



HERITAGE POSTING

Newsletter of the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society

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MMHS reviews past year

by Elmer Heinrichs

After meeting in Neu-Bergthal last year, the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society held its annual meeting in the Sunflower Capital, Altona, in the West Reserve Sat., February 7. Meetings in rural centres are part of an effort to familiarize smaller communities with the work of the society.

Pleased with a higher turnout, President Jake Peters told more than 60 amateur historians that in 2003 the provincial board had met in Niverville and Plum Coulee, set up a financial committee, began a review of its own past, and reports told how the society fosters an appreciation of history.

Altona Mayor Melvin Klassen welcomed historians to town. It was the day of the town's winter carnival, and Klassen noted how the society's work nurtures history, the effort of teachers in encouraging genealogy in schools, and agreed the recording of history was of great importance.

Altona historian Ted Friesen, who just published his own memoirs, welcomed historians to Altona Mennonite Church, and noted that a recognized historian, Frank H. Epp was its first pastor. He also noted that the first Mennonite historical society was founded at Altona.

Foregoing a banquet to highlight the annual meeting, the society added an Altona & district showcase event highlighting author readings, historical archives, and restoration activities.

For membership and publicity, chair Ed Hoeppner reported a hike in membership dues to cover rising costs, a membership survey now in progress, and issuing *Heritage Posting* quarterly.

Adolf Ens reported that local history focused on two areas of activity: workshops and preparing to publish the *Sommerfeld Gemeinde Buch*, originally *West Lynne Mennonite Church*.

Members heard that corrections are being accepted for a future reprint of the *Reinlaender* book.

Bert Friesen said that two W.C. Miller Collegiate students received the Henry E. Plett memorial writing contest awards, publication and manuscript translation work in progress, hiring a student for several data entry projects, and plans for *A Family Roots Day* at Steinbach March 27.

Publications and marketing reported ongoing work on



Bert Friesen, MMHS treasurer, accepts registrations from members.

Jake Peters, MMHS president, welcomes the members to the Annual General Meeting. This completed his term as president.



— Photos by Ted Barg

the history of Mennonites in Manitoba book project, with final revisions, followed by selection of a publisher, ex. CMU Press. The book is seen as a welcome contribution to Manitoba's history, for Mennonites and the public.

Chair Conrad Stoesz said projects historic sites and monuments is engaged in are: Post Road bus tours, a reburial of Mennonite remains in the Kleefeld area, marking and creating an inventory of Mennonite historic sites, and

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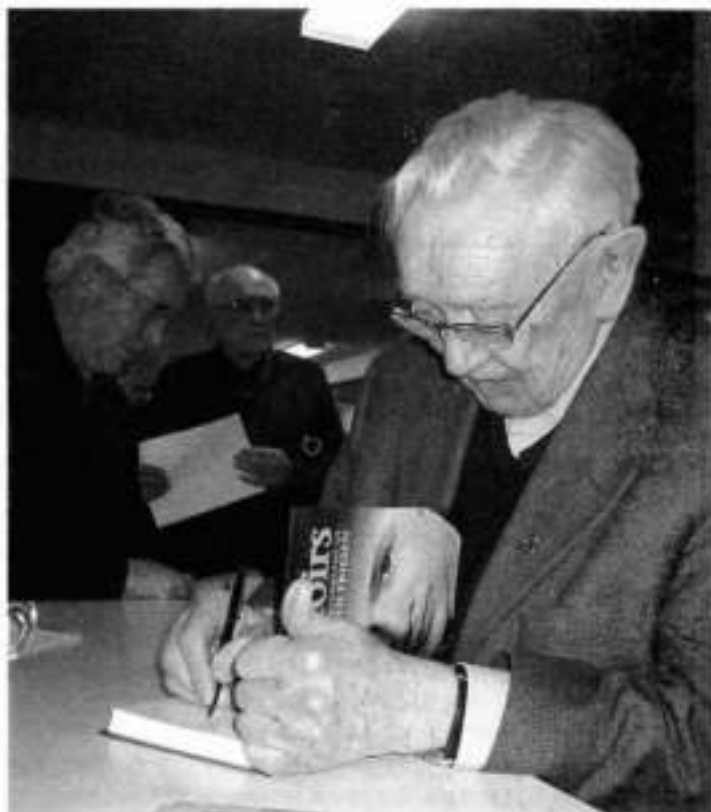
involvement in Altbergthal's 125th anniversary in 2004.

Donovan Giesbrecht reported that a new oral history committee has begun interviewing Mennonites who came to Canada after WW II to produce an audio of people telling their story.

Chair Conrad Stoesz says the Conscientious Objectors to War monument committee has decided that education and promotion of the Mennonite peace position is also vital. Materials are being prepared for Mennonite churches, with a Web site on Canadian COs soon to be launched.

Werner Toews and Marianne Janzen, both of Winnipeg were added, while John Giesbrecht, Lawrence Giesbrecht, both of Altona, Royden Loewen, Steinbach, and Paul Friesen, Donovan Giesbrecht, Roland Sawatzky, William Schroeder and Conrad Stoesz, all of Winnipeg, were re-elected.

Treasurer Bert Friesen's fiscal report showed MMHS with a 2003 year-end surplus of \$4,235 due to extra donations (for two years), and presented a budget for a 2004 \$21,584 shortfall due to payout of the Mexico project,



Ted Friesen long time supporter of the Historical Society autographs his Memoirs.

— Photo by Ted Barg



Margruite Krahn provided an update from the Neubergthal historical committee.

Jack Klassen entertained the audience with excerpts from the *Dee Trajchtmoka*.

— Photos by Ted Barg



a print job by local history and the Man. Mennonites book.

T.E. Friesen told how Mennonite Historical Society of Canada is aiming to tell the history of the most "quiet", and co-sponsoring a work by Marlene Epp on Mennonite women in Canada.

