



HERITAGE POSTING

Newsletter of the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society

No. 41 June 2003

Sketches From Siberia:

The Art of Jacob Suderman
(1888-1940)

Mennonite Heritage
Centre Gallery

by Agnes Dyck

This collection of art was taken out of Russia bit by bit in the suitcases of WW II refugees. Werner Toews, a Winnipeg policeman, gathered more than 100 pieces of his great uncle's art from various relatives to create a unique showing of watercolours and drawings telling a story; a story of peaceful and prosperous village life destroyed by the chaos and mindless cruelty of the Russian revolution. Jacob Suderman was one of untold numbers who finally vanished into the abyss. This young man had a gifted artist's eye, but he must also have had some training in photography and in creative drawing and painting.

The photos show something of what village life at the time contained; for example, there was always a church. Suderman's landscapes, circa 1932, rank with the best in landscape paintings. Of special interest to the artist appears to be interior spaces. Earlier watercolours are inside views of well-to-do homes complete with chandeliers, pianos and ornate bric-a-brac. These fine watercolours often have a scrubbed look as if the artist was labouring at getting it exactly right. Exquisite miniatures, painted in prosperous times, were followed by black and white drawings sent from

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Werner Toews explains pictures to Edith and Rudy Friesen. — Photos by Conrad Stoesz



Lucy Adamson (left), Linda Czernicki Toews, wife of Werner Toews pointing to paintings/sketches of work camp in Siberia (1916).



Jacob Suderman's painting "Harvest on the Estate" with descendants: Margaret Toews (Suderman), Henry Suderman, Helene Patkau (Suderman), Louise Dyck (Suderman) and Therese Bergen (Fast).

Suderman's Sketches

(Continued from page 1)

exile to the children in Suderman's extended family: "The Fox who wanted to Fish" triggered an early memory for me.



Translations of Suderman's letters, written from a Siberian work camp reveal an undercurrent of abuse and deprivation. His longing to be reunited with his family seeps through his writing and his drawings. Deprived of ordinary art materials he eventually resorted to pencil drawings and whatever paper he could find.

If as Rudy Wiebe has said, "Our stories make us real" then art which spans a painful period in Mennonite history may add to our perception of

who we are and where we are going. As a Mennonite community we are telling our story in forms such as fiction, poetry, anecdotal writings, music and finally in various art forms. That is exciting.

"One cannot understand the present unless one has learned from the past. One cannot comprehend the future unless one understands oneself and one's own people." David H. Epp as quoted in the show.

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The Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society Newsletter, Heritage Posting, welcomes letters and reports pertaining to the historical interests of society members. Correspondence can be mailed to Gilbert Brandt, 169 Riverton Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2L 2E2, or e-mailed to the editor at: editor@mmhs.org

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FIRST MANITOBA MENNONITE TEACHERS SOCIETY

by Lawrence Klippenstein

Our historical vignettes series continues with some sketches from the Mennonite teachers' side of the educational story connected with the MCI. We hope to share some comments on, and excerpts from, a very early minute book, dated 1893 - 97, which was kept by the secretary of the Western Local Conference of the District School Teachers in the Mennonite Settlement of Manitoba. The document was forwarded to the Mennonite Heritage Centre by the late Harry S. Friesen of Winkler, a number of years ago, and translated recently by Ed. Enns of Winnipeg.

The establishment of the MCI, begun in 1889 as the Gretna Normal School was, as is widely known, an historic event in the history of Mennonite education in Manitoba. Its story has been dealt with in many shorter writings, but particularly in the book written by Gerhard J. Ens, **"Die Schule muss Sein": A History of the Mennonite Collegiate Institute**. This book can still be purchased at the school.

Very little is known however, about the first Mennonite public school teachers' society of the West Reserve, begun in 1893, just four years after the Normal School in Gretna opened up. Since the beginning of this organization coincided almost exactly with the coming of Benjamin Ewert to teach in Manitoba (from Kansas in 1892), we may assume he was one of the founding members of this society.

The group called itself "Westliche Lokal Konferenz der Distriktschullehrer in der mennonitischen Ansiedlung von Manitoba" (translated in the introduction). The words "District Schools" intimate that these were teachers from the Mennonite public



Benjamin Ewert



David Toews



Johann Friesen

schools which were in existence by then, even as other Manitoba Mennonite elementary schools retained their private school status for some time to come. It would appear that Mennonite teachers had a similar organization for the area east of the Red River. One hopes that minutes of their meetings might be located one day as well.

It is well known that Heinrich H. Ewert, the brother of Benjamin, and leader of the Normal School since 1891, played a major role in helping Mennonite education to move toward a public school level. Interestingly, he does not ever appear among the names of those present at these district school teachers' meetings.

The first minute book, now located in Vol. 1012 at the Mennonite Heritage Centre in Winnipeg, covers a total of 19 meetings for the period of 1893 - 97. It includes a recorded roll call for all the teachers present at the sessions. The first list as given here (for the period 1893 - 94) includes the following names (districts in brackets): Bernhard Friesen (Edenthal), Johann M. Friesen (Hochstadt), Benjamin Ewert (Edenburg), Guenther Limprecht (Altona, town), Heinrich Graff (Blumstein), C. B. Fast (Winkler), Peter W. Dueck (Rosenfeld), David Toews (Gretna), E. Garlieb (Altona, town), Peters Toews (Edenthal), Gustav R. Toews (Strassburg?), and

Wm. Abrams (guest?).

