

HERITAGE POSTING

Newsletter of the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society

No. 43 January 2004

Remembering the Burwaldi District

by Dorothy E. Dyck

On September 21, 2003, the Burwalde School District's former students celebrated the 115th anniversary of the school's founding. The event celebrated the contributions made by former residents. It recaptured the bond of mutual trust and love that continues to unite us, even after many years of separation.

Burwaldi School was located on Number 3 Highway, in southern Manitoba. Not only did the children receive their elementary education here, but also the residents were involved in the community center, where citizens of diverse backgrounds learned tolerance, understanding, and acceptance of one another.

Many of the celebrants, who were at the anniversary, are fourth and fifth generation descendants of the early settlers. The first settlers arrived in 1875. In 1876, Mennonites from Russia began arriving in the West Reserve, and settled in villages. However, after several years, adventurous young men sought opportunities outside the village setting. They applied for grants of land offered by the Canadian Government to men willing to clear and cultivate the virgin soil. Many of these Mennonite émigrés moved out of the West Reserve, and settled in the Burwalde district. Through the years, the settlers strove to make the land productive, and were rewarded for their efforts. The farms prospered, and the settlement became a thriving community. Mutual interests and interaction among residents helped to develop a unique community.

Furthermore, spiritual awareness



The Burwaldi School which burned on January 21, 1937.

— File Photos

was fostered. In 1921, Sunday School was introduced by a teacher, Jacob E. Suderman, and in 1940, another teacher, Peter B. Krahn, organized the Young People's Christian Society. These institutions continued until the school closed in 1977.

The people of Burwalde commemorated important anniversaries of their sojourn in the community. The Diamond Jubilee of 1948 marked sixty years of progress. Some original settlers were still able to participate. The ninetieth anniversary in 1978 gave tribute to the forefathers. The Centennial Celebration of 1988 brought many members from distant places to the festivities. These were occasions of remembrance and renewed friendships.

At the reunion of September 21, 2003, the significant happenings of the community in the past 115 years were recalled. Of particular significance to Burwaldeans was a candle-lighting ceremony performed by family members on behalf of members and adherents that have passed away since the centennial reunion of 1988. We were all deeply moved by the knowledge that a host of friends are no longer with us. The ceremony concluded with the assembly

(Continued on page 2)



Burwaldi School, a familiar landmark for many years.

credit?

(Continued from page 1)

singing the old gospel song "When the Roll is Called up Yonder." We left with the thought that love for one another still unites us in spirit. We parted, hoping to meet again.

Burwalde District Celebrates 115 Years

by Marjorie Hildebrand

On Sunday afternoon, September 21 close to 200 people gathered at the Winkler Bible Camp to celebrate. People had come from BC, Ontario, Alberta and even from the US. The theme for the 115th anniversary of the Burwalde School district was "To God be the Glory". Arnie Neufeld, Winkler, gave a short history of the beginning of the M.B. Church of Canada which began the same year.

In the absence of the key organizer, Isaac Froese, who suffered a stroke 10 days prior to the event, Marjorie Hildebrand, another committee member took over the chair position. She gave tribute to Burwalde pioneers as part of a candle lighting ceremony to remember the 89 loved ones once connected with the district. These had passed away since 1988, when Burwalde celebrated its centennial.

Dorothy Dyck, a former teacher, led the group in some old favorites hymns. Eight short tributes were given by descendants of long-time Burwalde residents. Door prizes gave special interest as all items were made by people who were connected with Burwalde. The old school bell called everyone's attention each time numbers were drawn for prizes.

Many former Burwaldians brought memorabilia to jog memories of the past. The large camp dining hall buzzed with conversation during the meal served by a very capable food committee.

A wealth of material is available for a history of Burwalde. Several individuals are preparing a journal, to record the important events of the past, the achievements of our predecessors, and the activities of the present generation. A committee, working to make this happen, provided some materials for a display. Interest in a book project seemed to be high.

Co-editors

Gilbert Brandt & Bert Friesen

Editorial Committee

Ed Hoeppner (chair), Gilbert Brandt,
Elmer Heinrichs, Bert Friesen

Layout

Ted Barg

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
ISSN 1491-2325

Why so large photos ↓

Family history awards



The Henry E. Plett Memorial Award for Family Histories were awarded recently. Both winners are from W.C. Miller Collegiate in Altona. The first prize was awarded to **Andrew Giesbrecht** for his paper entitled "Helena (Heinrichs) Schroeder (Dec. 24, 1892-Nov. 8, 1996)." The winner of the 2nd prize was **Kathleen Penner** for her paper entitled "John Nickel (1926-1996)."

The contest, aimed at Manitoba high school students, seeks to encourage research and writing on a family history subject. The Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society "Genealogy Committee" administers the competition.

For additional details see: <http://www.mmhs.org/plett.htm>.

Alf Redekopp, Chair
Genealogy Committee,
Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society

Families Celebrate 100 Years in Canada

To Gretna, Manitoba via Rail from New York
by Esther Brandt Born and Julia Born Toews

A large banner stretched across the room declaring "100 years in Canada 1903-2003". Excitement was evident as the five families taking part in this celebration arrived at the Matsqui Centennial Court in Abbotsford on Sunday, October 26th, 2003. Each family set up various displays of maps, charts, pictures and family genealogy books.

The organizing committee had prepared programs and guest books, besides a large rose covered cake with "100 years in Canada" printed on it. Julia Toews, a member of the Brandt family, and a key organizer for this occasion, chaired the program.