Altona's showcase featured: Al Schmidt, Altona archives, Joe Braun, Mennonite history classes, and Ray Klippenstein, Altbergthal turning 125 and Margruite Krahn's Neubergthal story.

Krahn told how the village's past comes alive with a winter festival, a Mennonite Journey and art.



Melvin Klassen, Mayor of Altona, welcomes the member of the society to Altona for their Annual General Meeting.

— Photo by Conrad Stoesz

Land Dedicated for Ministry Centre

by Bert Friesen, with excerpts from the *M. B. Herald*

On Friday afternoon, January 23, 2004, a crowd of about 100 braved the elements to participate in a land dedication service for the new Ministry Centre of the Mennonite Brethren Conference. The new centre is to be located at 1330 Taylor Avenue, Winnipeg.

It was a cold afternoon, but a bonfire had been built to give the illusion of diminishing the effects of the extreme temperatures. Board members from across Canada, and staff from the Canadian and Manitoba M.B. Conferences participated in the celebration.

The service began with the chair of the Canadian M. B. Conference Board of Management, Herb Suderman, setting the theme that this site would be a light to the community and the world. Its mission was to be a witness to the gospel. This was supported by the prayer of the Executive Secretary of the Canadian M. B. Conference, David Wiebe, that all who worked there would be part of fulfilling that mission. Then many of the staff affirmed this promise in the many languages that the Canadian M. B. Conference is using in its witness around the world. Each person added a small log to the fire, symbolizing the growing ministry in Canada. The moderator of the Canadian M. B. Conference, Jasha Boge, closed with a prayer affirming the support of all the members of the conference in this effort. A display of fireworks which were enjoyed by not only the participants in the service but also all the neighbours completed the ceremony.

The centre will house the staff of the Canadian M. B. Conference and the Manitoba M. B. Conference. The Centre for M. B. Studies and the Christian Press will also relocate.



Jasha Boge and Herb Suderman unveil the Ministry Centre sign as Canadian M. B. Conference personnel look on.

— Photos by Conrad Stoesz



David Wiebe, Canadian Conference Executive Secretary, leads the land dedication service as board and staff personnel huddle around a fire.

MMHS BOARD MEETING Feb. 24, 2004

The Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society Board met for its reorganization meeting at the Mennonite Heritage Centre in Winnipeg on Feb. 24, 2004. The executive for 2004 consists of Roland Sawatzky (vice-president), Anna Ens (secretary) and Bert Friesen (treasurer). The position of president remains vacant and at the time the board met, final consent had not been obtained from the person

indicating some interest in being the member-at-large. It was left to the executive to discern how the position of president should be filled.

Members were also appointed to the various standing committees of the society and to the organizations on which the society is represented. Positive comments were heard about the annual general meeting held in Altona (Feb. 7), including the wonderful hospitality of the local organizing committee. The discussion of projections for 2004 focused on compliance with the new privacy legislation, increasing

membership of the society and particularly the pool of persons willing to be involved in committees and the board, leadership succession, review of financial policies and management of the records of the society. Each of the standing committees was also given the opportunity to report on developments since submitting their annual report. Jake Peters, the retiring president of MMHS was thanked for his very capable service.

The next meeting of the board is scheduled for May 12, although the location is still to be announced.

First Manitoba Mennonite Teachers' Society

by Lawrence Klippenstein

This is the final part of a series of articles on the first Manitoba Mennonite Teachers' Society of the West Reserve. The minutes from 1892 - 1922, used for researching this series, is available at the Mennonite Heritage Centre in Winnipeg.

In this concluding portion of excerpts from the minutes of the German-English Mennonite Teachers' Society of the West Reserve we will look at proceedings from the meeting of Friday and Saturday, November 1-2, 1906, held in Plum Coulee.

H. H. Ewert, by now chairman of the Society, opened the meeting with a brief appropriate meditation.

J. S. Wolkof, Winkler, presented a paper entitled "How to Combine Geography and Nature Study". Then followed other papers such as "Decorating the Classroom," by Susie Hooze from the Edward School; "The Aims and Methods in Teaching English," by A. D. Johnson; "The Teacher as Citizen", by J. J. Sawatzky teacher from Plum Coulee; "Dealing with Newly Enrolled Beginners," by Sara Voth, secretary treasurer of the Society. H.H. Ewert from the Mennonite Educational Institute, spoke on "Religious Instruction in the School".

Two more presentations scheduled for the sessions were not available. One of the topics missing, i.e. "Gymnastic Exercises," was taken up in a discussion anyway.

Guests of the Friday evening session were two educators from Winnipeg, Mr. Agnew and Mr. Fletcher (after whom the Fletcher Building in Winnipeg, used for educational administrative offices for some time, was probably named).

The following officers were elected for the next year: H.H. Ewert as chairman, H. H. Hamm (from Altona) as vice-chairman, Sara Voth as secretary-treasurer. The program committee was to include J.B. Braun, Gretna, J. S. Wolkof, Winkler, and P. H. Giesbrecht from Altona. It was agreed that the next meeting would be in Winkler. A treasury report noted the balance remaining of \$4.80, with a collection at these sessions having brought in \$5.17.

Twenty-eight names are listed among the teachers attending, although the recorded list fails to include several people who gave presentations, and who were presumably also teachers of the area. Among those present were G. G. Kornelsen and G. E. Kornelsen of Steinbach. From records checked, this seemed to be the first sessions of the Society at which a teacher from Altbergthal was present, that is J.A. Schellenberg. Altbergthal, apparently had opened as a public school in 1904, and built a new school building that year (this building is now located in Altona, waiting to be converted into an interpretive centre of some kind).

Schools represented in the recorded list of teachers present included: Winkler, Blumstein, Blumental, Strassberg, Rosenheim, Rosenbach, Brunkild, Langevin,

Weidenfeld, Altona, Steinreich, Edenburg, Neu- Kronstal, Steinbach, Neuhoofnung, Edenthal, Kronsfield, Edward, Halbstadt, Altbergthal, Gretna, Greenfarm, Plum Coulee, Amsterdam, Blumfield, Rosenort, and Grossweide.