New names appearing for 1895 - 97 include: Johann Loewen (Edenthal), J. C. Peters (Plum Coulee), Peter Siemens (Amsterdam), Heinrich Wiens (Halbstadt), P. B. Krebhiel (Altona), Heinrich Enns (Morris), Henry Siemens (Rosenfeld) and Gerhard Hamm (Edenthal). Four of these persons attended only one of the nine meetings held during these years. Four of the meetings for the years 1893 - 97 mention the attendance of students from the Gretna Normal School.

It would seem from the total collection of minutes in this still-sturdy volume, that Benjamin Ewert, Johann M. Friesen, and David Toews (later Rosthern, Saskatchewan) were the most frequent attendees, hence perhaps the "spark plugs" of the organization. The average attendance of six in 1893-94 dropped to five in 1895-97. The meeting of Jan. 26, 1895 included only Benjamin Ewert, David Toews and Johann Friesen, along with several students from the Gretna Normal School (unnamed).

Benjamin Ewert served as first secretary and did the minutes in a very artistic long hand Gothic German script for the first number of meetings. In several following items in this series we hope to share some tid bits from the records of these gatherings.

(To be continued)

Steinbach Workshop

By Bert Friesen

The Family Roots Day was held on Saturday, 22 March 2003, at the Mennonite Heritage Village Museum, Steinbach.

There were over 20 exhibitors. They displayed some of the results of their research into family roots. Some set up computers to show the mechanics of storing and organizing the material. Others brought textual records. Whatever the format of the material, it resulted in much interaction and discussion. Ideas were exchanged on both content and methodologies.

Others exhibited their published family roots, often the results of years of labours of love. These too generated much discussion, admiration, and some sales. A special feature were readings by Edith Friesen on her new book about Chortitza.

There were two lectures about genealogy. The first was by Alf Redekopp on new resources. He mentioned the compilation done by Tim Janzen which is available on his web site, www.timjanzen.com. Then he reviewed the new Chortitza resources now available on a CD and finally illustrated some of the features of the new release of the Grandma 4 CD. The second lecture was by Bert Friesen. He illustrated how to do research on a 1920s Mennonite immigrant family. The illustration was on a local Peters family with research done by Marianne Janzen and himself.

The day ended with an illustrated lecture on the Mennonite Heritage Cruises. Walter Unger and Rudy Friesen were there to explain some of the previous cruises and plans for the final two cruises ending with the 200th anniversary of the Molotschna Colony.

The day was a very informative time for about 75 people in attendance. It was jointly sponsored by the genealogy committee of the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society and the cultural and historical committee of the Mennonite Heritage Village.



Genealogist exchanging information at MHV Family Roots Day co-sponsored with MMHS. Centre is Jack Letkeman of Kenora, Far right is Lynne Ward with her display.

— Photos by Conrad Stoesz



Mr. Reimer at his computer with others looking on and asking questions at MHV Family Roots Day co-sponsored with MMHS.

Request for Materials for Virtual Exhibit

The Mennonite Heritage Centre is seeking materials documenting the experiences of Mennonite Conscientious Objectors (COs) in World War Two (1939-1945). If you have photographs, letters, interviews, audio recordings etc. relating to this important time in Canadian history, please contact the Heritage Centre. We are proposing to create a new interactive web exhibit to highlight this experience.

During WW I people could simply claim their CO status but during WW II each person wanting CO status had to be questioned by a judge. It is estimated that there were 10,000 men who made the decision to object to taking up arms against the enemy on grounds of conscience. Some spent time in jail for their refusal to take up arms. Most COs were permitted to do alternative service which meant being assigned to work in lumber camps or work in mental hospitals, farms, and factories.

The goal is to have a site that will be both a tribute to the contribution that the COs made to Canadian society, as well as a witness to the way of peace for our world today.

Contact the Mennonite Heritage Centre, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3M 0P4 204-888-6781 or e-mail at archives@mennonitechurch.ca for further information.

Local History Workshop

by Ken A. Braun

The Winkler Seniors Centre was the site for a local history workshop on 26th April. The workshop consisted of a panel discussion involving recent immigrants to the Winkler area. Having lived in Germany for a while, these Aussiedler from the former USSR are now adjusting to life in Canada. The reasons for such major relocations of people is of interest to a history society such as the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society.

A historical overview of Mennonite migrations to Canada from Russia/USSR was given by Adolf Ens, retired CMU history professor. The devastation of revolution and war caused major migrations to Canada in the 1920s and late 1940s and with the assistance of a relief organization formed in 1920 which became MCC, such an exodus became possible. 20,000 came to Canada in the 1920s and about 10,000 after 1948-1959. 25,000 were taken back after the German retreat from Russia and scattered to Siberia.

About 100,000 of these ethnic Germans have come to Germany



Henry Ens leads the panel members in the discussion. Panel included Eugen Klassen, Nik Funk, Irma Maier and Olga Penner.

— Photos by Mavis Dyck

since 1970, with the numbers growing after 1990 when migration became a flood into Germany and further migration became a necessity. Canada became the country of choice for these people. In Canada they feel accepted, they feel at home here, as was stated by Irma Maier who lives on a farmyard near Morden with her husband. Their children are university trained and one is married.