The Mayor of Abbotsford, Mary Reeves, in her words of welcome, related a short story of her own family coming to Canada from Russia some years ago. She recalled that her father used to put on *Dankfests*—celebrations of thanks for being able to live productive lives in Canada. A spokesperson from each family related a memorable incident that had happened on their arrival in Canada in 1903. All the participating families had come to Canada in 1903. Although numerous other families immigrated at the same time, the following families participated in this celebration: Brandts, Thiessens, Nickels, von Niessens and Bahnmanns. These immigrants came to Manitoba at Gretna. They had arrived in New York from Russia, traveled by Great Northern Railway to Manitoba. This railway, known as "The Empire Builder" was owned by a man who sought out settlers to develop the farmland adjacent to the rail lines.

The B.C. Mennonite Historical Society and the Abbotsford Genealogy Society were also represented.

In closing the Hon. Michael deJong, the local MLA, gave a fitting speech on the importance of an occasion like this, of preserving the stories of our families, and showing their part in the development of Canada.

Julia Toews, chairperson for the celebration, prepared a display for the event which has since been placed in the Tretheway House Gallery for a showing. This display, "One Family's Journey" depicts her ancestors coming to Gretna, Manitoba and settling on the land.



A number of families arrived in New York, in the spring of 1903, on the S.S. Victoria before taking the long train ride to Gretna Manitoba.

Corrections and Observations

The following corrections should be noted for the article on "House's Hotel" in the September 2003 issue of Heritage Posting.

- page 1 Photo captions; lower left - the photo of small log house should be 'replica log house across the highway from the site of Cuthbert Grant's former log 'manor'
- Upper right - (view from the east - 'House's Hotel?')
- Middle of the left column, replace "... both Pigeon Lake and St. Francois Xavier. . . known as White Plains; " by ". . . the entire region of Pigeon Lake and St. Francois Xavier was known as White Horse Plains;"
- Middle of the page right column - replace "White Plains" by "White Horse Plains"
- page 3 Photo captions; upper photo should be (interior view - hole in roof)
- lower photo should be (Rudy Friesen and Red River cart). In the 19th century Grantown oblique White Horse Plains became a major centre for Red River cart construction.
- Photo credits for these two photos — Lawrence Klippenstein.
- The site of the large log building, which may, or may not, be House's Hotel, is approximately 22 miles west of the Schoenfelder Mennonite Church. The question of how and when it was moved there from near the Schoenfelder Mennonite Church must be answered before any conclusion can be arrived at whether it really was House's Hotel. Research on this and the actual age of the building is being pursued.

SUMMARY OF OCT. 16, 2003 MMHS BOARD MEETING

The Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society Board met in the Niverville Mennonite Church for its fall board meeting on Oct. 16, 2003. Before the board began to deal with the agenda for the meeting, Alvin Podjan, a local businessman, councillor and member of the Niverville Historical Society provided an interesting presentation on the history of Niverville. The audited financial statement for 2002 was approved and reports were heard from the standing committees and the CO Monument Committee as well as about the Oral History Project sponsored by the Society, and Mennonite Human Rights Museum Inc.

Decisions were made to support the work of Mennonite Human Rights Museum Inc. and to appoint Roland Sawatzky as the Society's representative on this committee, to increase single and couple's membership dues and to contribute \$500.00 toward the CO website project from the 2004 budget. A proposal to assist a group planning to erect a monument at Edenburg was also given approval in principle.

The annual general meeting is scheduled for Feb. 7, 2004 in Altona and the next meeting of the board will be held at the Centre for MB Studies on Feb. 24, 2004.

Glances at our Manitoba Churches

Profiling Two Winnipeg Churches

by Bert Friesen

The Mennonite Brethren Presence

The Mennonite presence in Winnipeg began in 1907 with a baptism of individuals who had met in homes for Bible study. A church building was obtained for this group in 1913 and moved to the North End. The congregation moved a number of times in the next twenty years, settling at McGregor and College in 1929 and at Elmwood on Henderson in 1954. Another group at Springstein began a building project for a meeting place in 1938. The North Kildonan congregation began in 1928 and built its first meeting place in 1929. This building was enlarged but in 1957 a new meeting place was built.

The South End congregation began in 1928 at 95 Macdonald Street, then moved to Princess Street, then in 1933 to Ross Avenue. It officially organized as a congregation in 1936. In 1940 a larger meeting place was purchased on William Avenue. This congregation divided in 1960 and formed the Portage Avenue and Central congregations.



The North End Mennonite Brethren Church in Winnipeg, a building which the MBBC students used, ca. 1940.

— M.B. Archives

The Gospel Light Mission, begun in 1949, became the Logan Avenue congregation in 1960 and later became the Salem congregation. At the same time, this mission spawned the Fort Rouge congregation in the 1950s and then in the 1960s the Fort Garry congregation. The River East congregation grew out of the North Kildonan congregation in the 1960s. The Brooklands congregation grew out of the South End congregation in 1957.

The leaders of the North Kildonan congregation were: Herman Klassen (1930-1933), H.M. Janzen (1933-1937), Gerhard Epp (1938-1942), A. Heinrich Toews (1942-1950), I. W. Redekopp (1950-1953), William Falk (1953-1964), Victor Toews (1965), Wm. Neufeld (1966-1978), Roland Marsch (1979-1986), Victor Toews (1987), John Epp (1988-1993), Alvin Enns (1994), Johannes Stolz (1995-1998), Bob Marsch (1999), George Klassen (2000-). The leaders of the North End congregation were: F. C. Thiessen (1941-1943), B. B. Fast (1944-1949), and D. D. Dürksen (1950-1953). The leaders of the South End congregation were: P. Kornelsen (1936-1946), H. H. Janzen (1947-1949), J. P. Neufeld (1950-1961), H. R. Baerg (1962).