A researched assessment of the contribution of the Society to the development of the southern Manitoba Mennonite schools is much needed. This was clearly a vital institution, and it is hoped that more records, i.e. beyond 1922, can be located somewhere. It is not known when the organization disbanded, but this is the place to acknowledge the late Harry S. Friesen of Winkler for helping to preserve the records on which this series has been based. It is possible that Mr. Friesen was the last

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 will follow four themes:

- the historic, cultural and theological context which led North American Mennonites to take leading roles in refugee sponsorship programs;
- the cross-cultural experience of both the refugees and the Mennonite hosts during the months of actual sponsorship and settlement
- the organizational response by Mennonite institutions such as MCC Canada and other institutions to the coming of the refugees
- 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 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. For further information contact Royden Loewen, Chair in Mennonite Studies, University of Winnipeg, 515 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. R3B 2E9 or email to r.Loewen@uwinnipeg.ca

It's Faspa time! — All about life, work and play in a Mennonite family

by Elmer Heinrichs

Faspa is a book about family by Eleanor Hildebrand Chornoboy, who grew up on a family farm in the SD of Edenburg and attended a one-room schoolhouse. This compilation of stories about two second- and third-generation Manitoba Mennonite families who arrived in Canada from south Russia (Ukraine) in 1874 has been fondly received by readers.

Faspa was a snack time between lunch and supper, and traditionally, it was served in Mennonite homes daily. During summer *Faspa* with homemade bread was often brought to the men working in the fields. The serving of *Faspa* was also seen as a show of hospitality.

These stories have universal appeal — about home-based medical practices, daily home and farm life, toilet training, the impact of Mennonite sons going off to war, and rural telephone party lines. They come spiced with a healthy dose of humour, a deep sense of pathos, and practical, home-grown information about the rural way of life of these Mennonite Canadians.

In these vignettes, the author tells about the experiences of children and grandchildren of her grandparents, early Mennonite settlers to southern Manitoba. Specifically these are the stories of the Peter S. and Katharine Hildebrand, Edenburg, and Johan M. and Helena Sawatzky, Blumenthal families.

The Hildebrands were children of Hildebrands and Doerksens, of Sommerfeld; and the Sawatzkys were children of Sawatzkys, of Halbstadt, and Hildebrands, of Sommerfeld.

The pages in the book tell about moments of that first-generation's children and grandchildren (the author's aunts and uncles, and cousins). With different families and many shared similar names, stories are prefaced with a genogram (chart) to indicate whom it's about.

But readers, especially those with Mennonite roots, who lived here in the first half of the twentieth century will feel that these stories about experiences of everyday life bear a surprising resemblance to a way of life and norms in other families, and even elsewhere on the rural Prairies.

In the book Chornoboy offers short introductions, and for each fittingly tells readers what to expect. Topics like life and times, booze and prohibition, childbirth and babies, and smiles and chuckles, each with a series of compact, subtle stories, delicately told.

And suitably readers learn right at the outset what the book is all about. How "Mennonites brought a way of life with them to Southern Manitoba. The family remained the centerpiece of each custom and tradition. It was a culture of church, family, friends, hard work and some play."

Today's border patrol along the U.S./Canada boundary between Gretna and Emerson is a reminder for old-time residents of RCMP officers on horseback who patrolled the International Boundary during Prohibition years in the 1920s searching for illicit trafficking.

Then Americans were eager to buy liquor, and one path



Eleanor Hildebrand Chornoboy reads from her new book *Faspa*.

— Photo by Ted Berg

from Canada to the United States that the bootleggers found ran directly across Peter S. and Katharina Hildebrand's yard. On nights when they got stuck in potholes or snowdrifts, Hildebrand felt obligated to help.

"After all, it was the neighbourly thing to do," writes Chornoboy.

The book tells about good times in daily life, i.e. mothers giving birth to healthy babies, and families joining a young couple to celebrate at a wedding, but it was also a time of hard work, of poverty and accidents, and sometimes, both mother and baby dying in childbirth.

Perhaps there's no more telling chapter about Mennonites, and their feelings about family and faith, than are found in the "war and peace" section. While frowning on going to war, when asked about his boys, Mr. Hildebrand, at the Gretna P.O., could reply "My boys are doing good."

Simply put, this is a book about Mennonite family life in southern Manitoba early in the 20th century, and the author has captured it well.

About the Author

Eleanor grew up on the family farm in the school district of Edenburg where she attended a one-room schoolhouse. Graduate of MCI, she holds her teaching credentials, a Bachelor's degree and a Master's degree in Family studies at the University of Manitoba. Her professional life has been dedicated to children with special needs and their families, working towards inclusion of all children who are gifted with different strengths.

GENEALOGY — The Early Mennonite Gerbrandt Family — Part 2

By Glenn Penner*

Johann Gerbrandt b. before 1725
m. d. Aug. 24, 1765
Tiegenhagen, West Prussia

Dirk(?) b. ca. 1745 bapt. 1761

This family was *Frisian*.

According to the Tiegenhagen Catholic church records Johann Gerbrandt lived in Tiegenhagen from 1747 to 1765.³⁶ He is also listed in a land lease of 1764.³⁵ His death is recorded in the Tiegenhagen Catholic church records and he died at a location referred to as Alt Rosevald.³⁵ His son Dirk was baptized into the Orlofferfelde Frisian Mennonite church.¹⁸

Johann Gerbrandt b. ca 1718
m. d. Nov. 22, 1781
Blumenort, West Prussia
Margaretha b. ca 1721
d. May, 26, 1781
Blumenort, West Prussia

Possible children of Johann Gerbrandt:

| | | |
|------------|------------|------------------|
| Margaretha | b. ca 1745 | d. July 7, 1747 |
| Johann | b. ca 1745 | d. Apr. 10, 1749 |
| Peter | b. ca 1748 | d. Apr. 24, 1749 |
| Agnetha | b. ca 1751 | d. Jan. 28, 1753 |
| Johann | b. ca 1757 | d. Aug. 12, 1768 |
| Thomas | b. ca 1761 | d. Aug. 5, 1768 |
| Daniel | b. ca 1766 | bapt. 1788 |

This family was *Flemish*.