The other three panel members were Olga Penner, Nik Funk, and Eugen Klassen. With the help of Joyce Bergen of Winkler who assists these new arrivals in their adjustment, the panel members were willing to participate. Olga lives in Neuenberg, south of Winkler, Nik, his wife and four children live in Reinfeld, and Eugen, more a city dweller, lives in Winkler. The discussion, led by Henry G. Ens in the forenoon, focused on their life in Russia/USSR. To be Russian citizens they were told to deny their German ethnic background and take a militaristic approach to life, stated Irma Maier. "You serve the State." Eugen compared Russia and Germany as different as night and day, poor and rich.

After a lunch of Somma borscht and sandwiches with pie for dessert, Jake Hildebrand, retired teacher who came to Canada in 1951, asked questions about their German stay and then responses could be given about their life in Canada. Not knowing High German was the first difficulty they encountered in

their acculturation process in Germany. The locals had difficulty dealing with these foreigners who thought they were of German background. Their language was Low German and Russian was to be a forgotten language now. To be German you do and talk like they do in Germany.

In Canada they have felt accepted, not isolated as foreigners but feel that they can be a part of a diverse and multicultural setting. Their work experience is good in that they don't feel prejudiced against in their workplace. Winkler has seventeen churches, says Eugen, whereas the city he lived in in Germany had three and the German city had a population of 50,000. They have formed a small church fellowship where Low German and High German is used.

In closing, Adolf thanked the panel members for sharing so freely, and for giving us insight into the life experiences in three countries.



Participants in the Workshop listen with rapt attention to the panel members.

GENEALOGY — The Early Hoepfner¹ Family in West Prussia

by Glenn Penner

Although the Hoepfners make up a very small fraction of the present-day Dutch/Prussian Mennonites, the family is well known through Jacob Hoepfner (1748-1826), one of the delegates who inspected prospective settlement sites for the Prussian Mennonites in South Russia and negotiated settlement terms prior to the Mennonite migrations to Russia. At this time there were only 5 Mennonite Hoepfner families living in West Prussia. Three of these chose to move to the Chortitza Colony in Russia. As a result, the Hoepfner name was concentrated in Chortitza and daughter colonies. Many descendants later moved to Canada, where the Hoepfner name is quite well known.

The Mennonite Hoepfner family has been the subject of many studies. In 1989 I published an outline of the Hoepfner family in West Prussia.² The most complete work on the Hoepfners is that of Pauline Heppner.³ The purpose of this short article is to take another look at the early Mennonite Hoepfner family in the region that was once known as West Prussia⁴. My original article contains at least 3 errors and several omissions. These errors were further incorporated into Pauline Heppner's book, which contains several additional mistakes. The Grandma database, which is becoming a popular source of genealogical information, contains much incorrect information on the early Hoepfners.⁵ I hope to correct these errors and omissions, and to present new information that has recently come to light.

The Hoepfner Name

Like most "Mennonite" family names, the name Hoepfner, and its variations is not unique to the Mennonites. Non-Mennonite Hoepfners appear frequently in the Lutheran and Catholic church records of West Prussia. For example, the 1772 land census of West Prussia includes 11 Hoepfners, of which only one was a Mennonite. At present there is no evidence that these people were ever Mennonites, or are related to the Mennonite Hoepfners. The information we have on the first few generations of Mennonite Hoepfners comes from the records of the Flemish Mennonite Church in Danzig (now Gdansk, Poland). The old registers include baptisms (1667-1808), marriages (1665-1808), and deaths (1667-1808).⁶ There is also two Familienbücher, which were started in 1789.⁷ Important information such as parents of baptismal candidates or married couples, ages of those who died, and the residences of individuals are often missing. Fortunately, the Hoepfner family in Danzig was small enough that one can fit everyone together and reconstruct the original Hoepfner family.

Peter Hoepfner (d. 1718)

The story of the first Mennonite Hoepfner begins with Peter Heppner who married Anganetha Wilks on Dec. 6, 1671 in Danzig. I and others have speculated that a Peter Hapner, mentioned in a land lease of Klein Lubin in 1632,

might be the father of this Peter Hoepfner. I should emphasize that this is speculation, and that there is no evidence of any connection. The family of Peter Hoepfner and Anganetha Wilk is outlined in Table 1.

Anthon Hoepfner (1672-1752)

Anthon Hoepfner, the son of Peter, appears to have lived his entire life in Danzig. The Danzig church records refer to him as being "von dem Hof" at the time of his death. Details of the Anthon Hoepfner family can be found in Table 2. The Hoepfner family name was carried on by his three sons, Peter, Anthon, and Jacob.

Peter Hoepfner (ca. 1705-1768)

Peter Hoepfner moved to Marienwerder, but his family seems to have kept close ties with the Danzig church. The marriages of his son Anthon, the death of his wife, and the death of son Anthon are all recorded in the Danzig church records during the period before 1800. Peter Hoepfner's family is outlined in Table 3, and that of his son Anthon can be found in Table 4. Grandson Anthon appears to be the last male of this line. He married Carolina Henriette Neuman, a Lutheran, on May, 11, 1797. The record of the baptism in Danzig of a Carolina, daughter of Anthon Hoepfner, on June 11, 1797, is probably a transcription error, and likely refers to the baptism of the wife of Anthon (b. 1768). Anthon (b. 1768) was a merchant in Marienwerder and inherited a house from his father, who was a "Mälzbrauer", on June 1st 1795.^{8,9}

Anthon Hoepfner (1711-1773)

Anthon Hoepfner was born in the city of Danzig, but died in the nearby suburb of Schottland. He and his wife, Catharina Berentz, had 14 children of whom only 5 survived to maturity. Of these, the only son was Anthon (b. 1740). Anthon (b. 1740) is listed as a painter in Schottland in 1776 together with his wife, 2 sons and a daughter. He rented his property at that time. According to the Danzig Familienbuch he moved to the Gross Werder region. The baptism records of Rosenort¹⁰ (in the Gross Werder) list an "Anthonie Hoepfner's son Anthonie" who was baptized on June 13, 1790. Unfortunately the village of residence is not given. The Prussian census of Mennonite landowners for 1789 does not list any Hoepfners, which indicates that he was still renting at that time.¹¹ Where Anthon Hoepfner (b. 1740) lived in the Gross Werder and what became of his son Anthon remains a mystery. The family of Anthon Hoepfner (1711-1773) can be found in Table 5.