The Mennonite Church in Winnipeg

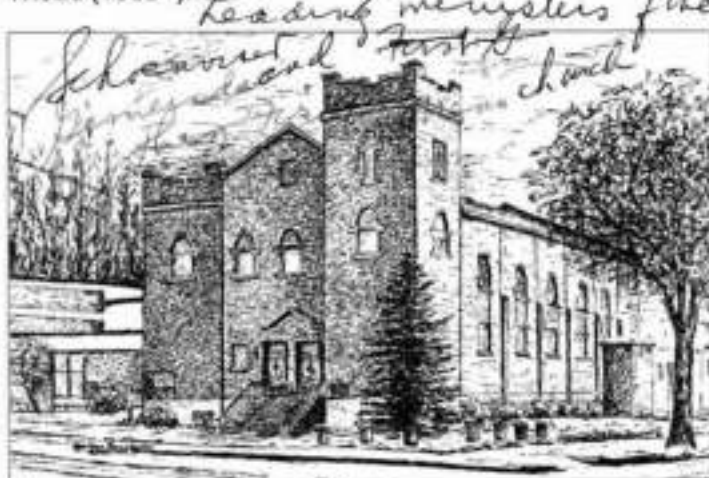
First Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, traces its beginning to the founding of the Schönwieser Mennoniten Gemeinde in Manitoba in 1926. As early as 1907 Ältester Benjamin Ewert had provided spiritual services to Mennonites living in Winnipeg. He eventually moved to Winnipeg from Altona in 1921.

The number of Mennonite families in Winnipeg increased with the 1920s migration of Mennonites from Russia. With this increase the Canadian Mennonite conference asked Ältester Johann Klassen, one of these immigrants who lived in Starbuck, to minister to the Winnipeg families as well. Soon these immigrants were the majority within this group. They organized in 1926 as the Schönwieser Mennoniten Gemeinde. The name Schönwieser came from the name of the congregation Ältester Klassen had led in the Chortitza Colony, South Russia.

In 1929 Ältester Klassen moved to Winnipeg. During the early years this congregation met in rented facilities. A centre of activity was the Mädchenheim (girl's home). Then they met in, and later purchased, the Zion Reformed Church building on Alexander Avenue. Eventually, in 1950, they built their own meeting house on Notre Dame and Alverstone.

This building was expanded in 1958 and again in 1983. The congregation was instrumental in founding the Concordia Hospital, the Mennonitische Religionschule von Winnipeg, the Bethania Personal Care Home, and

Westgate Mennonite Collegiate among many others. The Schönwieser Mennoniten Gemeinde had many meeting places during the 1920s. Eventually several additional congregations emerged out of the First Mennonite Church, Winnipeg. The last of these, in 1971, was Oak Lake. The leaders of the congregation were: G. A. Peters (1925-1930), Johann Klassen (1926-1943), John H. Enns (1939-1964), J. H. Wiebe (1965-1973) [he was Ältester and the last to be so referred until 1971], John Neufeld (1973-1983), Victor Kliever (1984-1985), Franz Wiebe (1986-).



First Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.

— Sketched by Marlene Neustaedter

Bergthal Migration to the West Reserve

by Elmer Heinrichs

The "Bergthal" migration from the Mennonite East Reserve (ER) to the West Reserve (WR) from about 1876-1882 was viewed from several perspectives by various speakers at the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society's fall local history workshop in Neuberghthal Nov. 8.

Neuberghthal, today a national historical site, was one of the villages settled here by the emigrating Bergthaler, along with Halbstadt, Edenthal, Sommerfeld, Edenburg, Neuanlage, Schoenhorst, Silberfeld, Gnadenfeld, Old Altona, Blumenthal, and Strassberg, though the latter two did not develop into villages.

Historian Lawrence Klippenstein says the "haphazard movement of large numbers of Bergthaler," as E.K. Francis described the migration, involved a further uprooting of about half the Bergthal families who had come from the Ukraine to the Mennonite Reserve a few years earlier.

This move by as many as 1,500 to 2,000 people led to the establishment of another distinct Mennonite church community. Klippenstein suggests that the year 2003 might well be considered the 125th anniversary of the Bergthaler Church on the West Reserve. With these families would come the usual body of mostly very industrious people who would help develop the area more successfully economically. They had a decidedly different attitude toward accommodation to their Canadian environment than their Reinlaender cousins to the west.

These were communities who could cope with major changes such as the institution of municipalities, the introduction of public schools, as well as the urbanizing influences that were thrust upon them with the emergence of railway trading centres from 1882 on, adds Klippenstein.

Henry Fast, East Reserve historian, told how one community, Gruenfeld, was impacted by Bergthalers leaving for the West Reserve. Some fairly good land accrued to Gruenfeld residents as farmers left to establish new homesteads and villages at Altbergthal, Gruenthal, Edenburg and elsewhere.

Adolf Ens spoke about the religious ferment in the Mennonite communities of Manitoba in the context of the relocation. He noted that church leaders of all three groups – Kleine Gemeinde, Bergthaler and Reinlaender – had hoped to establish a more faithful practice in Manitoba.

Inferior settlement possibilities on the East Reserve led to resettlement of many Bergthaler on the West. Geographic distance hindered the ER Chortitzer leadership in implementing any intended renewal efforts, and this made the WR

Bergthaler more vulnerable to outside influences.

The abrupt resignation of Bishop Gerhard Wiebe in March 1882 weakened the leadership of the Chortitzer Church. To minister more adequately to the Bergthal settlers locating in the eastern part of the WR, Bishop David Stoesz ordained Johann Funk of Altbergthal in 1882.

Funk's openness to innovations in religious style and higher education led to an eventual division of the Bergthaler in the 1890s, resulting in the formation of the Sommerfelder Church in 1893, added Ens.

Dave Sawatzky reported on plans for a Halbstadt history book for the village of Halbstadt, and districts of Blumenthal and Strassberg— "a unique area—the last part of the WR to be settled. It was already partly settled by English, Ukrainians and French people on the north."

These districts consisted of only 24 sections – first land was bought Sept. 1, 1879 – but of 90 early landowners less than half a dozen owners were listed in the 1918 records. Many must have moved away.