The first 6 children listed above are found in the burial register of the Lutheran Church at Fürstenau.¹³ In each case the father is given as Johann Gerbrandt, but the village is not given. Mennonite deaths in the village of Blumenort are found in the Fürstenau Lutheran records. The baptism of Daniel Gerbrandt, surviving son of Johann Gerbrandt, of Blumenort is found in the Gross Werder (Flemish) Mennonite baptismal register.³⁷ Johann Gerbrandt, his wife, one son (Daniel?), and 3 daughters are found in the 1772 and 1776 censuses, in Blumenort.^{7,8} He was the owner of 8.5 Morgen of land.⁷ There are no Gerbrandts in Blumenort in the 1789 land census, indicating that his land was not inherited by his son.⁹

Johann Gerbrandt b.
m. d.
Catharina Neufeld b. ca 1726
d. Apr. 27, 1796 West Prussia

This family was probably *Flemish*.

This is likely the Johann Gerbrandt listed in Klein Mausdorf in 1789.⁹ The death of Catharina (Neufeld) Gerbrandt is listed in the Gross Mausdorf Lutheran burial register.¹⁴

Johann Gerbrandt b. ca 1757
m. Sep. 19, 1782 d. July 14, 1830
Wengelwald, West Prussia
??? Quiring b. before 1764
d.

| | | |
|-----------|------------------|------------------|
| Helena | b. Aug. 29, 1783 | d. Sep. 26, 1790 |
| Anna | b. Mar. 11, 1785 | |
| Katharina | b. Feb. 17, 1787 | d. Sep. 12, 1827 |
| Heinrich | b. Dec. 7, 1792 | |
| Jacob | b. June 2, 1798 | d. June 29, 1798 |
| Helena | b. Mar. 21, 1800 | |

This family was *Frisian*.

The marriage and death dates, and the dates given for the children of Johann Gerbrandt are found in the Thiensdorf/Marcushof (Frisian) Mennonite church records.²⁸ Johann Gerbrandt was living in Neudolstadt at the time of his marriage. It is possible that he is the son of Jacob Gerbrandt, who died in Neudolstadt in 1785. He later lived in Augustwald, where his children were born and where he is recorded as having 2 Morgen of land in 1789.⁹

Johann Gerbrandt b. ca 1720(?)
m. d. ca 1777
Tiegenhagen, West Prussia

| | | |
|-----------|------------|------------------|
| Dirk(?) | b. ca 1745 | bapt 1761 |
| Johann(?) | b. ca 1769 | bapt. 1785 |
| Maria (?) | b. ca 1764 | d. Feb. 28, 1770 |
| Maria (?) | b. ca 1771 | bapt. 1785 |

This family was *Frisian*.

The baptisms of Dirk, Johann and Maria are recorded in the Orlofferfelde (Frisian) Mennonite church books, and they are listed as surviving children of Johann Gerbrandt.¹⁸ The death of a daughter Maria is recorded in the Tiegenhagen Catholic burial register.³⁶ This Johann Gerbrandt is probably the one who is found in Tiegenhagen in 1772 and 1776.^{7,8} He may also be the Johann, son of Jacob Gerbrandt, who was baptized in 1736. According to the Orlofferfelde church records a widow Hans Gerbrandt married Hans Lietz in Tiegenhagen in the period 1778 to 1779. She is likely the widow of this Johann Gerbrandt. A possible son, Dirk, was baptized in 1761 and is recorded as moving to the Tragheimerweide congregation in 1777.¹⁸

Johann Gerbrandt b. ca 1753
m. Mar. 25, 1784 d. Apr. 28, 1793
Schönhorst, West Prussia
Maria Wall b.
d.

| | | |
|--------|------------------|--------------------------|
| Johann | b. June 6, 1785 | Leske, West Prussia |
| Helena | b. Sep. 26, 1789 | Schönhorst, West Prussia |

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This family was Flemish

He was the son of Peter Gerbrandt (b. ca 1719). He and his brother Peter seem to have moved to the Heubuden congregation, where he was married in 1784.³⁰ He returned to Schönhof soon after and is recorded there in the land census of 1789.⁹ His widow remarried to Johann Fast on Feb. 4, 1794, according to the Ladekopp (Flemish) Mennonite church records.¹⁶ Peter's death and the birth of his daughter Helena are also found in these records.

| | | |
|------------------|------------|---------------------------------|
| Johann Gerbrandt | b. ca 1768 | Gross Wickerau, West Prussia |
| m. about 1805-07 | d. | Russia |
| Catharina | b. ca 1786 | West Prussia |
| | d. | Russia |
| Thomas | b. ca 1809 | m. Catharina Penner |

This family was Flemish.

Johann was the son of Thomas Gerbrandt (1741-97) of Gross Wickerau, West Prussia. Johann Gerbrandt moved to Russia in 1805 as a 37 year old single man. The immigration records (found on page 97 of Peter Rempel's book) include him in the family of Isaak Klassen.²⁴ This family is found in a 1816 census of the Chortitza Colony, and was living in the village of Chortitza at the time.³² Son Thomas is the ancestor of many Gerbrandts in Russian, North and South America (see Part 3).

| | | |
|---------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
| Nathaniel Gerbrandt | b. ca 1734 | |
| m. before 1765 | d. Nov. 14, 1798 | Kerbswald, West Prussia |
| Susanna Block | b. ca 1738 | |
| | d. Aug. 19, 1784 | Neustädterwald, West Prussia |

| | | |
|-------------|------------|-------------------------|
| Wilhelm (?) | b. ca 1766 | (see entry for Wilhelm) |
| Maria (?) | b. ca 1769 | d. Aug. 28, 1785 |
| Nathaniel | b. ca 1771 | d. May 28, 1771 |
| Jacob | d. ca 1773 | bapt. 1789 |

2nd m. 1785

| | |
|--------------|----|
| Helena Pauls | b. |
| | d. |

| | | |
|----------|------------------|------------------------|
| Dirk (?) | b. ca 1787 | bapt. 1804 (Kerbswald) |
| Heinrich | b. Apr. 3, 1793 | Kerbswald |
| David | b. Feb. 21, 1797 | Kerbswald |

This family was Frisian.