Jacob Hoepfner

Jacob Hoepfner, the son of Anthon Hoepfner (1672-1752), does not appear in the Danzig church records after his baptism in 1739. He seems to have moved to the Gross Werder and married there. He next appears in the 1772 census of West Prussia. Copies of this census have recently become available to me.¹² He is listed as Jacob

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Hepner, a Mennonite owning 25 Morgen of land in the village of Klein Mausdorferweide. His family unit included his wife, 2 sons over 10 years of age, one son under 10, 2 daughters over 10, and a male servant. He is also listed in the same village in the 1776 census of Mennonites in West Prussia with his wife, 1 son and 2 daughters.¹³ At this time he was also classified as a landowner. In 1989 I speculated that this Jacob Hoepner was the father of the three Hoepner brothers (Jacob b.1748, Peter b. 1752 and Anthon b.1762) who moved to the Chortiza Colony. This is based on the record of the baptism of son Anthon in the Rosenort Gemeinde in 1782.¹⁰ In the 1772 census the two older sons were probably Jacob and Peter, the younger son was Anthon and the two daughters under the age of 10 were Catharina and Helena. By 1776 Jacob and Peter were on their own. Jacob was living in the Danzig area and Peter was living in his home village of Klein Mausdorferweide. Anthon was the son listed as living at home. In 1776 daughter Catharina would have been a teenager and was likely living elsewhere, and was probably included in another household under the category of servant. The proposed family of Jacob Hoepner is shown in Table 6. Jacob Hoepner is listed in 1772 and 1776 as a landowner (Eigenthümer), but he is not found in the 1789 census of Mennonite landowners in West Prussia.¹¹ Jacob Hoepner must have died or sold his land sometime between 1776 and 1789. Only 4 of the 18 Mennonite landowners of 1776 were still in Klein Mausdorferweide in 1789. In any case none of his sons inherited his land and chose to move to Russia.

Jacob Hoepner (1748-1826)

One of the proposes of this article is to present some new information on the family of Jacob Hoepner (1748-1826) in West Prussia and to correct previous errors. Jacob Hoepner was raised in the Gross Werder region of West Prussia, very likely in the village of Klein Mausdorferweide. By 1776 he was married and was living in the Danzig area (not covered by the 1776 census). The Lutheran church records of Tiegenort include many references to Mennonites.¹⁴ There are three references that probably pertain to Jacob Hoepner. On July 2, 1775 a child Jacob Hoepner, who's parents lived near Danzig, died when he fell into a ditch. I believe that the parents were Jacob Hoepner and his wife Sara Dyck. On Nov. 6, 1780 a child, Anna, the daughter of Jacob Höpner, a landless Mennonite of Tiegenortischer Wiese died. On Jan. 1, 1781 a daughter, Anna, of Jacob Höpner of Abgunst was born. I am not too sure of the exact location of Tiegenortischer Wiese (obviously near Tiegenort), but Abgunst refers to Abgunstkampe, which existed up to the time of the second World War. This location is incorrectly referred to as Augustkampe in Henry Schapansky's brief biography of Jacob Hoepner.¹⁴ By 1783 he had moved northeast to the village of Bohnsack. There children Anna and Jacob were born on Sep. 25, 1783 and Jan. 5, 1786, respectively. The family of Jacob Hoepner (1748-1826) is detailed in Table 7.

Table 1

Peter Hoepner	b. ca. 1645 ^a	
m. Dec. 6, 1671	d. Jan. 18, 1718	Danzig
Anganetha Wilk ^b	b. ca. 1645	
	d. Mar. 22, 1715	Danzig

Children:

Anthon	b. Sep. 25, 1672	bapt. June 12, 1695
	(see Table 2)	
Anganetha	b. ca 1674	bapt. June 12, 1695 ^c
	1 st m. Sep. 24, 1702	to Michel Siemer (d. 1702)
	2 nd m. Jul. 14, 1709	to Hans Brunck ^d (d. 1742)
	d. Jun. 4, 1745	
Anna	b. ca 1685	bapt. Jul. 27, 1706 ^c
	1 st m. date unknown	to David Siemens
	2 nd m. May, 1, 1735	to Hans Klippenstein
	(1681-1753)	
	d. Apr. 5, 1744	
Sara	b. ca 1692	bapt. Jul. 2, 1713
	m. Oct. 11, 1716	to Gillis Vreese (d. 1737)
	d. date unknown	

I have standardized the names in this, and all subsequent tables (i.e Antonio, Antonie, etc. becomes Anthon; Ancke becomes Anna; Sarke becomes Sara...)

^a The years of birth are estimated based on a baptismal age (in Danzig) of about 21 years or an age of first marriage of about 25 years.