During the lunch hour, prepared by members of the Neuberghthal community, historians took a tour of an older house-barn combination, and received an update on developments at Neuberghthal by Margruite Krahn.

Writer-historian John J. Friesen, who wrote a soon-to-be-published modern history of *Mennonites in Manitoba* noted that he had become aware of all kinds of gaps in recorded history.

In his research Friesen had been surprised at the number of Mennonite women working in medicine before the 1900s. Friesen further added, "Why were most hospitals developed in the 1930s and '40s? And work is needed on the role of midwives and chiropractors, and on early music."

Rose Hildebrand (foreground) and other historians at the workshop.

— Photos by Elmer Heinrichs



Built in 1901 by the youngest of six Hamm brothers who settled in Neuberghthal, and long the home of Abram and Margaret Friesen, this property is now being restored.

GENEALOGY — The Early Mennonite Gerbrandt Family

Part 1

By Glenn Penner*

The Gerbrandt Name — The origin of the family name Gerbrandt (or Gerbrand) is quite simple; it was derived from the first name *Gerbrandt*. This is an ancient Germanic name which seems to have been most popular among the Dutch, and is still in use in the Netherlands.

Gerbrandt must be one of the oldest documented Mennonite family names. The earliest reference to a Mennonite Gerbrandt is to Dirk Gerbrands, a carpenter from Weesp in northern Holland who lived in Danzig around 1549.¹ The former city of Danzig is now Gdansk in Poland. As one will see from the lists and family groupings produced below, the first name *Dirk* (or *Diedrich*) was a rather common name in the Gerbrandt family for many centuries after Dirk Gerbrands.

Unfortunately, over the following period of nearly 200 years only 2 Gerbrandts are documented. The Reichenberg Lutheran records show a child of Dirk who died on March 19 of 1623 at the age of 4 weeks.² On October 24, 1694 Ancke (Anna) Gerbrandt married Bastian (Sebastian) Esau. She died on Nov. 21, 1698 at the age of 22 years. Bastian Esau lived in Orlofffelde in West Prussia, about 18 miles (29 km) south-east of Danzig.³ According to Gustav Reimers *Familiennamen*, the next mention of the name Gerbrandt is found in the Frisian Mennonite church records of Danzig in 1712.⁴ Unfortunately these records were lost during the Second World War, and all attempts to find them or the copies that were taken to South America have failed.⁵

That the Gerbrandts, like many of the Mennonites of the Danzig area, moved south-east into a region known as the Gross Werder is clearly demonstrated by the Brandordenung of 1727.⁶ The Brandordenung was a fire insurance register which covered a large area of the Gross Werder. The following Gerbrandts, and the amount of land they owned, are found in the Brandordenung:

Name	Village	Hufen	Morgen
Arendt	Klein Maudorf	2	15
Derck	Tiege	3	
Hans	Rückenau	1	
Peter	Einlage	3	

One Hufen (about 41 Acres) is equal to 30 Morgen.

Since the Brandordenung covered only part of the area in which the Mennonites lived, and since it included only those people who insured their property (and not those who rented), one can assume that there were several more Gerbrandt families in the Danzig and Gross Werder regions in 1727.

One might think that with at least 4 Gerbrandt families living in West Prussia in 1727 that by the 1770's (about 2 generations) the number of families would have increased significantly. This is not the case; largely due to the rather high infant mortality and short life expectancy of those

years. The following Gerbrandt families are found in the 1772 census of West Prussia⁷:

Name	Village	Occupation	H	W	S ^a	S ^b	D ^a	D ^b	H	M
Cornelius	Tiege		1	1	0	0	0	0		15
Dirck	Alt Rosengart		1	1	0	0	0	0		not given
Jacob	Reinland		1	1	0	0	0	0		not given
Johan	Blumenort		1	1	0	1	3	0		8.5
Johan	Neukrügerskamp	laborer	1	1	0	1	1	1		no land
Johan	Tiegenhagen		1	1	1	1	0	1		1
Peter	Schönsee	weaver	1	1	2	0	0	0		not given
Thomas	Gross Wickerau		1	1	0	1	0	0		15
Wilhelm	Orlofffelde	carpenter	1	1	0	0	0	0		not given

H=Husband, W=Wife, S=sons, D=daughters, ^a indicates less than 12 years old, ^b indicates over 12 years.

There is also a special census of Mennonites in East and West Prussia for 1776 which provides the following information⁸:

Name	Village	Occupation	H	W	S	D
Claas	Tiege	Farmer	1	1	0	1
Derck	Einlage	Farmer	1	1	0	0
Dirck	Oberkerbswalde	Farmer	1	1	2	0
Hans	Blumenort	Farmer	1	1	1	2
Hans	Tiegenhagen	Farmer	1	1	3	1
Jacob	Powunden	Farmer	1	1	0	0
Jacob	Küche	Farmer	1	1	1	2
Nathaniel	Neustädterwald	Farmer	1	1	0	0
Thomas	Gross Wickerau	Farmer	1	1	2	1
Wilhelm	Orlofffelde	Farmer	1	1	0	1

All of the families listed above were landowners (Eigentümer). I have not included economic status or numbers of male and female servants.

The censuses of 1772 and 1776 are the most complete lists available. The Danzig district was not covered by the 1776 census since it was not yet in Prussian territory. The 1793 census of this region does not include any Gerbrandts.