Nathaniel Gerbrandt was the son of Jacob Gerbrandt of the Gross Werder (see above). The death of Susanna Block and son Nathaniel were recorded in the burial register of the Fürstenau Lutheran church, and occurred in Neustädterwald.¹³ The death of Nathaniel Gerbrandt and daughter Maria, as well as the baptisms of sons Dirk and Jacob are found in the Thiensdorf/Marcushof (Frisian) Mennonite church records.²⁶ His marriage to Helena Pauls (of the Klein Werder) was recorded in the Orlofferfelde (Frisian) church books.¹⁸ Nathaniel Gerbrandt likely moved from Neustädterwald to Kerbswald in 1785. Probably due

to his marriage to Helena Pauls, who was originally from the Klein Werder region.

| | |
|-----------------|------------|
| Peter Gerbrandt | b. ca 1719 |
| m. | d. |
| Agatha | b. ca 1720 |
| | d. |

| | |
|--------|------------|
| Peter | b. ca 1749 |
| Johann | b. ca 1753 |

This family was Flemish.

Peter Gerbrandt was recorded as a weaver in the 1772 West Prussian census but is not found in the 1776 census of Mennonites.^{7,8} His sons Peter and Johann seem to have moved to the Heubuden area. The baptism of Peter (in 1770) and the marriage of Johann (in 1784) were recorded in the Heubuden (Flemish) Mennonite church books.³⁶ The years of birth are estimated from the ages of this family in the 1772 census.

| | | |
|------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| Peter Gerbrandt | b. ca 1748/49 | |
| m. about 1783-85 | d. Nov. 3, 1809 | Krebsfeld, West Prussia |
| Anna Berg(en) | b. ca 1764 | |
| | d. Dec. 31, 1809 | Krebsfeld, West Prussia |

| | | |
|----------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Peter | b. May 22, 1797 | Krebsfeld |
| | Bapt. 1818 | d. Jul. 7, 1868 W. Prussia |
| Helena | b. Oct. 1786 | d. Sep. 3, 1808 Krebsfeld |
| Child(?) | | |

This family was Flemish.

The deaths of Peter, Anna and daughter Helena are found in the burial register of the Gross Mausdorf Lutheran church. The birth of son Peter is recorded in the Ladekopp (Flemish) Mennonite Familienbuch. The baptism of Peter Gerbrandt's surviving son Peter of Krebsfeld can be found in the Gross Werder (Flemish) Mennonite baptismal register. According to the Gross Mausdorf records Peter Gerbrandt was survived by 2 children when he died.

| | | |
|------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| Thomas Gerbrandt | b. ca 1741 | |
| m. about 1762-67 | d. Mar. 2, 1797 | Gross Wickerau, West Prussia |
| Elisabeth Wiens | b. before 1747 | |
| | d. after 1790 | |

| | | |
|----------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Johann | b. ca 1768 | to Russia in 1805 |
| | Bapt. 1788 | |
| Anna | b. ca 1768 | m. Bern. Friesen (1802) |
| | Bapt. 1788 | |
| Daughter | b. 1772/73 | d. June 18, 1773 |
| Arend | b. ca 1775 | d. Apr. 4, 1790 |
| Thomas | b. ca 1779 | to Russia in 1819 |
| Dirk(?) | b. Jan. 5, 1789 | |

This family was Flemish.

Thomas Gerbrandt was known to have lived in Gross Wickerau from before 1772 until his death in 1797. The

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baptisms of his children Johann and Anna are recorded in the diary of Ältester Gerhard Wiebe of the Flemish Mennonite church of Elbing/Elterwald.²⁵ The deaths of Thomas Gerbrandt, his daughter (name not recorded) and son Arend, are found in the burial records of the Elbing/Neuheide Lutheran church.²² There is some question as to whether Dirk was his son (see Part 3 of this series).

| | | |
|---------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Thomas Gerbrandt | b. ca 1779 | Gross Wickerau |
| | d. after 1835 | Grossweide, |
| m. about 1800 -1806 | | Molotschna, Russia |
| Barbara Klassen(?) | b. ca 1782 | |

| | | |
|-----------|---------------------|------------------|
| Elisabeth | b. Feb. 28, 1807(?) | m. Paul Loewen |
| Martin | b. July 27, 1807 | d. Aug. 28, 1807 |
| Jacob | b. July 8, 1808 | d. Aug. 3, 1808 |
| Anganetha | b. Oct. 19, 1809 | d. Mar. 12, 1812 |
| Abraham | b. Sep. 5, 1811 | d. Oct. 19, 1811 |
| Bernhard | b. Oct. 25, 1812 | |
| Johann | b. Dec. 16, 1813 | d. July 10, 1814 |
| Barbara | b. Oct. 3, 1814 | d. Oct. 3, 1814 |
| Jacob | b. Dec. 26, 1815 | |
| Barbara | b. Sep. 10, 1817 | d. Sep. 20, 1817 |
| Anna | b. Sep. 18, 1818 | d. Sep. 29, 1818 |
| Johann | b. about 1819/20 | d. 1820 |
| Barbara | b. ca 1822 | |

This family was *Flemish*.

