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Altona church marks 125

Fellowship, food abound at Altona Bergthaler's anniversary

by Elmer Heinrichs

People came from far and near, some from out of province and the United States, to join current members of the Altona Bergthaler Church for a weekend of worship services to mark its 125th anniversary on the weekend of Aug. 25-26.

Beginning with a music night on Saturday, the anniversary continued on Sunday with a service of celebration, a fellowship meal at noon, an informal afternoon program of sharing by current and former pastors, and concluded with an old-fashioned *Faspa*.

A number of participants also visited the gravesite of Bishop Johann Funk, of Alt-Bergthal, near Altona, with Pastor Rick Neufeld presiding over a brief service of thanksgiving.

Others took a tour to the conference memorial marker at Hochstadt, site of the first Bergthaler Church built in 1882, northeast of town. Mennonites settled here around 1876, and this church hosted the first mid-Canada Conference of Mennonites gathering in July 1903.

Funk, ordained in 1882, was the first bishop of the Bergthaler Church, and many members of the Hochstadt Church later became part of the Altona Bergthaler Church.

At the outset of the Saturday evening festivities, pastor Rick Neufeld and council chair Byron Loeppky unveiled a 125th anniversary banner quilted by sisters Kathy Dyck and Helen Dueck and other members.

At the music program, a string quartet led the congregation in a theme song "This is the Place." The program also featured a mixed quartet, a duet, a men's ensemble, an ABC worship team, a ladies double trio, an ABC quartet, and solos by Carilee Dueck and Teresa Hamm.

Songs by Curt and Wanda Friesen, and the singing of Linda Hiebert concluded opening night.

In Sunday morning worship, pastoral team members, song leader Jayson Giesbrecht, and worship leader Dan Kehler led worshippers through praise, confession, and responding to the light, the Word that lights our Path.

Neufeld's Sunday message was entitled "Bearers of God's Light." He noted that about 125 years ago Bergthalers came from Russia and met near Altona to express their faith in God. "As we reflect, I'm thankful for those who went before us, who inspired us, and gave us hope in despairing darkness," he said. "Let's let our lights shine."

The worship also included a 48-voice choir directed by Henry Peters, a string ensemble of Peter Elias, Ang

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Leading pastor Rick Neufeld (left), and council chair Byron Loeppky, unveiled the Altona Bergthaler Church's 125th anniversary banner quilted by sisters Kathy Dyck and Helen Dueck, and other member quilters.

— Photo by Elmer Heinrichs

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Loeppky, Judith Klassen, and Krista Loewen; a children's feature by Grace Harms, and Scripture readings by Menno Funk, Josh Neufeld and Kate Enns.

The Sunday afternoon program, "Remembering the past, light for the future," gave current and former pastors the chance to reminisce and offer their insights about the church. Former pastors sharing were the first salaried minister, Henry J. Gerbrandt, David F. Friesen, Jake F. Pauls, Walter Franz, Peter Bartel, Peter Penner and Randy Klaassen (by letter).

Gerbrandt noted that when he came the Altona church was a Bergthaler meeting place, one of many. "Before I left, each Bergthaler church was independent, and the transition to English was well underway," he shared.

T. E. Friesen, who grew up in the church and whose father, D. W. Friesen, was a deacon for 37 years, brought personal greetings and on behalf of Altona Mennonite Church. Greetings on behalf of Mennonite Church Manitoba were delivered by Director Ruth Falk.

Anniversary committee chair Jake Sawatzky explained why the church was now marking its 125th anniversary. "A Bergthaler group began a church at Hochstadt in 1882, and after the Altona church was built in 1912 many transferred to the Altona church." As well, Sawatzky noted, "it was in 1882 that Johann Funk was ordained Aeltester of the Bergthaler Church."

In conclusion, Henry Thiessen, chair of the pictorial directory, and church council vice-chair Art K. Dyck announced that a new member pictorial directory and history will be dedicated to long-time church workers Menno (a minister) and Margaret Funk. It will be a hard-cover book.