^b This name has many variations (Wilk, Welk, Woelk, Woelke etc.)

^c The name Ancke appears in the baptismal register in 1695 and 1706. The entry in 1695 is obviously in error and should have been recorded as Agtke.

^d The name is Brunck, not Brun, which is incorrectly given in the Heppner book and the Grandma database.

^e The Germanized version of this name would be Julius Froese.

Table 2

Anthon Hoepner	b. ca 1672 ^a	Danzig
1 st m. Oct. 6, 1697	d. Jul. 11, 1752	Danzig
Maria Jacobs ^b	b. ca 1675	
	d. 1711-1712	Danzig

Children:

Peter	b. 1705-10	(see Tables 3 & 4)
	bapt. Jul. 2, 1730	
Maria	b. ca 1710	m. Jacob Klippenstein
	d. Dec. 25, 1746	
Anthon	b. Sep. 25, 1711	(see Table 5)
	bapt. Jul. 1, 1737	
	2 nd m. ca 1712	
Elisabeth Wiens	b. ca 1679	
	d. May 27, 1753	Danzig

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Children:

Anna	b. Nov. 28, 1713	m. Jacob Kampen
	bapt. Jul. 1, 1737	
Jacob	b. 1718	(see Table 6)
	bapt. Jul. 5, 1739	
Sara	b. ca 1725	
	bapt. Jun. 5, 1746	
Catharina	b. 1700-1720	m. Willem Ludwig
	d. Aug. 14, 1771	(1700-1770)

^a The GM database has a date of Sep. 25. This probably belongs to Anthon b. Sep. 25, 1711.

^b Maria Jacobs was the daughter of Cornelius Jacobs and was baptized on June 16, 1697.

Table 3

Peter Hoepfner	b. 1705-1710	Danzig
m. May 21, 1736	d. 1778	Marienwerder
Anna Janzen ^a	b.	
	d. Dec. 2, 1768	Marienwerder

Children:

Anthon	b. ca 1737	(see Table 4)
	bapt. Jun. 11, 1758	

^a Daughter of Abraham Janzen.

Table 4

Anthon Hoepfner	b. ca 1737	
1 st m. Oct. 18, 1761	d. Nov. 13, 1797	Marienwerder
Maria Zimmerman ^a	b. July 6, 1741	
	d. Nov. 7, 1766	Marienwerder

Children:

Maria	b. Dec. 14, 1764	
2 nd m. date unknown		
Maria Woelke	b. ca 1747	
	d. Aug. 23, 1815	Marienwerder

Children:

Anthon	b. ca 1768	m. Carolina Neuman
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^a Daughter of Wilhelm Zimmerman and Maria Bachdach.

^b Most of this information from the Hermann Thiessen collection.

Table 5

Anthon Hoepfner	b. Sep. 25, 1711	Danzig
m. Oct. 18, 1739	d. Sep. 30, 1773	Schottland
Catharina Berentz ^a	b. Aug. 12, 1720	
	d. May 24, 1782	Schottland

Children:

Anthon	b. Aug. 10, 1740	m. unknown
Catharina	b. Jun. 9, 1742	d. Aug. 7, 1742
Elisabeth	b. Aug. 29, 1745	m. Johann Kromske
Catharina	b. Apr. 23, 1747	m. Abraham Berentz

Jacob	b. Mar. 22, 1749	d. Mar. 22, 1749
Jacob	b. Jun. 14, 1750	d. Aug. 19, 1750
Anna	b. Jul. 24, 1751	d. Sep. 9, 1751
Susanna	b. Mar. 11, 1753	m. Peter Wiebe
Abraham	b. Apr. 13, 1755	d. Apr. 19, 1755
Maria	b. Jun. 22, 1756	m. Heinrich Siemens
Abraham	b. Mar. 19, 1758	d. young
Peter	b. May 31, 1759	d. young
Anna	b. Oct. 16, 1760	d. Nov. 2, 1760

^a Daughter of Abraham Berentz and Catharina Wittenberg.

Table 6

Jacob Hoepfner	b. ca 1718	Danzig
m. d. after 1776		Klein Mausdorferweide
unknown	b. d.	

Children:

Jacob	b. Jan. 3, 1748	m. Sara Dyck
Peter	b. ca 1752	m. Anna Thiessen
Catharina	b. after 1762	m. Jacob Janzen
Anthon	b. ca 1762	m. Catharina
Helena	b. ca 1773	m. Abram Klassen

The Grandma database (v. 4; v. 4.03 online) contains several serious errors with respect to this family: the date of birth for J.H. is actually that of his brother Anthon; he is stated as having died in Kleinwerder, when he likely died in Kleinmausdorferweide; his wife is given as Christina Bentz b. Aug. 20, 1720, which is a confused reference to his sister-in-law Catharina Berentz; his daughters are not included.

Table 7

Jacob Hoepfner	b. Jan. 3, 1748	Klein
Mausdorferweide		
m. Oct. 12, 1773 ^a	d. May 5, 1826	Insel
Chortitza, Russia		

Sara Dyck ^b	b. Nov. 17, 1753	Neustädterwald
	d. Feb. 27, 1826	Insel Chortitza, Russia

Children:

Jacob	b. ca 1774	d. Jul. 2, 1775
Helena	b. Mar. 11, 1775	m. Peter Hildebrandt
Anna	b. 1770's	d. Nov. 6, 1780
Anna	b. Jan. 1, 1781	m. Heinrich Penner
Maria	b. Sep. 25, 1783	m. Johann Ewert
Jacob	b. Jan. 5, 1786	d. 1788
Catharina	b. ca 1788	d. 1789
Catharina	b. ca 1789	d. Jan. 9, 1804
Elisabeth	b. Sep. 1, 1792	m. Cornelius Rempel
	m. Gerhard Dyck	
Jacob	b. Mar. 24, 1797	m. Anna Brand

Some of this information was taken from Henry Schapansky's book¹⁵.

