CENTENNIAL—1905-2005





The Family Tree

Genealogy Editor—Rosemary Slater

Preserving your family history for future generations

DOING GENEALOGY

Based on a talk given April 15, 2000 by Elaine Wiebe

During my school days history was not my favourite subject. Yet there are a few names I do remember about the Reformation, Martin Luther and Zwingli to name a few. In 1969, when I went to Switzerland to study French, I took opportunities to travel around the country and while in Zurich, I saw Zwingli's church with all the holes in it. We were told about the cruel suffering that the Anabaptist people back in the 1500 and 1600's had endured at the hands of the State Church. At that time, I did not comprehend that our Mennonite faith and history took root during this time. But now in my mind this church has become my point of contact with the Anabaptist people and their struggle to uphold their faith in God. This has set the tone for me to not just document the stories of the past but to seek out the spiritual component of our Mennonite people as well. Why did our people take the stand they did on non-violence? Why were they more interested in restoring the church than in reformation? What did the congregational view of church authority mean to them? What did they base church discipline on? Why did they insist on separation of church and state? Reading up on the early history of our heritage helps so much to understand our own family history.

I am blessed with a heritage coming from the Molotschna Colony on my mother's side (Thiessen) and from the Old Colony Mennonites on my father's side (Wiebe). When I first started working on the Wiebe family in January, 1997, I thought we were another insignificant family with very little of interest to write about. However, as my cousin's wife, Gladys, and I progressed in our search, surprises kept popping up! She found out that she and her husband were

fourth cousins. On a visit to the Mennonite Heritage Centre in Winnipeg, Gladys and her husband, Don, found a book in the bookstore on Abraham Wiebe who turned out to be a brother to our great-great-grandfather. In this book was earlier history we did not know. At the Mennonite Heritage Centre archives, John Dyck helped in many ways with information gathering and support for the task at hand. Our biggest surprise happened in the library down town when we learned that the Aeltester Johann Wiebe, whose name you see in the front of some Catechism Books, was another brother to our great-great-grandfather! It was this Aeltester Wiebe who led all of the Fuerstenland Colony and some Chortitzer Colony Mennonites to Manitoba in 1875. In July 2000, I was grateful to be involved in a memorial service at Reinland, Manitoba commemorating Aeltester Wiebe and those of his church.

As you can see, one thing leads to another. Back in 1997, while gathering information for the Wiebe book, we were introduced to total strangers who were relatives—who knew a lot of oral history. Sometimes we were almost overwhelmed with leads and stories. We kept on WRITING down everything we were told, and ASKING questions and more questions. The result was a family book!! That was in 1998 and I naively thought that was the end of the Wiebe story. NO! Another family reunion took place in Otterburne, Manitoba in 2000 I now have over 14,000 names of our Wiebe family on my Genealogy program and another relative has an additional 6,000. One Wiebe sibling went to Mexico and his descendants still need to be traced. The project continues!

On March 4th, 2000, I attended the Genealogy Day in Steinbach, Manitoba to learn more about how and where to find documents that contained valuable information on my projects. I came back eager to pass on what I had learned.

How many have already done a family history book or something similar? How many want to start writing?

How does one get started? Start where you are at—your point of interest. Remember there is no right or wrong way to do your book—just YOUR way!

Ask yourself these four questions:

1. Why are you writing? To keep stories alive. The answer to this question may be what you will need to keep you going during a discouraging time in your writing.
2. Who are your readers? Most likely it will be your family but keep in mind the various archives and libraries which will want a copy.
3. What is your focus? Most likely on the family with stories and pictures. Or maybe you will focus on early history. Maybe you have a theme you wish to carry throughout your writing. Decide what you want to accomplish.
4. How do you start? Well, with what is on your heart – with what you REALLY want to say.