Site of first Bergthaler church. A commemorative plaque at Hochstadt, later renamed Kleinstadt, marks the location where Mennonite immigrants from Russia settled when they came to the West Reserve around 1876, and built a church in 1882. — Photo by Elmer Heinrichs



John J. Elias getting last minute advice from Ellie Reimer re book signing. — Photo by Shirley Bergen

BRIDGING THE GENERATIONS

by Shirley Bergen

John J. Elias's reminiscing of bygone days published in the Winkler Times during their Centennial year went over so well that people started asking, "Are you going to put them in a book?"

The Winkler History Society took it seriously, and, with help from Marj Hildebrand *"I Remember When..."* was published in 2006.

After reading one of John J's stories in HERITAGE HAPPENINGS, the new Winkler History Newsletter, I was determined to buy that book about my hometown! So my husband, John, and I travelled 100 km for the book signing on May 15, 2007. When we arrived, the Winkler Senior Centre was full. There were over one hundred people sitting at tables and waiting. But no John J. Elias. So we visited around and got acquainted until... John walked in. Everyone cheered! The mood was set.

Ellie Reimer, new chair of the Winkler Historical Society, had to explain to 95-year-old John what he was expected to do. He'd never done a book signing in his life. Al Friesen, from CFAM, ably chaired the meeting. When John stepped to the podium and started reading from his book, the visiting and chattering stopped. Everyone, including my husband who claims he is not a history buff, listened with rapt attention. You could hear a pin drop. After about half an hour, Marj Hildebrand did some reading so John J could gather his strength for the book signing.

The evening was suitably called "Bridging the Generations" because the students from Winkler Elementary School performed excerpts from the musical 'Annie'.

During coffee time we visited and waited in line for our books. Seventy five books were sold that night but there are still some available from the Winkler History Society for \$15.00 a book. The 70 stories cover a wide range of topics. They are well told and easy to read.

Haskett celebrates 100 years of community

by Elmer Heinrichs

With more than a fleeting nod to the past, former Haskett residents - some gone for 70 years - returned to the place they called home to refresh past memories, and to meet acquaintances. Others were drawn by the lore of the history that's grown with the community as it now marked 100.

Organizers of the 2007 Haskett Homecoming Days were not disappointed when the town's core population of 100-plus swelled to over 1,000 for homecoming days June 30 - July 1.

On the Canada Day weekend, they came to reminisce about what Haskett once was and to take a look at the community as it exists today. The Haskett community, 18 kilometres south and three kilometers west of Winkler, is home to 150 people downtown and on nearby farmyards.

While there are a handful of farming families who have lived in Haskett for generations, the district has also seen more and more new families move in, especially since a rural water line was installed some years ago. These newcomers prefer the tranquility and wide-open spaces rural living offers.

There were many program highlights, writes Gerald Dyck a former teacher. "The organizing and programming committee did a marvelous job to make the music items truly music with a 'Haskett' flavor.

"The quartets, the bands and the family groups all portrayed glimpses of the Haskett community. The music was just simply superb! I think the Warkentin violin family group was certainly a group that stood out. They were indeed great artists."

"The politicians were there with bells on. Canada Day weekend in Haskett was a very worthwhile occasion. We were all celebrating Canada's birthday," wrote Dyck, who taught in Haskett in 1954-55, when he and Marie (Peters) were raising their young family.

It was no doubt a pinnacle point of the afternoon when 1920s immigrant, Mrs. Elizabeth Buhler, a lady of 108, with an eight-year-old Haskett youth, Elias Hamm, cut the homecoming ribbon. What a historic moment!

Many teachers from years past attended, including Dr. John K. Friesen, now 95, from B.C., who came with brother Ted Friesen from Altona. Others were Margaret (Schroeder) Suderman, Peter I. Friesen, Henry Neufeld, Menno Schulz, Mary Anne (Ens) Zacharias, Jessie (Zacharias) Friesen, Peter Sawatzky, Mary (Funk) Dyck, Irvin Enns, Ella Neufeld and G. Dyck.

Henry Neufeld, who had a long career in education, and Gus Konkell, president of Otterburne's Providence College, proclaimed God's word Sunday morning in a tent filled by 'coming-home' people, a Thanksgiving service celebrating Canada Day and Haskett's 100 years.