In 1789 the Prussian government conducted a census of Mennonite landowners.⁹ The following Gerbrandts are found in this census:

Name	Village	Hufen	Morgen
Clas	Neustädterwald		6.5
Dierk	Kerbswald Obertrift		12
Dirck	Rückenau		no land holdings given
Doerk	Rosenkranz		no land holdings given
Jacob	Insel Küche		10
Jacob	Schweiggrube		4
Johann	Klein Maudorf	1	4
Johann	Augustwald		2
Johann	Schönhorst		15
Nathaniel	Neustädterwald		15
Thomas	Gross Wickerau		14
Wilhelm	Orlofffelde		14

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

Around this time at least one quarter of all Mennonite families in West Prussia were landless and were not included in this census. One further census is of interest here. That is a census of Mennonites in the Elbing (now Elbląg, Poland) administrative district.¹⁰ The following Gerbrandts are found in this census:

Blumenort	
Dirk Gerbrandt	48 years
Wife	40
Son	15
Son	4
Daughter	9
Daughter	5
Oberkerbswalde	
Wilhelm Gerbrandt	46 years
Wife	32
Son	9
Son	10(?)
Daughter	10(?)
Daughter	10(?)

In 1773 the Prussian government, which had just taken over the majority of territory where the Mennonites lived, ordered all Mennonite churches to keep records of vital statistics (i.e. births, marriages and deaths). Although many of these registers are gone forever, those that remain are a rich source of information on the early Mennonites, including the Gerbrandt family. In addition, Mennonites are included in many Catholic and Lutheran church records; mainly burial registers. This was because the Mennonites were not allowed to have their own graveyards, but were required to pay the local Catholic or Lutheran churches for the right to use their cemeteries. Beginning in 1800 the Prussian government required the Lutheran church (which was the Prussian state church) to keep vital statistics on local Mennonites.

This article is an attempt to integrate as much of the currently available information on the early Gerbrandt family as possible into family groups. I will concentrate on the West Prussian Gerbrandts up to the early 1800's.

In Russia and North America the family name Gerbrandt is considered to be rare. This is not the case in West Prussia. The West Prussian church registers record individual births, baptisms, marriages and deaths. Therefore the family units must be reconstructed from these sparse, unconnected entries. This is impossible to do without making a number of assumptions. Integrating data from many different sources is also more prone to errors, than simply transcribing records. Adding to the confusion is the popularity, and thus repeated use, of certain first names among some Mennonite families. In the case of Gerbrandt, Dirk was very popular, followed by Jacob and Johann. I invite those who can provide further insight into these family connections, or have additional information to contact me.

Before going further it should be pointed out that the

very rare Mennonite family name Gerban is not the same as Gerbrandt. The Gerbans of West Prussia were descended from Martin Gerban, who was one of the Mennonites expelled from Lithuania in 1724 and settled in West Prussia.¹¹ This name seems to have died out by the mid-1800's.

Arend Gerbrandt b. ca. 1681
m. 1703-1710 d. Jan. 10, 1755
1st wife unknown b. 16??
d. Apr. 14, 1722

Son	b. ca. 1712	d. Jan. 16, 1720
Son	b.	d. Jan. 22, 1720
Child	b.	d. May 21, 1721
Child	b.	d. Aug. 2, 1723

2nd m. 1720's

Sara	b.	d. Sep. 22, 1729
Child	b.	d. Dec. 28, 1729

3rd m. Jan. 8, 1730

Catharina Classen	b. May 8, 1708 Rückenau, W. Prussia
	d.

Daughter	b.	d. May 23, 1736
Daughter	b.	d. Sep. 14, 1736

This family was *Flemish*.

Information on Catharina Claassen comes from the Hermann Thiessen collection.¹²

Fürstenau Lutheran Burial Records 17?? – 1808.¹³

Gross Mausdorf Lutheran Burial Records.¹⁴

This family lived in Klein Mausdorf and Krebsfeld

He is probably the Arend who lived in Klein Mausdorf in 1727.

Arend Gerbrandt is listed as a "Prediger" in the Rosenort (Flemish) Gemeinde in the Dutch "Namljst" in 1743.¹⁵

Claas Gerbrandt b. before 1754
d. after 1789

Son	b. ca 1774	d. July 23, 1778
-----	------------	------------------

He lived in Tiege (also referred to as Tiegerfeld) in 1776 and 1778. He later (1789) lived in Neustädterwald. The death of his adopted son is mentioned in the Ladekopp (Flemish) Church records.¹⁶

Dirk Gerbrandt b. Sep. 6, 1745 West Prussia
m. d. Oct. 20, 1806 Klein Usnitz, W. Prussia

Catharina	b. May 6, 1779 Rosenkranz	m 1795
		to Peter Frantzen
Anna	b. Sep. 8, 1781 Rosenkranz	d. Dec. 16, 1797

This family was *Frisian*.

Tragheimerweide Frisian Church Records.¹⁷

This family is recorded as living in Rosenkranz, West Prussia, in 1779, 1781, 1789, 1793, 1795, and 1797.

It is very possible that Dirk was the son of Hans Gerbrandt of Tiegengagen, who was baptized in 1761 into the Orlofferfelde (Frisian) church.¹⁸ He likely lived in that area

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

until 1777. This is when the Orlofferfelde church records indicate that a Dirk Gerbrandt moved to the Tragheimerweide region.

N.B. This Dirk is incorrectly identified in the Grandma database as the Dirk Gerbrandt who moved to the Chortitza Colony in Russia.¹⁹ This is simply incorrect because a) this Dirk died in Prussia and b) this Dirk was Frisian, while the village of Chortitza was exclusively Flemish during the time that a Dirk Gerbrandt is recorded as living there.

Dirk Gerbrandt b. m.
Helena Katt b. ca 1738 d. Feb. 4, 1803 Neustädterwald, W. Prussia

This family was *Frisian*.

The death of Helena Katt is found in the Jungfer Lutheran Burial Records.²⁰ and the Orlofferfelde (Frisian) Mennonite records.¹⁸ This Dirk is difficult to place in any of the census or village lists.