Write in small sketches of about fifteen minutes. Take a break and then come back to it. Write like you talk. This adds a personal touch that completes the picture you are trying to portray. Start filling in details with the following questions – WHO, WHEN, WHERE, WHAT, WHY, HOW, AND HOW MUCH. Now add some life – movement (walking, talking), physical descriptions of people, smells, thoughts and feelings. Don't forget to select appropriate pictures for your project. Put this all together and you will have a book that will be invaluable to future generations.

While you are putting your thoughts down in writing, start reading up on the background history. Ask Leonard Doell or Victor Wiebe what are good books to read to gain a better understanding about your particular interest.

A very important point to remember is to document your sources. By that I mean, if you are taking a piece of information from another book to complete or fill in your family history, mention the author and the name of the book.

The archives are our most valuable source of information. Here at our local archives, the archivist and volunteer helpers will assist you in any way they can.

Sources that are full of data for family stories are:

1. **Homestead records.** Just buy Leonard Doell's book for

records of the Hague-Osler area. This will save you time and effort. For locations outside that area, the Saskatchewan Archives have the records. Once you get the land description, you can go to the Land Titles office and get a copy of the title for a price. Here is more valuable information.

2. **Old Newspapers.** The *Mennonitische Rundschau* started in 1878–1974, is full of pure genealogy. Check with Victor Wiebe here in our Archives for access to them.

3. **Immigration Records and Ship Lists.** Check *Brothers in Deed to Brothers in Need* by Clarence Hiebert for ship lists for both the USA and Canadian arrivals.

4. **Church Records.** The Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society has printed the *Reinlander Gemeinde and Bergthaler Gemeinde* books. Mexican Church records and the Chortitzer Church records are at the Mennonite Heritage Centre in Winnipeg. Mennonite Brethren church records are in the Mennonite Brethren Archives in Winnipeg and the Kleine Gemeinde records are in the book Peter Toews Genealogy Register.

5. **Census Records for Manitoba.** The 1881 census is in the Bergthal Gemeinde Buch. The 1891 census is in the 1880 Village Census of the West Reserve. Census records for Saskatchewan are at the Saskatchewan Archives on the University campus.

6. **Russian Period.** Peter Rempel's book *Mennonite Migration to Russia 1788–1828* is full of archival documents such as the Russian lists of 1797, which lists the head of households for the Chortitza Colony in Russia. It also lists the assistance given to those migrating to the Molotschna Colony. Another list is the 1817 list of visas issued in Danzig to those moving to Russia during this time period.

We need to talk to people to learn more about our background. One effective way is through interviews—recording recollections of an individual.

What types of interviews are there?

Autobiographical—divide life into themes, childhood, school, marriage, work, retirement.

Topical—a special group (sewing circle), an event (formation of a new church group), social phenomenon (child rearing).

Process—focus on change or development in a person, place, industry or institution. An example would be the changes in church services, music, language, church

schools.

Unstructured—when chronological order is not necessary. Episodic events chosen by the interviewee. An example here would be the weather, farming methods, etc.

What skills are required?

1. Know the major facts and themes before you start. Know what gaps and questions exist.
2. Discuss the project with the interviewee. Establish rapport. Let them know what will happen.
3. Be a student yourself. Listen carefully, and use a co-operative approach.
4. Know your equipment – tape recorder, tapes, microphone and power source.
5. Know your location – carpeted floors, draperies and bookcases absorb sound.
6. Be prepared – check equipment and sound before doing the interview.
7. Talk to the interviewee about signing an agreement regarding oral history interviews to be donated to the Archives for future use.

How do you start the interview?

1. Voice label the tape by saying “This is the first tape of an interview with recorded on at The interviewer is
2. Getting people to talk. Be at ease and start with easy topics. Have question topics prepared. Ask brief, open-ended questions. Rather than asking, “Did you go to Sunday School?” ask, “What do you remember about Sunday School?” Start your questions with: “Tell me about....., Describe.....What do you remember about....., Explain.....”

What is the suggested length and number of interviews?