A former Haskett teacher, Peter Dyck, and Peter Letkeman, who grew up here and left to become a renowned teacher at Brandon University, have written a community history "Haskett Centennial History" describing the community in a 240 page book. What a book!

Others of some note in attendance were John E. Buhler, a local boy who now owns the only tractor manufacturing company in Canada, George G. Elias, who was acknowledged for growing good barley, and many past and current businessmen.

With tours of the town, live music in the tent, one more *Faspa*, and final good-byes, a greatly-enjoyed centennial celebration was over.



Former Haskett students who came under the tutelage of teacher Menno Schulz.

— Photo by Elmer Heinrichs

Rev. Gerhard Wiebe Memorial Dedication

by Judy Dyck, Great-great granddaughter of Gerhard Wiebe

There are those who might think it unusual for a group of people to spend the Saturday of the August long weekend sitting on a dirt road in southern Manitoba singing hymns. However, that is the choice that approximately 225 people made this past August 4. The occasion was the unveiling of a cairn in honour of the memory of Rev. Gerhard Wiebe, who served the first Mennonite Brethren church in Canada at Burwalde, near Winkler, as its first resident minister.

Gerhard Wiebe was born in Waldorf, West Prussia in 1847. His father died when he was four years of age, and from the ages of seven to fourteen, he lived with foster parents during which time he received a thorough education. After he turned 14, he was apprenticed to various trades, including those of baker and carpenter. In 1871, together with his wife and young son, Gerhard, he moved to Russia where he stayed for 16 years. After 8 years in Russia, he became convicted of his need for salvation, and was baptized upon his confession of faith and accepted into the Einlage Mennonite Brethren Church. He also was ordained into the ministry. He experienced opposition and some persecution for his faith, but held firm to his belief in the Bible as the Word of God that condemned sin but also offered grace and forgiveness. He served as church leader in two villages, one of which was Ebenfeld.

During this period, Gerhard Wiebe had been in correspondence with Heinrich Voth, an itinerant minister to southern Manitoba, who was active in missionary work and evangelism. Voth's pastoral work had laid the foundation of a small group of baptized believers in the Burwalde district. In 1888, Gerhard Wiebe responded to Heinrich Voth's invitation to take over the leadership of this small group of believers. The Burwalde group was formally chartered that same year as the first Mennonite Brethren Church in Canada. A year later, a church building was erected on land donated by Jacob Banman, beside the Dead Horse Creek, about one mile east of Hwy. 3. The congregation subsequently relocated to Winkler. However, it was at this original site that the cairn in memory of Gerhard Wiebe was erected and unveiled on August 4. The land was again donated, this time by Ted Dyck, a great-grandson of Jacob Banman.

The dedication ceremony was chaired by Frank Wiebe, a great-grandson of Gerhard Wiebe, who also chaired the family committee that initiated the memorial. Other Gerhard Wiebe descendants featured prominently in the ceremony. These included song leader, James Peters of the Winkler Mennonite Brethren Church, and MLA, Peter G. Dyck, who brought greetings. Greetings also were brought by Abe Dueck and Dan Block, on behalf of the Canadian and Manitoba Mennonite Brethren Conference respectively. Both referred to the Old Testament tradition of setting up stones to serve as memorials of particular events and people, and as evidence of divine grace in the history of



The cairn, flanked by descendants of Gerhard Wiebe, who also formed the committee to erect the memorial.

— Photo by Judy Dyck

God's people. Both men commended the Wiebe family for its vision and its work in having the stone erected.

During Rev. Gerhard Wiebe's tenure as minister of the young church in Burwalde, it grew from sixteen to eighty-four members. In 1895, Gerhard Wiebe left the formal leadership of the congregation. He continued to be active in conference and local church affairs. He established a lumber business in Winkler, and served the village as school trustee, school secretary-treasurer, and as mayor in 1910.

He was an active and adventurous individual for many years. In 1912, he embarked on a journey to see his oldest sister in Russia, visiting family and friends in Germany and in Russia. In 1916, he joined a pioneering group of Mennonite settlers in Littlefield, Texas. He lived for a time in another settlement in Coldwater, Texas and in Hillsboro, Kansas. He visited children in California and in other destinations in the western United States and Canada. In 1931, he returned to Canada and to Winkler, residing with his eldest son, Gerhard. He died in 1934, and his remains were laid to rest in the Winkler cemetery.