Dirk Gerbrandt b. ca 1752 West Prussia
 1st m. 1772-75 d. Sep. ??, 1801
 Chortitza, Chortitza Colony, Russia
Agatha Dyck b. d. 1786 West Prussia
Agatha b. ca 1777 bapt. 1795
David b. Apr. 1778 d. Sep. 15, 1778
Arend b. ca 1779 d. Apr. 3, 1780
Anna b. Feb. 18, 1781 m. Wilhelm Zacharias

2nd m. Katharina b. d.

Dirk b. ca 1788
Helena b. June 3, 1794 d. young
Maria b. ca 1796
Helena b. ca 1798

This Family was *Flemish*.

Daughter Agatha was baptized into the Flemish church in Ladekopp, West Prussia.¹⁶

I believe that Henry Schapansky has correctly identified this Dirk of Chortitza as the one who lived in Einlage in 1776.²¹ His two infant sons, David and Arend, died in Einlage according to the Lutheran Church records of Elbing/Neuheide.²² He was probably married after the 1772 census. He likely sold his property by 1789. According to B.H. Unruh's list he came to Russia in 1796.²³ According to Russian archival material translated in Peter Rempel's book he came in 1795.²⁴ He is listed in the 1801 Chortitza Colony Census in the village of Chortitza.²⁵ His surviving wife remarried to Johann Penner, who is recorded as possessing the farm in 1806.^{20,23}

Dirk Gerbrandt b. before 1740
 m. d. 1776-81 Ober Kerbswald, W. Prussia
 ??? b. d.

Jacob b. about 1760-62 m. Margaretha Dirksen (1802)
Dirk b. about 1760-65

This family was *Frisian* but later became *Flemish*.

According to the diary of Ältester Gerhard Wiebe of the Elbing-Ellerwald (Flemish) church son Jacob appeared before the church council on Oct. 11, 1781 due to his "schlechten Lebensart" in that he had drank too much and danced in the Einlage tavern.²⁸ At this time he is referred to as the step-son of Paul Klaassen. Paul Klaassen was living in Tiegenhagen in 1772 but had moved to Oberkerbswalde by 1776, where he was recorded as a land owner. Son Dirk Gerbrandt may have inherited his fathers land as he is recorded as owning 12M of land (compare to 12.5 for his father in 1772) in Ober Kerbswald in 1789.

Dirk Gerbrandt b. ca 1763
 m. June 23, 1796 d.
Susanna Ketler b. ca 1771 d.

Cornelius b. Sep. 3, 1797 bapt. 1813
Susanna b. Jan. 20, 1799 d. Nov. 30 1802
Anna b. ca 1800 bapt. 1819
Maria b. July 6, 1800 d. Jan. 22, 1804
Susanna b. (Oct. 2?), 1802 d. young
Dirk b. ca 1805 d. Mar. 14, 1807
Susanna b. Feb. 15, 1806
Maria b. ca 1811 d. Mar. 1, 1813
Johann b. Apr. 6, 1812

This family was *Frisian*.

Dirk Gerbrandt was married in the Thiensdorf-Marcushof (Frisian) Gemeinde in the region known as the Klein Werder.²⁷ They then (before 1797) moved to the village of Orloff in the Gross Werder but remained members of the Thiensdorf-Marcushof church. Sometime between 1800 and 1802 they moved to the nearby village of Fürstenau.¹³ The baptisms of the children are recorded in the church books of the local Orlofferfelde (Frisian) Gemeinde.¹⁸ In 1822 Dirk Gerbrandt sold his land to Heinrich Classen.²⁸ It is not known what happened to this family after 1822.

Dirk Gerbrandt b. before 1780
 m. d. 1857 Klein Nessau, West Prussia
Katharina Goerz b. before 1790 d.

Johann b. Oct. 28, 1808 m. Katharina Schroeder

This family was *Frisian*.

Dirk became a minister (Prediger) in the Thorn (Frisian) Mennonite church in 1815.²⁹ He sold his land in 1834 to non-Mennonite Heinrich Knopf.³⁰ Earlier records from the Thorn area mention no Gerbrandts, so it can be assumed that he originated from elsewhere in West Prussia. His son

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

Johann sold his land in 1837 and moved to Poland sometime between then and 1841.³⁰ In 1875 Johann and his family moved to Kansas.³¹

Heinrich Gerbrandt b. ca 1741
m. d. Sep. 28, 1796 Tiergart, W. Prussia
??? b.
d.

This family was *Frisian*.

The death of Heinrich is found in the records of the Thiensdorf-Marcushof (Frisian) Gemeinde.²⁶

Heinrich Gerbrandt b. ca 1743
m. d. Dec. 19, 1809 Klein Wickerau,
West Prussia
??? b.
d.

Heinrich b. ca 1776 d. June 4, 1777
(Heinrich b. d. Oct. 13, 1791
(Catharina b. ca 1792 d. Nov. 22, 1795

This family was *Flemish*.

According to the burial register of the Lutheran church of Elbing-Neuheide son Heinrich died in Ellerwald.²² The deaths of the other two children are found in the burial register of the Elbing-St. Annen Lutheran church (no village given).³³ Heinrich Gerbrandt is mentioned in the diary of Ältester Gerhard Wiebe of the Elbing-Ellerwald (Flemish) Gemeinde. He had to appear before the church council on March 3, 1785 and on July 31, 1794.²⁶ The death of Heinrich Gerbrandt is found in the burial register of the Elbing-Neuheide Lutheran church. The Mennonites in Ellerwald and Klein Wickerau were exclusively *Flemish*.

Isbrandt Gerbrandt b. ca 1675
d. Feb. 14, 1745 Einlage, W. Prussia

He was probably *Flemish*.