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(Continued from page 8)

The GM database contains several errors with respect to this family: Jacob was not born in Brodsack, Prussia; he and his wife are incorrectly given identical death dates; daughter Anna could not have been born in 1777 (Jan. 29) as two others by that name were born after 1777 (this date may refer to the birth of the first Anna, who died in 1780); The location of the birth of Anna is wrong; Maria was not born in Kremenschuk, Russia ("on the trip to Russia"); Jacob, b. 1786, did not die in 1787 in Dubrovna, Russia since the Hoeppners did not leave Bohnsack until March of 1788; his birth is Jan. 5, 1786, not 1785.

^a This marriage date is given in the GM database but no source is provided.

^b Daughter of Abraham Dyck. He is recorded as living in Neustädterwald in 1772, 1776 and 1789.

1. There are many variations of this name, including: Hepner, Hapner, Hoepner, Heppner, and Hápner. I will use Hoepner in this article, unless directly quoting an original source.
2. Glenn Penner. "The Early Hoeppner Family in Prussia" *Mennonite Family History*. 1989 (July).
3. Pauline Heppner. "The Heppners in Prussia, Russia and America". Edmonton, 1997.
4. This area is now part of northern Poland.
5. California Mennonite Historical Society. *GRANDMA 4 Database*. 2003.
6. Microfilm copies of these records are available at the Mennonite Heritage Centre (Winnipeg, MB), the Centre for MB Studies (Fresno, CA), the Mennonite Library and Archives (Newton, KS).
7. see: www.mmhs.org/prussia/danz1.htm and www.mmhs.org/prussia/danz2.htm for an index of the Familienbücher.
8. Mennonite Genealogy Card File on Anthon Hoepner.
9. Hermann Thiessen microfilm collection. Available at most North American Mennonite Archives.
10. Adalbert Goertz, "1782-1795, Baptisms in Rosenort, West Prussia" in *Mennonite Family History*, 1986, pp. 138-143.
11. This census is available at: www.mmhs.org/prussia/1789alph.htm
12. West Prussian Land Census of 1772. For an index by family name see: <http://pixel.cs.vt.edu/library/land/wprussia>
13. Horst Penner, *Die ost- und westpreußischen Mennoniten*. 1978. An electronic version of this census has been submitted for posting on the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society web site at www.mmhs.org.
14. Lutheran Church records of Tiegenort. LDS film # 208424.
15. Henry Schapansky. *The Old Colony (Chortitza) of Russia*. Rosenort, 2001.

COMING EVENTS

Historic Driving Tour, 5 July, 2003

Meet at Garden Valley School, Winkler, parking lot for a tour of the area at 10:30 a.m. This includes the Winkler Cemetery, Waldheim Cemetery, the Braun Monument, the Jacob & Maria (Fast) Braun gravesite. Lunch will be available.

Braun 2003 Reunion, 6 July 2003

Confirmation of Registration, (9:00 a.m.) distribution of colour-coded name tags, donation of 'Silent Auction' Items, Set-up interest items on Memorabilia tables and meeting/visiting relatives. Registration fee provides all-day visiting! 10:30 Devotional; 11:30 - noon: Potluck lunch, visiting 1:30 - 3:30 Reminiscing and Children's activities; 2:00 - 4:00 Tour Guides available for 'Threshermen's Museum Grounds' (The Braun Log House will be available all day) 4:00 Business meeting; 5:00 'Faspa', prizes, Silent Auction draws, visiting, touring, pictures

Lena Mennonite Church Commemoration

Former members and friends of Lena Mennonite Church, 1926-1968, are invited to gather at the church site on 20 July 2003, 2:30 p.m. to place a memorial stone with plaque and to commemorate the life of the Church in God's grace. After the service at the site, a fellowship Faspa will be held in the Killarney Mennonite Church.

A booklet will be for sale at the event. The booklet provides a brief history of the Church, biographies of the 5 leading ministers, biographical data about the 23 persons interred in the cemetery, and a listing of all members of the Church during its 42 years.

The former church site (and cemetery) is located 10 miles south of Killarney on #18 highway, and then 0.5 miles west. There will be a marker at the junction.

For further information phone John Dyck, Winnipeg, 204-885-2425.

Bus Tour to James Valley Colony

Tentatively, a bus tour for MMHS members to the James Valley Hutterite Colony, Elie, is planned for the last weekend in September (27 or 28). The tour will include a brief visit to some parts of the colony property. We expect to arrange a time of discussion with them about their history and theology. Tentatively, the schedule calls for a worship time with the Colony members. The cost will likely be around \$45. Contact Bert Friesen for further details.

Looking for a Good Group Activity?

Join us for a bus tour of the historic Post Road. Call Conrad Stoesz at 888-6781 or 669-6575 or Lawrence Klippenstein at 895-4421. Cost is \$45 per person with a minimum of 30 people required.