This family lived in Neuteich, West Prussia from 1808 to 1818, and all dates for that time period come from the Ladekopp (Flemish) Mennonite church records.¹⁵ According to pages 122, 146 and 160 of Peter Rempel's book, the Thomas Gerbrandt family, which consisted of Thomas, his wife (no name given), sons Bernhard and Jacob, and daughter Elisabeth, moved to Grossweide in the Molotschna colony in Russia in 1819.²⁴ They are recorded as living in the village of Grossweide in the 1835 census of the Molotschna colony.⁴⁰

| | | |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Wilhelm Gerbrandt | b. Jan. 17, 1766 | Oberkerbswalde |
| m. Oct. 6, 1801 | d. Sep. 2, 1849 | Oberkerbswalde |
| Sara Schröder | b. Sep. 2, 1780 | Oberkerbswalde |
| | d. Jan. 26, 1850 | Oberkerbswalde |

| | |
|-----------|------------------|
| Son | b. about 1801 |
| Heinrich | b. June 26, 1803 |
| Katharina | b. May 8, 1806 |
| Elisabeth | b. May 8, 1806 |

This family was *Frisian*.

The Wilhelm Gerbrandt family lived in Oberkerbswalde in 1811, and the estimated births year of his son is based on his age at that time.¹⁰ The dates for Wilhelm Gerbrandt and Sara Schröder are from the Thiensdorf/Marcushof marriage register.²⁷ According to this record Wilhelm was the son of Nathaniel Gerbrandt of Oberkerbswalde, who died in 1798 at the age of 64, and whose wife died in 1795 at the age of 62. The father of Sara was Abraham Schröder. This marriage register was constructed from the earlier, original church records. Therefore some of the

family connections may be assumptions by the person who put together the marriage register. There is also the record of the baptism of a Wilhelm, son of Dirk Gerbrandt, of Kirschwald in 1783.²⁷

| | | |
|-------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Wilhelm Gerbrandt | b. ca 1745 | |
| m. | d. Jan. 1, 1819 | Orlofferfelde |
| Anna Lietz | b. ca 1747 | |
| | d. Dec. 25, 1812 | Orlofferfelde |

| | | |
|--------|--------------|------------|
| Helena | b. ca 1772/3 | Bapt. 1787 |
| Jacob | b. ca 1780/1 | Bapt. 1796 |

This family was *Frisian*.

The deaths of Wilhelm and Anna and the baptisms of their children are found in the Orlofferfelde (Frisian) Mennonite church records.¹⁸ This family is found in the 1772 West Prussian census, the 1776 Mennonite census and the 1789 Land census.^{7,8,9}

Other, Unconnected, Gerbrandts

The following is a list, with original sources, of other Gerbrandts found in early West Prussian records which I have not been able to connect with any of the above families.

Agnetha Gerbrandt, wife of Isaac Reimer d. Feb. 12, 1778 age 37 (b. ca 1741)

Source: Fürstenau Lutheran burial register.¹³

Agnete Gerbrandt, wife of Jacob Berg of Lackendorf, d. Jan. 19, 1795, age 40 (b. ca 1755)

Source: Fürstenau Lutheran burial register.¹³

Anna Gerbrandt (Mrs.) of Kerbswald who died on June 23, 1795. Mennonite records say she was 76 years old, Lutheran records say that she was 74 years old.

Sources: Thiensdorf/Marcushof (Frisian) Mennonite church records;²⁷ Elbing St. Annen Lutheran burial register.³²

Aron Gerbrandt, who died in Orloff on Oct. 5, 1816 at the age of 70 years, 1 month and 8 days (b. Aug. 28, 1746).

Source: Ladekopp (Flemish) Mennonite church records.¹⁶

Bernhard Gerbrandt, who died in Orloff on Aug. 12, 1810 at the age of 61 years (b. ca 1749). He is referred to as a "Jungesell", i.e. a bachelor.

Source: Ladekopp (Flemish) Mennonite church records.¹⁶

Catharina Gerbrandt, who was married to Claas Wiens of Herrenhagen. Their son Claas was baptized into the Heubuden (Flemish) Mennonite church in 1786. She died a widow on Jan. 30, 1803; age of 64 years (b. ca 1739)

Source: Heubuden church records.³⁹

Dirk Gerbrandt, who died on Mar. 9, 1751.

Source: Elbing St. Annen Lutheran burial register.³²

Dirk Gerbrandt, who died on Mar. 2, 1758.

Source: Elbing St. Annen Lutheran burial register.³²

Dirk Gerbrandt of the Elbing area. Unnamed children of a Dirk Gerbrandt died on the following dates: Sep. 29, 1758,

(Continued on page 9)

Events

APRIL 24 – Stories from New Immigrants. The Local History Committee of MMHS is sponsoring this event in Winkler.

* * *

JUNE 26 – Ceremony of Reconciliation being planned by the Evangelical Reformed Church of Switzerland honouring Heinrich Bullinger and Felix Manz. This event is 'by invitation only' with some 100 "Anabaptists" invited. For further information contact Alf Redekopp, Mennonite Heritage Centre.

* * *

Mennonite Heritage Village 40th anniversary celebrations this year. For further information contact: info@mennoniteheritagevillage.com or call the Museum at 204-326-9661.

* * *

SEPT 30—OCT 1, 2005 – Symposium by the Chair of Mennonite Studies. The Symposium will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the coming of the Indo-Chinese refugees ("Boat People") who settled in Canada, often sponsored by various church groups.

We also want to mention the upcoming community reunions and anniversary celebrations for Altberghal people (former and now), and the folks connected with the Thames (Bergfeld) S.D., already scheduled for late August this year. For info on the latter, contact Bill Penner at the Altona Credit Union ph. 324 6437.

* * *

JULY 23-25 – Heppner – Hoeppner Reunion. This event takes place at the Marvin M. Schwan Retreat and Conference Centre, Trego, Wisconsin. Information on accommodation/lodging and meal package rates is available from Darrell Heppner, 2004 Heppner-Hoeppner Reunion, P.O. Box 577, San Leandro, CA 94577. Registration should be in by April 30, 2004.