The Mennonites in Einlage were predominantly *Flemish*. His death is recorded in the burial register of the Elbing-Neuheide Lutheran church.²²

Jacob Gerbrandt b. before 1700
m. d. after 1757
Maria b. ca 1703
d. Jan. 2 1767

Hans b. ca 1719 bapt. 1736
Jacob b. ca 1730 bapt. 1747
Anna b. ca 1733 bapt. 1750
Nathaniel b. ca 1735 bapt. 1753
Maria b. ca 1740 bapt. 1757

This family was *Frisian*.

The baptisms of the children are recorded in the Orlofferfelde (Frisian) church register.¹⁸ There is no village mentioned in these records. There is no direct evidence that the children listed above were siblings, and it may be possible that they were from different Jacob Gerbrandt families. Maria's death is found in the Tiegenhagen

Catholic death register.

Jacob Gerbrandt b. ca 1705
m. d. 1772/3
??? b. ca 1703
d. 1774/5

This family was *Frisian*.

The deaths of Jacob Gerbrandt and his widow are recorded in the Orlofferfelde (Frisian) church register.¹⁸

Jacob Gerbrandt b. ca 1736
m. d. Feb. 4, 1784 Neudolstadt, W. Prussia
??? b.
d.

This family was *Frisian*.

The death of Jacob and the remarriage of his widow to David Fröse are recorded in the church books of the Marcushof-Thiensdorf (Frisian) Gemeinde.²⁷

Jacob Gerbrandt b.
m. d.
??? b.
d.

Heinrich b. ca 1745 bapt. 1761
Nathaniel b. ca 1769 d. May 17, 1772

This family was *Frisian*.

The death of son Nathaniel was recorded in the burial register of the Fürstenau Lutheran church.¹³ The baptism of son Heinrich was found in the Orlofferfelde (Frisian) church register.¹⁸ It is possible that this may be the same Jacob Gerbrandt family as above.

Jacob Gerbrandt b. ca 1748
1st m. d. 1802-08 Schweingrube, W. Prussia
???

One son and two daughters, recorded in the 1776 census.

2nd m. Aug. 23, 1798
Maria Jantzen b. Feb. 5, 1776
d. May 12, 1802

no known children

3rd m. Aug. 1, 1802
Catharina Vogt b. Nov. 21, 1781
d.

This family was *Frisian*.

Jacob Gerbrandt was probably the son (baptized in 1765) of Jacob Gerbrandt. The dates shown above come from the Tragheimerweide (Frisian) church records.¹⁷ He is probably the Jacob recorded in Küche (Insel Küche) in 1776 and in Schweingrube in 1789. His last wife remarried in 1808.

(Continued on page 19)

A Visit to James Valley Hutterite Colony

by Bert Friesen

On Saturday, 27 September 2003 a bus tour went to visit the Hutterite colony just south of Elie. It was one of the original colonies formed in Canada (1918) after the Hutterian Brethren decided to leave the USA. The treatment they had received during the First World War, when a few of their members were jailed and two died because of their refusal to enter military service, were major factors in their decision to migrate to Canada. Here they were promised exemption from military service.

The James Valley Colony has just over 100 members with over 20 families. They farm about 3250 hectares (approx. 8000 acres), have dairy and beef cattle mostly for colony use, commercially produce hogs and poultry, and are relatively self-sufficient for all their food needs. They have a colony school until grade 8 and distance learning for their high school aged children. The Colony runs an antique shop, book bindery shop, a bookstore. The Colony has various facilities for their farming and living needs such as a feed mill and a wood shop for making furniture, etc.

The tour included a lecture on sixteen-century Hutterite history, a time of discussion, as well as a tour of the colony to demonstrate their activities. We were served wonderful refreshments, all produced on the colony. Many had an opportunity to converse with individual members of the colony.

I had the opportunity to ask a young boy how he liked school this year. He replied: "I really like

our teacher this year because she does not give us any homework, yet." It is indeed a long day for these students. They begin at 07.55 hr. with their German-language class taught by an appointed colony member. At 09.00 hr. the 'English' teacher takes the rest of the time until 15.30 hr. teaching the provincial curriculum and then there is another hour of German language religious instruction from the same colony member teacher. School finally ends after 16.30 hr. The Colony leaders explained that it is really not a longer day than what most area rural children because the students are on the bus for nearly two hours each day.

This was a very informative tour. Most tour members gained a better understanding of the Hutterian colony life, history and theology.



This original building, built in 1919 when the James Valley Colony was founded, is still in use today.

— Photo by Edith Wiebe

(Continued from page 9)

Jacob Gerbrandt	b. ca 1777	
m.	d.	
Anna Boldt	b. ca 1779	
	d. Feb. 20, 1817	Wilhelms Bruch, West Prussia
Dirk	b. Oct. 1812	d. Dec. 16, 1812 Wilhelms Bruch
Anna	b. ca 1808/9	
2 nd m.		
Agneta Franz	b.	
	d.	
Eva	b. ca 1822	

This family was *Frisian*.

This family probably belonged to the nearby Schönsee

(Frisian) Mennonite church.

The deaths of son Dirk and Anna Boldt are recorded in the Culm Lutheran burial records.³³

According to B. H. Unruh (p. 371) this family moved from Gross Lunau, West Prussia to the Molotschna Colony in Russia in 1823. They are not found in Peter Rempel's book.

At the time of Anna Boldt's death the only surviving child was Anna (age 8).

This family is not found in the 1835 census of the Molotschna colony or any other Russian records for that time period.

To be continued.

References will appear at the end of the last installment of the series on this family.

* e-mail: gpenner@uoguelph.ca

Book Notes

Concordia Hospital has just recently published a second edition of its institutional history in the book **Concordia Hospital: Faith, Health and Community - 75 Years 1828 - 2003** written by Dr. Abe J. Dueck, recently-retired director of the Centre for MB Studies in Winnipeg. It comes in the form of a 105-page 8 1/2 x 11 table top volume version, highly illustrated, thoroughly researched, and giving us a concise yet informative story of an important part of the Mennonite and wider community of Winnipeg. Its appendices include a mission statement and a list of directors who have served since the beginning in 1928.