Evolution: first to voting, then to seeking office

Mennonites & Government

by Elmer Heinrichs

An Altona history course on Mennonites and government in Manitoba - a series of lectures and discussion considering Manitoba Mennonite involvement in politics - voting, seeking office focussed the interest of amateur historians take part in an Altona history club this winter.

Historian and writer Adolf Ens, with input from archivist Lawrence Klippenstein, led the study, and several members of the group undertook research projects and reported to the class.

In one project Jim Dyck and Ted Klassen studied two friends of the Mennonite people, MLA Valentine Winkler, and son Howard W. Winkler, Lisgar MP, in the Manitoba archives.

Brothers Valentine Winkler and Enoch Winkler had been instrumental in helping Mennonites homestead in Manitoba, and sat in the Manitoba Legislature.

Valentine Winkler owned and operated a grain elevator and lumber business at Winkler, a town established in 1892 and named for him. During that year, he was elected to the Manitoba Legislature and served until his death, from 1915-1920 as minister of agriculture and immigration.

In his report on Winkler, who was also elected the first reeve of the Rural Municipality of Stanley, Jim Dyck noted that "by 1915-1920 it was no longer just Mennonite churches negotiating with government but individuals had begun seeking advice, favours, or seeking influence."

After his World War I service, and his father's death in 1920, son Howard W. Winkler ran the family business and became an organizer for the Liberals. In 1935 he was sent to Ottawa as Member of Parliament for Lisgar, and served continuously until he retired from office in 1953.

A prolific letter writer, the MP's extensive files in Manitoba's provincial archives, says Ted Klassen, includes correspondence with D. K. Friesen,

Bishop David Schulz, and a myriad of people; show his strong relationship with J. J. Siemens, and support for set up of Co-op Vegetable Oils. Winkler also attended a preparatory meeting to the formation of the United Nations.

Dick Hildebrand, who interviewed Rhineland MLA Jake M. Froese (1959-69), successor to W. C. Miller, on his 10 years of service as a Social Credit member in the Manitoba Legislature, observed "I believe this family became stronger because of their father's involvement in politics."

L. Klippenstein says Siegfried Enns told the class he served with Children's Aid Society when the Portage Conservative MP, a neighbour, decided to retire. He suggested to Sig that he should run. Other people too encouraged him; so off he went for his first try. Basically "it was a case of a vacancy waiting to be filled, not really a matter of ideology."

Jack Penner (Emerson), now a long-serving Conservative, indicated he had once pondered support for other parties. Active in local and provincial farm organizations, these got him involved on the political scene since these groups were strongly lobby-oriented. He decided to run for the Manitoba Conservatives, he told the class.

Both Enns and Penner said the church seemed indifferent to their political activity, and didn't really interact with them about government. Penner found this fitting - separation of church and state, but Enns seemed to regret his congregation could not be more affirming, the class heard.

Grunthal MLA Albert Driedger, who served locally as reeve at the municipal level, was approached to run provincially, and held several portfolios in Filmon's Manitoba government. After Filmon dropped him from the cabinet in order to add more city representation, he declined to run again. Class member Joe Braun says Driedger, regarded "a



Adolf Ens, the instructor for the course in Altona, interacts with his students.

— Photo by Elmer Heinrichs

straight shooter", expressed pride in his design of the 'Friendly Manitoba' plate.

Of interest, and perhaps deserving of a study, noted Enns in the last session, is that Mennonites who entered politics tended to be children or close relatives of bishops and ministers.

With talk about Mennonite experiences during WW II, the 1920s Russian immigration, and the 1870s and later immigrations as future topics, it seems the classes are likely to continue.

Heppner-Hoepfner Reunion

This event is planned for 2004 July 23/24/25 at the Marvin M. Schwan Retreat and Conference Centre, Trego, Wisconsin, USA.

Information on accommodation/ lodging and meal package rates is available from the reunion organizer Darrell Heppner, 2004 Heppner-Hoepfner Reunion, P.O. Box 577, San Leandro, CA 94577, USA.

Trego is approximately 100 km south of Duluth, Wisconsin. Lodging registration must be in by 2004 April 30 complete with payment.

Call for Papers

Molochna 2004

"Molochna '04 Mennonites and their Neighbours, 1804-2004," an international conference commemorating the bicentennial of Mennonite settlement in the Molochna region of Ukraine.

Date: 3-5 June 2004

Host institution: Melitopol State Pedagogical University, Ukraine

The Conference organizers welcome presentation proposals from across the humanities and social sciences that address all aspects of the history of the Molochna Mennonites and the region in which they settled as well as their interactions with their larger environment and their Molochna neighbours.

Mennonites played a unique role in the Molochna as engines of change and modernization, keen observers, who recorded fundamental developments in both their own communities and those surrounding them, and a litmus test for the Soviet system, challenging its all-engrossing principles. They are, today, searching for ways to create sustainable, locally led, development programs.

Conference conveners and organizers: Setline Bobyleva (Ukraine), Harvey Dyck (Canada), Alfred Eisfeld (Germany), Nikolai Krylov (Ukraine), Peter Letkemann (Canada), John Staples (11SA), Peter Klassen (USA), Petr Wiebe (Russia)

Deadline: Proposals for original individual papers, panels, or roundtables, including a brief (2-3 page) abstract must be submitted no later than 1 December 2003. For information and the submission of proposals contact:

N.V. Krylov - krylov@mpu.melitopol.net or John Staples - staples@fredonia.edu

The Conference will seek to cover the costs of tourist-class travel, accommodation and maintenance for participants from the CIS.