Gerhard Wiebe was married three times, and had children with two of his wives. It was great-grandchildren, descended from his eldest son, Gerhard, who decided in 2001 that his contributions to the development of the Mennonite Brethren Church in Canada deserved formal and permanent recognition. However, descendants from many branches of the family, in both Canada and the United States, were present for the dedication ceremony. After the formal dedication and unveiling, the group adjourned to the M.B. church in Winkler for *Faspa* and a time of fellowship, singing, and sharing, giving full expression to his motto in life: "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing" (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

PLUM COULEE PLUM FEST, 2007

by Cleo Heinrichs

The 2007 Plum Fest, held Aug. 17-19, was another successful celebration for Plum Coulee. Throughout the weekend visitors and locals enjoyed the new facilities of Heritage Square, the Park and Sunset Beach.

Everything was held downtown this year. The large tent on Main Avenue West was the venue for lots of kids activities; for the Low German entertainment show; and for the Sunday morning community worship service. Another tent pitched on Heritage Square was the Old Tyme Dance venue, where bands like Les Moccasins, The Fugitives and The Moonlighters provided the rhythm for the dancers. The place was busy from Friday afternoon to Sunday afternoon.

Food vendors and eating areas also had their spots on Main Street. Of course the Saturday morning breakfast menu included cracklings, and waffles topped with vanilla sauce. With appetites sated, the breakfast crowd settled down to enjoy the hour-long parade. Big cheers went up for

the Plum Coulee Citizen of the day, Jake Penner. Mr. Choo Choo Train the clown, also received great applause when he passed by with his unique train, with which he later gave free rides to the kids (of all ages)!

Another highlight of the Plum Fest were the water activities, and the Survivor Challenge. A dog show, tours of the art exhibit in the elevator, and the top gardeners were also featured. Everything was great – downtown at the Plum Fest in Plum Coulee!



Book Notes

Our listing of new titles is rather short for this issue. If you know of titles that should be listed, please send the information to Gilbert G. Brandt at ggbrandt@brandtfamily.com. We will seek to include them in future issues.

Breaking Ground, by Josephine Friesen is subtitled, Three Generations of Mennonite Women in the Canadian West. It is published by Ocean Park Publications (2006, ISBN: 1-897266-15-4).

Helmut Huebert continues to produce significant Mennonite historical volumes. *Mennonites in the Cities of Imperial Russia, Vol. 1* is published by Springfield Publishers (2006, ISBN: 0-920643-10-8). Huebert lists the following cities: Barvenhovo, Berdyansk, Melitopol, Millerovo, Orechov, Pologi, Sevastopol and Simferopol.

Verbannung: Unschuld nach Siberian ins Verderben, 1935-1955 was published by Heinrich Bergen, Regina, SK in 2006.

Our Stoesz Story: From Bergthal to Bergthal with an Ocean Between, 1731-2006 comes from Edgar Stoesz, Akron, PA (ISBN: 1-60126-009-1).

Hope is Our Deliverance, written by Alex Rempel and Amalie Enns, tells the tragic experience of a Mennonite leader (Aeltester Jakob Aron Rempel) and his family in Stalinist Russia. It is published by Pandora Press.

Irmgard Epp has written *Constantinople*, describing attempts to escape from Bolshevism. (Trafford Publishing, ISBN: 1-4120-5325-0).

Hard Passage: A Mennonite Family's Long Journey from Russia to Canada by Arthur Kroeger is published by University of Alberta Press (2007, ISBN: 0-88864-473-3). Heinrich and Helena Kroeger decided to uproot their six children and leave behind their home and community for a foreign land. *Hard Passage* follows the trials and tribulations of the Kroeger family as they cross the vast Atlantic Ocean in search of tranquility, opportunity, and a good life in Canada. Based largely on family diaries and other personal documents, *Hard Passage* is a social history that speaks to the indomitable spirit of Mennonite immigrants to the Canadian West.

Note from the editors

Special Project: Thank you to all who contributed to the re-designing of the Web site. We are within \$200 of our target amount of \$1500. Additional contributions are welcome and should be sent to the treasurer.