It's good to stop every 30 minutes or so to catch your breath. Each session of about one to two hours is usually long enough. It is preferable to have only one interviewee at a time. When ending the interview, ask an overview question. Ask if the interviewee wants to add anything.

After the interview, transcribe the tapes and provide a sum-

A Peek at Winkler Heritage Society Meeting

By Rosemary Slater

Thursday, November 4, 2004, approximately 270 people gathered at the Grace Mennonite Church in Winkler, Manitoba to enjoy the Winkler Heritage Society's Second Heritage Memorial Banquet.

After supper, Dr. Hans Werner updated the group on the progress being made on Winkler's 2006 Centennial History Book. Harvey P. Friesen then read a list of people from the Winkler area who had served in the World Wars, followed by a list of people who had served as conscientious objectors in World War II. Former COs not on the list were then asked to stand and outnumbered those listed.

The first speaker of the evening was Conrad Stoesz, archivist at the Mennonite Heritage Centre in Winnipeg. Conrad's talk was illustrated with pages from the website found at www.alternativeservice.ca, which consists of 750 pages of material dealing with conscientious objectors in Canada. In 1996, when Conrad looked for a list of conscientious objectors in the Second World War, he found no such record existed. Approximately 11,000 people registered as COs in World War II, 4,400 of them Mennonites, but so far Conrad's list includes only 1,500.

Conrad is asking people to check the website and to submit names of conscientious objectors who are not presently listed. For Saskatchewan information, Conrad is asking people to forward the information to Dick Epp, Editor of the Saskatchewan Mennonite Historian, who can then forward the information to Conrad Stoesz in Winnipeg.

Dr. David Schroeder, Professor Emeritus at Canadian Mennonite University, who was himself a conscientious objector from October, 1943 until his release in June, 1946, continued the story of the COs from a more personal point of view.

Although David Toews in 1939 wrote to Prime Minister Mackenzie King, verifying the right of Mennonites to conscientious objection, this right was later restricted as applying only to Mennonites who had come to Canada in the 1870s. A further qualification required every conscientious objector to appear before a judge to defend his stance, which the judge might or might not accept.

Those whose conscientious objection status was accepted were sent to work at logging camps, mental hospitals, farms,

parks or building roads. Riding Mountain National Park was largely built by CO labour. COs planted 1.75 billion dollars worth of trees, 500 to 800 trees per day for each CO. For this, workers received \$.50 per day and \$10 to \$15 a month went to the Red Cross.

COs were introduced to a national and international world and came home as changed people with a sense of responsibility to the needy of the world. Voluntary service as an

institution (VS), programs for the care of the mentally handicapped, and the formation of Mennonite colleges, CMBC and MBBI, in the forties, came out of the CO experience. Active teaching of the peace position and an awareness of the need to work through the implications of Christian faith for every day living were a result of the challenges faced by Mennonites during the years of the Second World War. Dr. Schroeder concluded by stating that our peace position remains a challenge for today.

Drei Piggen continued from p. 26

sze, boese Wolf, mit tires screeching. Er kommt to der Tuer und bellert: "Open die Tuer, open die Tuer or ich will your Haus down geblowen!" Und der dritte Pigge, with confidence, sagt: Go ahead, just try!" Die zweite kleine Piggen whose Haus down geblowen war, were so scared ihren ears standet straight up. Sie kennen hardly keep from squealing out.

Der Wolf bellert louder und sagt: "I will huff und puff und you will open die Tuer!" Der dritte Pigge answered "Nicht bei das Haar mein chinny-chin-chin. Der grosze, boese Wolf huffed und puffed until sein face red war. But das brick Haus was too strong gebuildet. Der Wolf, however, war nicht ein quitter. Er war sehr hungry for fat Piggen. Er decided down the chimney zu kommen. Die drei Piggen waren ready. They have ein grossen kettle mit boiling Wasser unter die chimney, chust in case der grosze, boese Wolf got Santa Klaus idea.