* * *

The Mennonite Heritage Village was the site for another successful "Roots Day." Some eighteen displays were set up as numerous people came to check on their family roots. This annual event has attracted amateur genealogists from many communities and is considered a highlight for those searching out the past.

(Continued from page 8)

Nov. 11, 1758, June 15, 1763, June 28, 1763 and a daughter, age 2½ years, on Feb. 28, 1774. There was also a daughter Maria, who died on Aug. 23, 1785 at the age of 15 years.

Source: Elbing St. Annen Lutheran burial register.³²

Dirk **Gerbrandt**, whose son Jacob married Amalia Momber on May 14, 1820.

Source: Grandma database version 4.11.¹⁹

Gerhard **Gerbrandt**, who died in Orloff on Apr. 4, 1814 at the age of 61 years (b. ca 1753).

Source: Ladekopp (Flemish) Mennonite church records.¹⁶

Heinrich **Gerbrandt**, illegitimate child, who died on June 24, 1778, 2 weeks old.

Source: Fürstenau Lutheran burial register.¹³

Jacob **Gerbrandt**, of Trappen, near Finkenstein (Elbing area), who married Margaretha Dirksen on Oct. 24, 1802.

Source: Zeyer Lutheran marriage records.⁴²

Johann **Gerbrandt**, of the Klein Werder, whose son Johann was baptized into the Tragheimerweide congregation in 1781.

Source: Tragheimerweide (Frisian) Mennonite church records.¹⁷

Johann **Gerbrandt**, whose daughter died in Aschbude on Apr. 1, 1757. May be the same Johann as above.

Source: Neuheide/Elbing Lutheran church records.²²

Judith **Gerbrandt** of Herrenhagen, baptized into the Heubuden (Flemish) Mennonite church in 1795. She

Married Jacob Klaassen and they moved from Sandhof, West Prussia to Lichtfelde, Molotschna Colony in 1818. Source: Heubuden baptismal register.³⁸ Zeyer Lutheran birth records.⁴² Mennonite Genealogy Inc. card file.⁴³

Margaretha **Gerbrandt**, wife of Diedrich Rempel, d. July 1, 1792, age 48 (b. ca 1744).

Source: Neuheide/Elbing Lutheran church records.²²

Margaretha **Gerbrandt**, who married Peter Classen of Orloff on Apr. 20, 1778.

Source: Ladekopp (Flemish) Mennonite church records.¹⁶

Peter **Gerbrandt**, died on May 2, 1726.

Source: Gross Mausdorf Lutheran burial register.¹⁴

Peter **Gerbrandt**, whose son died on Dec. 31, 1725.

Source: Fürstenau Lutheran burial register.¹³

Peter **Gerbrandt**, died on Feb. 11, 1728 in Einlage.

Source: Elbing St. Annen Lutheran church records.³²

Peter **Gerbrandt**, died on June 10, 1733 in Einlage.

Source: Neuheide/Elbing Lutheran church records.²²

Setcke **Gerbrandt**, who married Abraham Peters of Tiegerfeld on Feb. 20, 1783.

Source: Ladekopp (Flemish) Mennonite church records.¹⁶

Susanna **Gerbrandt** of Marienburg, baptized into the Heubuden (Flemish) Mennonite church in 1782.

Source: Heubuden baptismal register.³⁸

To be continued

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

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Glances at our Manitoba Churches

by Bert Friesen

Griswold M.B. Church was founded on June 5, 1926 with Henry Penner of Alexander as its leader. There were 22 members which met in homes until 1929 when a church building was bought in Griswold with a seating capacity of 150 people.

In 1954 the congregation built a new church in Alexander. Their dedication service was held on September 19, 1954. The name was changed to Alexander MB Church. On April 16, 1973, there was a unanimous decision to close the church. All memberships were transferred to the Brandon MB Church.

The churches leaders included: Jacob Abrahams (1930), J. J. Friesen (1931-1932), P. J. Heide (1933), J. N. Wittenberg (1934-1937), Peter Mandtler (1938-1944), Abraham Friesen (1945-1951), Abe L. Klassen (1952), John J. Krueger (1953-1960), H. C. Schroeder (1961-1964), Peter J. Doerksen (1966-1971).



Arnaud Town Hall.

The Arnaud Mennonite Brethren Church, located in the Municipality of Franklin, was affiliated with the Manitoba, Canadian and General Conferences of the Mennonite Brethren Churches. The congregation began its history on June 14, 1925, consisting of 23 members. They originated from the Soviet Union with the founding leader being Abram Peters. They began their services in the United Church building and then later moved into the town hall. In 1935, the congregation moved into their first permanent building. Operation of the church was paid by the income coming from a piece of land that was farmed by the church members.

Church membership reached its peak in the years 1940-1943. Because of fire, they needed to rebuild in 1952. Church membership was 26 in 1965 and because of declining attendance, the church dissolved on April 17, 1980.

The leaders of the church included: Abram Peters (1925-1927), Abram Nightingale (1927-1933), Henry P. Toews (1933-1948), Isaac Toews (1948-1959), David Thiessen (1959-1967), Edward G. Thiessen (1967-1975), leadership committee - Waldo H. Thiessen, Edward G. Thiessen, and Jake P. Janzen (1975-1976), Edward G.

Thiessen (1976-1980).

Mennonites settled in the Ste. Elizabeth, Arnaud, and Dominion City areas in 1925. They met to worship in private homes and rented facilities when these became available. In 1929 it was decided to build a meeting house at Ste. Elizabeth. This was the first meeting house built by the 1920s Russian Mennonite immigrants in western Canada.