Ray Dirks, curator of the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery in Winnipeg, is the author of a remarkably well-done volume of photos and text that comprise a publication entitled **In God's Image: A Global Anabaptist Family** (2003, pb., 143 pp., 34.99 hdc., 29.99, pb. CND) It is published by Herald Press at Waterloo, ON, Canada, and Scottdale, PA, USA, in cooperation with Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery and Mennonite World Conference. Editorial assistance was provided by Larry Kehler. The core of the volume is found in hundreds of excellent, descriptively detailed portraits of persons and slices of life from the communities of 17 countries where Mennonites meet for worship and fellowship regularly.

A new family book, **Abram and Justina Dyck (1880 - 1956) History, Story Descendants**, has just been released by its author, Martha Dyck Martens, of Winkler, MB. It is bound in paperback, and has 219 pages, with many photos. For further info, or to place an order, contact the author at emm@mts.net or 225 Pembina Ave. East, Winkler, MB, R6W 3N8.

The Old Colony (Chortitza) story is supplemented significantly by two publications published recently by Arthur Kroeger of Winnipeg. The titles are **"Koloniesgarten" near Rosental** (2003, pb., 30 pp.) and **Biography of Johann Bartsch, the deputy** (2002, pb., 38 pp.). For further info contact the author at 1-204-488-7604.

Also new: Eleanor Hildebrand Chornoboy. **Faspa: A Snack of Mennonite Stories** (Winnipeg: by the author, 2003), 215pp, 28.95. This is a compilation of stories about two second- and third- generation Manitoba Mennonite families who arrived in Canada from south Russia

(Ukraine) in 1874. Learn about their home-grown medical practices, farming with stubborn broncos, toilet training with straw, rural telephone party lines and much more. These stories are spiced with a healthy dose of humour; a deep sense of pathos; and practical, home-grown information.

How to obtain these books:

Unless otherwise specified, all books may be obtained from:

Mennonite Books at 1-204-668-7475 or email to gobrandt@brandtfamily.com

Mennonite Heritage Centre at 1-204-888-6781 or email to aredekopp@mennonitechurch.ca

Correction for Jack Klassen, author of the novel *The Chiropractor* in the December Issue. Correct number is (204) 324-5993.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

As author of *David Heinrich Friesen & Family - 1720 - 2001*, I wish to comment on the book review published in the September 2003 HP. It revealed more about the reviewer's genealogical elitism than the book's unique merits. Although some points were valid, the review relied on a belaboured "Johnny-One-Note" theme: Unless a family history conforms to rigid scholarly standards, it must be dismissed.

Wiebe is troubled by the lack of footnotes or bibliography, but the appendices' anecdotal documentation - all standard sources - is sufficient for all but the most pedantic. The reviewer faults repetition, but failed to notice in the "About This Book" section that it has a laudable genesis: the "Starter Kit" concept, whereby future family historians may "lift" comprehensive information intact to seed their own branch sequels.

Wiebe finds no joy in our many wonderful anecdotes, but simply laments their lack of attribution. She also omits lauding the distinctive margin guides and the rich veins of engaging Mennonite history throughout. Ms. Wiebe's praise appears condescending and is dotted with qualifiers. Elsewhere, her negativity is so transparently gratuitous that I believe your astute readers will have found the review suspect.

The fresh, innovative approach of this professionally designed, award-winning book has been embraced with great enthusiasm by virtually all who have experienced it. While I can understand that originality and departure from convention can be unsettling - or even galling - to some purists, I believe there is room for all treatments in this fascinating genre.

Lynne Ward
Author/Editor/Publisher

Review — Journey into Freedom: One family's real-life drama

Edith Elisabeth Friesen Winnipeg: Raduga Publications, 2003. \$34.95

by **Susan Brandt**

It is 1931. A young mother with a baby and four young children has just been forced out of her home by the authorities. Her husband has been deported. Everything has been confiscated and even her right to work has been withdrawn.

This is the opening scene of Edith Friesen's, *Journey into Freedom*. Friesen allows her two aunts, her uncle and her mother to tell the story of what happened next. Through conversations among the four siblings who are left (the baby died in infancy), the story of their survival in Stalinist Russia, their subsequent flight to Germany and finally their immigration to Canada is told. Friesen fills in the context of the conversations with the history of the time and other events and people who influenced the outcome of this story.

The Dyck family finds new safe places to live in Soviet Russia, only to find their safety disrupted by more violence.

The family is separated, then reunited in Germany. How this comes about, and the risks they take to get there are incredible. They settle in Germany for a few years, living in refugee camps and working for a living, until they learn that repatriation to Russia is a distinct possibility. They then pursue immigration to Canada. They find a distant relative to sponsor them, and within months have paid off their "Reiseschuld" (travel debt). Throughout the story it is their faith in God which undergirds them and sees them through.

Friesen does an admirable job of keeping the voices of the siblings fresh and interesting. Her research into the history of that time is thorough and adds much to the dialogue. It's a good read. I thoroughly enjoyed it.

The book is available from Mennonite Books, Winnipeg; McNally Robinson, Winnipeg; Mennonite Heritage Village, Steinbach, Man.; Mennonite Historical Society of B.C. and from Raduga Publications, Winnipeg.

Susan Brandt is interim editor of MB Herald.

Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society

Annual General Meeting

Saturday, Feb. 7, 2004

2:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Altona Mennonite Church

Besides the usual AGM agenda, the meeting will include a report on the activities of local historical groups, including the Neuberghthal Village Heritage Foundation.

Displays and book sales tables will be part of the afternoon's program.

A tour of the Altona & District Archives is also being planned.

A snack will be served.