Honourary chairs for the Conference, additional Conference Conveners and a list of sponsoring institutions, will be announced at a later date.

Mennonites and Refugees: A 25 Year Retrospective

A history conference examining the interaction between North American Mennonites and refugees will take place on September 30 and October 1, 2005, at the University of Winnipeg. The conference is held on the 25th anniversary of the coming of the so-called Vietnamese 'Boat People' and other Southeast Asian refugees in 1979/1980. This was a time when many Canadian and American Mennonites became directly involved in refugee sponsorship.

Research papers are welcomed on one of the following four themes:

1. the historic, cultural and theological context which led North American Mennonites to take leading roles in refugee sponsorship programs;
- 2) the cross-cultural experience of both the refugees and the Mennonite hosts during the months of actual sponsorship and settlement
- 3) the organizational response by Mennonite institutions such as MCC Canada and other institutions to the coming of the refugees
- 4) the long-term inter-ethnic relationships – direct and indirect – between Canadian/American Mennonites and newcomers from the southern hemisphere, specifically those from Africa, Latin America and Southeast Asia

The conference organizers also welcome submissions for storytelling by both hosts and refugees.

Please send proposals to: Royden Loewen, Chair in Mennonite Studies, University of Winnipeg, 515 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. R3B 2E9 or email to: r.Loewen@uwinnipeg.ca

The conference will take place in Eckhardt Gramatte Hall at the University of Winnipeg on Friday, September 30 and Saturday, October 1, 2005

The conference is hosted by the Chair in Mennonite Studies, University of Winnipeg. It is sponsored by the Divergent Voices of Canadian Mennonites subcommittee of the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada with funds from Mennonite Central Committee Canada.

Members of the Planning Committee include: Sandy Dooley, Ionka Hristozova, Larry Kehler, Royden Loewen, Ken Reddig, Stephanie Stobbe, Tim Wichert.

Summary of Board Meeting May 14, 2003

by Paul Friesen, Secretary

The MMHS Board met on May 14, 2003 at the Plum Coulee New Horizon Senior's Centre. Cleo Heinrichs and Aaron and Mary Rempel hosted the meeting. In addition to reports from the standing committees, presentations were given by the

Conscientious Objectors Monument Committee and the Oral History Committee.

The board of directors supported a motion to convene a symposium on conscientious objectors under the auspices of the Chair of Mennonite Studies at the University of Winnipeg in 2006 or earlier. The board also approved funding for the Oral History Committee so that the interviewing of

post-WW II Mennonite immigrants could proceed. The celebration of the 25th anniversary of the MMHS was also discussed, but a proposal still needs to be developed. Since the preparation of the 2002 audited financial statement had not been completed, its presentation to the board was tabled until the fall meeting, scheduled for Oct. 16, 2003 at the Niverville Mennonite Church.

Review — “The Pacifist Who Went to War”

by: **Tina Fehr Kehler**

“The Pacifist Who Went to War” depicts the division within the Southern Manitoba Mennonite community over the participation of Mennonite men in WW II. This division left lingering wounds that were reopened with the erection of the monument in Winkler in 1999 dedicated to the soldiers who died in combat. The documentary considers the division from the perspective of two brothers, John and Ted Friesen, who chose differing paths during the war. Ted remained convinced of his pacifist upbringing and served as a conscientious objector (CO) while John decided to join the war effort as a serviceman. Reflections by other CO's and servicemen as well as historical and contextual comments by author Rudy Wiebe comprise the rest of the film. The latter seems most appropriate considering his first novel “Peace Shall Destroy Many” dealt directly with this issue unearthing these deep seated tensions within the Mennonite community.

The film depicts a relatively balanced view of two positions, those seeking alternative service and those deciding upon military service. It was appropriate that authority was given to those who endured the struggles, and thus the film focused on their voices rather than those of historians. Narration presented historical and contextual data as an unbiased source. As is the pitfall of a documentary, the background information was extremely simplified. At times, misinformation given by speakers was not corrected.

The film's subjects discussed the precipitating ideas and events that led to the differing responses to the war. Historically, Mennonites have held strongly to a pacifist position leading many to request alternative service. Their pacifist position, along with their German culture and

sympathy towards Germany early in the war led to suspicions by Anglo neighbours. Many Mennonite men enlisted to quell these impressions while others did so for excitement, to do one's duty to their new country or, as John stated, to sacrifice himself as others around him were doing. At times the CO's were depicted as unable to articulate their positions and Rudy Wiebe's comments

were used to help express the pacifist position.

The documentary also portrayed the ramifications of the division within the community. The daughter of a serviceman reflected on her mother's experience of discrimination by other Mennonites during and after the war. The return of CO's and officers deepened the division. CO's remained adamant about pacifism, decrying the war and its atrocities while condemning those who fought. Servicemen did not regret their actions and were offended by the community's lack of acceptance. Discussions with Mennonite youth project the image that the ensuing silence about this issue has left a vacuum regarding pacifist beliefs. It is unfortunate that the directors of the film did not balance this segment with a discussion with Mennonite youth who are passionate about the peace position.

Also largely omitted in this documentary are the voices and experiences of women during this struggle. This omission reinforces the presupposition that war is a male affair affecting women peripherally if at all.

John and Ted's divergent stories coupled with their continued love and respect for each other, carries an element of possible reconciliation for the entire community.