Wenn er down der chimney gekommen ist, ist er into das Wasser gesplashed und die drei Piggen waren nicht more gebothered by der grosze, boese Wolf.

TyphusTyphoid Confusion

When we read about the typhus fever epidemic in European Russia during 1917-1921, often we mistakenly associate our version of typhoid fever. The article below explains the difference. —Helga Loewen, Saskatoon

Typhoid Fever

An infectious disease contracted by eating food or drinking water contaminated with salmonella bacteria. In areas of poor sanitation it is usually spread by contamination of drinking water with sewage or by flies carrying bacteria from infected faeces to food.

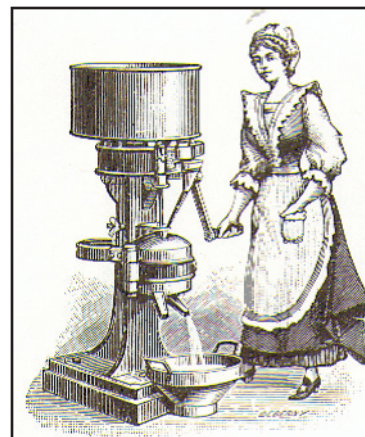
Typhus Fever

Entirely different from Typhoid fever. The causative organism of Typhus is carried by lice. It is particularly likely to occur in conditions where a number of people are herded together, wearing the same clothe for prolonged periods and lacking the means of ensuring body cleanliness. There is more than one form of the disease, but the type (also called epidemic or true typhus) characterized by high fever, delirium, crisis and blotchy rash is very dangerous.

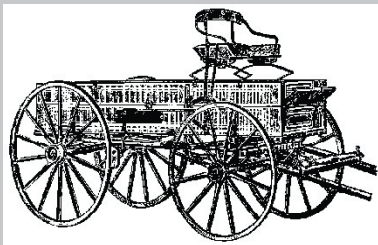
After the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the Civil War that followed, famine and disease devastated almost the whole country. Approximately twenty million cases of true typhus occurred in European Russia alone between 1917-1921, with almost three million deaths.[∞]

Hoemsen, Jacob. *Jacob's Journal: The Russia Years*, 1995. Published by: Margarita Hoemsen Silver, Dryden, Ontario.

Do You Remember?



Gone are the days! Perhaps some of our readers will have some flashbacks about this scene. If you have a story to tell, write us.



From the Past

The best of prophets of the future is the past...Byron

Do You Remember the Depression Years?

I recall that Mr. Abram Fehr, the father, dug wells during the early forties. He lowered a charge of dynamite into the well he was digging. Hearing no detonation, he decided to pull up the bundle of dynamite to investigate. When the dynamite was out of the well and suspended at about eye level, he reached out to take it. It exploded and took off his forearm. Had it not blown off his forearm, speculation was that he would have been killed instantly. I remember son Herman working at our neighbors. He gave all the earnings to his family. His allowance was 40 cents a month. I recall him phoning his father along the fence line to ask for a raise to 75 cents. He was refused. This was during the forties. Another story from an acquaintance of the family has it that when the Fehrs were delayed in Edmonton at the time this famous picture was taken, the rear axle on the car was broken. Mr. Fehr managed to get permission to use a forge to weld the axle. Those were the days when welding was done by hand. When they saw what an expert welder he was, Mr. Fehr was offered a job immediately. He turned it down, likely because he did not want to raise his family in Edmonton.

—Jack Driedger, Saskatoon.



Abram and Sara Fehr, with their seven children, became the Depression's poster family. Photo courtesy Jack Driedger.

An Old Farm Well



Photo by dhepp

An Old Well Story?

Have you a memory of an old well? Remember digging it? Putting your butter down the well? How you found water with a forked willow? The day the well ran dry? The morning a cow fell in? Send your stories and photos to the editor, Let's remember the pioneers who depended on water in the early years.dhe