



## ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the society will take place on Saturday, 3 April, 1993 at 7:00 p.m. It will be held in the chapel of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg. Please note the change in date.

The agenda for the business portion of the evening will include reports, election of new directors, and revisions to the society's constitution. The revisions to the constitution are in two areas. First, the members of the executive committee have been revised. The position of chairman and second vice-president have been dropped and replaced by a member-at-large. Secondly, the committee structure has been changed. The standing committees have been reduced to three from six. The three standing committees will be research, scholarship, and publications; membership and publicity; and genealogy. The executive committee will also be the finance committee. All other committees will be special committees. All committees will be subject to review; the standing committees every five years and the special committees every three years.

The other portion of the evening will be a discussion of the contents of the Odessa collection received by the MHC Archives. It is a collection of material mostly originating in the Molotschna colony. This will be in conjunction with an exhibit of this collection which opens on the 1 April at the Mennonite Heritage Centre. That is why this year it was decided to have the annual meeting in the spring instead of the usual winter date. It will give opportunity to not only discuss the contents of the collection but also to see reproductions of part of it. The speaker will be our society member, George K. Epp. This will be followed by light refreshments.

This is also the time of year to renew your membership and to make a donation to the activities of the society.

This is your invitation to attend the

annual meeting of the society and to renew your membership. Thank you for your interest and support in the society.

## Report by Research, Scholarship, and Publications Committee

This committee continues to oversee the translation and publication of the Echo Verlag series. This year two more books in the series were published: H. Goerz's *Mennonite Settlements in Crimea* translated by John B. Toews; and H. Sawatzky's *The Templars* translated by Victor Doerksen. Two others have been translated and will be published in the near future. They are H. Goerz's *Molotschna Settlement*, the most substantial book in this series, and Bartsch's *Our Trek to Central Asia*.

This committee continues to represent the society by appointing a member to the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Mennonite Studies*. To date ten volumes have been published.

Other projects are being considered. The one receiving active consideration is a history of the Mennonites in Manitoba. We welcome members comments and ideas on projects for this committee's consideration.

## Genealogy Committee

This committee sponsored a seminar to discuss the possible new primary sources to be made available in 1993 from the Odessa (Ukraine) and St. Petersburg (Russia) Archives. Of greatest interest to genealogists will be the census records and annual village reports. These will include information about individuals from which genealogical data might be ascertained.

The interest in genealogical research seems to be growing. Some reasons for this might be the greater accessibility of sources, both primary and secondary. Also, the greater access to computer technology makes compilation of data and distribution of that data much more feasible. It is a continuing hope that this interest can be sustained, and

more, grow to the point where more information can be shared and sources can become even more accessible.

## Genealogy software

In the *Mennonite Historian* there is a short note about the availability of genealogy software. It is recommended for use by both the Mennonite archival centres in Manitoba. Therefore, it should be given every consideration for individual use. Also, one should check the central registry to see if data there can be of some value.

The more individuals who use it and deposit their data in the central registry, the greater will be the benefit to all concerned. The potential is great. It is estimated that Mennonites of Dutch-Prussian-Russian background number from the 16th century to date about 5,000,000. It is going to take a lot of individual efforts to compile data on all those people. Think of it in another way. If the average ancestor chart in your ancestry goes back eight generations, then you have 254 ancestors. Therefore, if you are doing descendants of one in the first of these generations you could be in over 200 different descendant lines. So if you do just one of these or even four of these, it is still going to take a lot of other efforts to complete the picture. But, your data, just of yourself, entered in a central registry might be useful for over 200 descendant research projects. So, the benefits are many. The benefits are even greater if everyone enters data in a common data base with the same software.

## Membership Report

During 1992 the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society membership reached a total of 174 members. Of this number, 10 are Honorary Members or Members for Life.

Our membership year runs from January 1 to December 31. Memberships received

after October 1 are generally notated for the following year unless other instructions have been given.

The annual membership fee for 1993 is \$15.00 and is now due. Please make cheques payable to Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, c/o 169 Riverton Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2G 2E5.

### Education Committee

The committee has devolved its efforts exclusively to the planning of the symposium on "Canadian Mennonites and the Challenge of Nationalism", May 6-8, 1993, at Concord College in Winnipeg. (see enclosed brochure)

### Mennonites and Jews

This spring the Western Jewish Historical Society and our society sponsored an evening to discuss the relationship of Jews and Mennonites in southern Manitoba.

The evening featured a joint lecture by Ted Friesen and Percy Goldberg. They both grew up in Altona and became lifelong friends. During their growing up years they went to school together and mixed socially. As well, Low German and Yiddish were similar languages which made communication between their two communities easier. Jews and Mennonites also had mutual needs. The Mennonites were mostly farmers who supplied the food for the community. The Jews were mostly tradesmen, merchants, and doctors who provided these services. It was evident from the discussion after the joint lecture that most people agreed, that, as two minority groups who had known persecution throughout their histories, they had lived together relatively harmoniously. The only difficult time was the war years. Then, the Mennonite Germanism and conscientious objector status were difficult differences for the Jews to deal with. Today the relationship remains good.

### Jacob Y. Shantz Cairn

In the summer of 1990 a cairn was dedicated to the memory of Jacob Y. Shantz. The cairn states:

"JACOB Y. SHANTZ  
1882 - 1909

Jacob Yost Shantz was born to Swiss Mennonite parents in Berlin (now Kitchener), Ontario, on May 2, 1822. He began as a farmer and later extended his interests to

include a saw mill operation, construction and button factory.

When Mennonites from the Ukraine inquired about moving to Canada, Shantz was asked by the Canadian Government to investigate settlement possibilities in Manitoba. Shantz made a trip to the Northwest in 1872 and wrote a report entitled "The Narrative of a journey to Manitoba" which was translated into a number of languages and widely distributed to promote settlement in western Canada.

In the period 1874 to 1880 about 7,000 Mennonites came from the Ukraine to settle in Manitoba. They settled first of all on the East Reserve and then in 1875 and later on the West Reserve. Jacob Y. Shantz was instrumental in many ways in making this settlement possible. He negotiated a loan with the federal government and with his own church brethren to assist the settlers in getting started. He also made numerous trips to Manitoba to check on their progress and to bring them provisions.

The villages of Schanzenfeld, lying just west of here, and the former village of Schanzenberg near Niverville were named in his honour."

Many society members were present on that occasion. For those who were not able to be there, this will give some indication of who was being honoured on that day. Further information on the life of Jacob Y. Shantz can be read in Sam Steiner's biography of him.

## ANNUAL MEETING

1993 April 3  
7:00 P.M.

Canadian Mennonite Bible College  
600 Shaftesbury Blvd.  
Winnipeg, MB

Speaker: George K. Epp

Subject:  
Resources of Archives in  
Odessa and St. Petersburg

Exhibit on Odessa collection

Light refreshments will follow



Society members Gerhard Ens (Left) and Peter D. Zacharias by the Jacob Y. Shantz Cairn at Schanzenfeld, Manitoba in June of 1990.