Our apologies to those who received a renewal notice in the last issue and had already renewed. In order to cut down on the work involved in sending out the Heritage Postings, we will likely include renewal notices more frequently. If you have already renewed, just ignore the notice. If you need to renew, this is a good reminder.

GENEALOGY — The Mennonite Wieler Family: Part II

by Glenn Penner

Family Lists Continued:

Since most of Mennonite Wielers in West Prussia were descended from or related to Bernhard Wieler (d. 1729) the name Bernhard was very common among the early Wielers. As a result it is difficult to separate all of the Bernhard Wielers found in the various West Prussian records.

B1

Bernhard Wieler b. before 1675
d. Apr. 3, 1729¹⁵ Ellerwald, WP

He was the son of Hans Wieler who died in 1682. He became a deacon in the Elbing-Ellerwald Mennonite church on July 23, 1713.⁶ He paid taxes on 85 Morgen of land in Ellerwald from 1795 until 1729.⁴

B2

Bernhard Wieler b. before 1710
d. after 1730
Catharina Harder b. before 1710
d. after 1730

Children:
Catharina b. Dec. 25, 1730 m. Dirk Penner (1755)

Catharina (Wieler) Penner lived in the Danzig region but her parents lived in the Elbing region and she was baptized into the Elbing-Ellerwald church. The source of this information is the Danzig Family Register volume 1, page 22.²³ Bernhard Wieler could be the son of Bernhard (B1). He may be the Bernhard Wieler who died on July 27, 1768 in the Elbing/Ellerwald area¹⁵.

B3

Bernhard Wieler b. 1693
d. May 29, 1760²² Pletzendorf, WP

Children:
Maria b. 1754 d. Mar. 26, 1757²²

He is listed as living in Petershagen, WP in 1751 and 1752, then in Pletzendorf from 1752 to 1759. His widow is listed in Pletzendorf in 1760.²²

B4

Bernhard Wieler b. 1726
d. May 18, 1807¹⁵ West Prussia
child b. d. July 27, 1768¹⁵

It is difficult to place this Bernhard Wieler with respect to the 1772, 1776 or 1789 censuses.

B5

Bernhard Wieler b. 1712
d. Feb. 22, 1800¹⁶ Nogathau, WP
Agatha b. 1705
d. Mar. 30, 1775¹⁶ Klein Wickerau, WP

1772: Klein Wickerau 11/00/10/32 1H 5M (listed as Wiener)¹

1776: Klein Wickerau 11/00/22 E s¹⁷
1789: Nogathau 1H 15M¹⁸

Moved from Klein Wickerau to Nogathau in 1785.

It is possible that there were 2 Bernhard Wielers in Klein Wickerau in the late 1700s (Sr. & Jr.).

B6

Bernhard Wieler b. before 1745
d. after 1789 Spitalskamp, WP
2nd m. June 27, 1779⁶

Maria Thimm b. before 1750

Children from 1st marriage:

Anna b. Mar. 19, 1766 m. Klass Jost (1786)⁶ bapt. 1784⁶

Eva b. ca 1766
bapt. 1786⁶

Peter b. Aug. 1, 1758²⁰ m. Elisabeth Thiessen (1781)⁶
bapt. 1778⁶

Heinrich b. 1760s m. Catharina Sawatsky (1789)⁶

It is difficult to identify him in the 1772 census. He could be one of a number of Bernhard Wielers.

1776: Hospitalkamp Lw. 11/23/00 E s.

1789: He may be the Bernhard Wieler mentioned in Drausenkamp.¹⁸

Maria Thimm was the widow of Peter Dyck.

B7

Bernhard Wieler b. 1747
d. June 17, 1786¹⁶ Ellerwald 5 Tr.

Children:

Franz b. 1772 d. Jan. 12, 1778¹⁶

Catharina b. 1773 d. Jan. 12, 1778¹⁶

Abraham b. May 11, 1779 d. May 25, 1779¹⁶

Cornelius b. 1780s m. Catharina Thimm (1811)

Possibly a resident of Ellerwald 4 Tr. (1778) before moving to Ellerwald 5 Tr. (1779 – 86). It is also possible that the families of two Bernhard Wielers have been combined here. It is hard to place this family in the 1776 census. The widow of Bernhard Wieler married Hans Dyck of Finkenstein on Mar. 20, 1787.⁶ Son Cornelius transferred to the nearby Rosenort congregation in 1811⁶ and moved to Russia in 1818 (more on him later).