Travel conditions and means made it difficult for the entire group to worship together at Ste. Elizabeth. So in 1944 another meeting house was built in Arnaud. The Mennonite Brethren families had already built a meeting house in Arnaud in 1935 so many of the other Mennonite families worshiped there until 1944. An attempt at remaining an equal congregation in the Lichtenauer Mennoniten Gemeinde did not work out so two independent congregations emerged after 1944, the Lichtenau Mennonite Church at Ste. Elizabeth and the Arnaud Mennonite Church. They did co-operate in some programmes such as the Jugendverein. For some major celebrations, such as the 40th anniversary of the settlement in 1965 the three congregations, Lichtenau, Arnaud M.B., and Arnaud M., celebrated together. The Arnaud Mennonite Church continued to survive after Arnaud M.B. congregation dissolved in 1980 and the Lichtenau congregation 1990. The leaders of the congregation were: Johann Poettker (at Ste. Elizabeth 1933-1944) (at Arnaud 1944-1996), Abram Warkentin (1944-1965), Peter Harder (1953-1959), John Krueger (1962-1976), David Wiebe (1977-1986), Jacob Funk

(Continued on page 11)



Arnaud Mennonite Church.



Oak Lake Mennonite Church.

Molochna 2004

Molochna '04 "Mennonites and Their Neighbours, 1804—2004" is an international conference commemorating the bicentennial of Mennonite settlement in the Molochna region of Ukraine. The dates are June 3-5, 2004. The host institution is the Melitopol State Pedagogical University, Ukraine.

The conference organizers are looking forward to presentations on all aspects of the history of the Molochna Mennonites and their interactions with their larger environment and their neighbours.

Mennonites played a unique role in the Molochna as engines of change and modernization. They were keen observers who recorded fundamental developments in both their own communities and those surrounding them and challenged the all-engrossing principles of the Soviet system.

The conference conveners and organizers include: Setline Bobyleva (Ukraine), Harvey Dyck (Canada), Altfred Eisfeld (Germany), Nikolai Krylov (Ukraine), Peter Letkemann (Canada), John Staples (USA), Peter Klassen (USA), Petr Wiebe (Russia).

Group Activities

The MMHS suggests that groups (church or neighbourhood) looking for activities should consider tours to various Mennonite areas. Join a bus tour of the historic Post Road. Visit beautiful southern Manitoba and see traditional Mennonite street villages. The Post Road, established in 1878 by Mennonites, was built to guide travelers along an almost featureless prairie landscape.

Contact Conrad Stoesz at 888-6781 or 669-6575 for further details.

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(1986-1990), Abe Neufeld (1990-1991), Byron Rempel-Burkholder (1992-1993), Lynell Bergen and Bryan Dyck (1993-2000), Lynne & Omar Martin (2001-).

The Mennonite congregation at Oak Lake was an affiliate congregation of the Schönwieser Gemeinde of Winnipeg from its founding in 1932 until 1974. The congregation met in rented facilities until 1949 when they built their own meeting house. In 1990 they built a new meeting house in the town site. The membership was 58 in 1968. In 1983 the membership stood at 70 and in 2000 at 43. The leaders of the congregation were: Peter Penner (1929-1945), Jacob Enns (1956-1963), Jacob Sawatzky (1956-).

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Book Notes

Ted D. Regehr, *Faith, Life and Witness in the Northwest, 1903-2003: Centennial History of the Northwest Mennonite Conference* (Kitchener ON: Pandora Press, 2003), Pp. 524.

For many Mennonites across Canada and the United States the story of the Northwest Mennonite Conference is not well known. Thanks to Ted Regehr we now have a centennial history of this conference, which began with three small Alberta congregations in 1903, and eventually included member congregations from Alberta, Saskatchewan, Montana, and Alaska.

Ted Regehr, originally from Coaldale, Alberta, has authored a number of books and articles, including *Mennonites in Canada 1939-1970: A People Transformed*, published by the University of Toronto Press. He now lives in Calgary.

Ted Friesen, of Altona, Manitoba, and formerly with D.W. Friesen and Sons, and published his memoirs in *Memoirs: A Personal Autobiography of Ted Friesen* (Altona, MB: privately published, 2003), hardcover, 180 pages. Ted's involvement in various Mennonite organizations, often at the founding stage, makes this a valuable contribution to wider areas of Mennonite history in Manitoba and Canada. Ted was also involved in an earlier publication entitled *David W. Friesen: A Tribute* (pb., 24 pp). For further info contact the author at Box 720, Altona, Manitoba, Canada, ROG OVO or phone 1-204-324-5406.

The Neuberghal Heritage Foundation released its Winter 2004 issue of *Neuberghal Notes* recently. For subscription information contact krahnp@borderland.ca or 1-204-324-1567. Rose Hildebrand of Altona is editor.

The Mennonite Old Colony Vision, by David M. Quiring, carries the sub-title, Under Siege in Mexico and the Canadian Connection. This book explores the world of the Old Colony Mennonites who left Canada for Mexico in the 1920s. Royden Loewen states, "The book is a sympathetic but not uncritical evaluation of the worlds of the Old Colonists. . . The argument that the Old Colonists survived and can survive within a traditional communitarian ethos will be controversial, but its making is timely. The work is also exceptionally well researched. The wider

Mennonite community will be well served in having this work in print."

The book (paperback, 190 pages) is published by Crossway Publications, Steinbach, Manitoba.

Jack Thiessen has done much research into the Low German language, and brings us a new edition of his Low German dictionary. The *Dictionary of Mennonite Low German* is published through the University of Wisconsin Press. Aside from a concise history and grammar of the language, this dictionary contains more than twenty-five thousand entries taken from everyday speech, popular sayings and literature.

Max enn Moritz, opp Plautdietsch aewasat von Jack Thiessen. This old classic has been translated into Low German by Thiessen has the German and Low German in parallel columns providing us with a two-fold look at the adventures of Max and Moritz, a couple of "buben" (boys) who enjoy life. Published by Edition Tintenfasz (2003, paperback, 62 pages)

How to obtain these books:

Unless otherwise specified, all books may be obtained from:

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

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

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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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