B8

Bernhard Wieler b. 1755
d. Nov. 16, 1806¹⁶ Ellerwald 2 Tr.

m. Nov. 4, 1784⁶

Anna Neufeld b. ca 1762-66
d. aft 1811

Children:

Jacob b. Feb. 2, 1787²⁰

Anna b. Jan. 15, 1790²⁰
bapt. 1810⁶

Catharina b. Dec. 8, 1793²⁰ m. Gerhard Dyck (1813)⁶
bapt. 1812⁶

Maria b. Jan. 26, 1800²⁰

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Gertrude bapt. 1819⁶
 b. Nov. 6, 1802²⁰
 bapt. 1822⁶
Peter b. Dec. 27, 1803^{20,24}
 bapt. 1824⁶

The birth dates for all of the above children are found in the Elbing-Ellerwald Family Registers Vol. 2, p. 49²⁰. The Zeyer Lutheran birth records give the mother of Peter as a Neufeld.²⁴ In the 1811 Elbing regional census of Mennonites widow Wieler (age 45) is listed with sons (25, 8) and daughters (23, 19, 15 and 12) in Ellerwald 2 Tr.

1789: Ellerwald 2 Tr. 17M 150R (since 1785).

Bernhard Wieler was the son of Martin Wieler (1712 – 1779); **M1**. Anna Neufeld was the daughter of Jacob Neufeld of Kaemmersdorf and was baptized into the Elbing/Ellerwald church in 1782.⁶

B9

Bernhard Wieler b. 1767 Koenigsberg, EP
 d. Dec. 19, 1829 Koenigsberg, EP
 m. Sep. 21, 1795

Susanna Jantzen b. 1753
 d. May 27, 1804 Koenigsberg, EP

There were no children from this marriage.

2nd m. June 1, 1805

Catharina Reinke b. July 21, 1777 Koenigsberg, EP
 d. Sep. 6, 1863 Koenigsberg, EP

Children:

Bernhard b. 1806 d. Feb. 11, 1807
 Catharina b. Dec. 7, 1809 m. Eduard Zimmerman

Bernhard Wieler's 2nd wife was also his step-niece.

The son of Johann Wieler (1716 – 1802); **Jo11**. He took over his father's distillery. He became a citizen (Burger) of Koenigsberg on Mar. 18, 1794. All information on this family comes from reference 25.

C1

Cornelius Wieler b. 1740
 d. Dec. 23, 1789 Lichtfeld, WP¹⁵

Children;

Cornelius b. May 6, 1765⁶ m. Agatha Funk (1800)
 Bapt. 1784⁶
 Helena b. ca 1764
 Bapt. 1784⁶

He was a Maelzer (Malt maker) living in Lichtfeld, WP.

1772: The village of Lichtenau does not appear to be in the currently available version of this census.

1776: Lichtfeld Maelzer 11/12/00 E s

1789: Lichtfeld Cornel. Willert 17M.

C2

Cornelius Wieler b. May 6, 1765
 d. Dec. 24, 1807 Lichtfeld, WP
 m. June 10, 1800
 Agatha Funk b. ca 1773
 d. 1831

Children:

Cornelius b. Mar. 22, 1801 d. 1801
Nicolaus b. Sep. 11, 1802 m. Catherina Allert (1825)
 Isbrand b. Dec. 28, 1803 d. 1803
Heinrich b. Apr. 23, 1805 m. Catharina Dyck
 Carl Friedrich b. 1807 d. Aug. 19, 1807³⁴

Son of Cornelius Wieler (1740 – 1789). He transferred from the Flemish congregation of Elbing-Ellerwald to the Frisian congregation at Marcushof in May, 1800. The descendants of Cornelius Wieler are covered in detail in the Wieler Chronicle.⁴

Both the Wieler Chronicle⁴ and the Grandma database⁹ have the wrong father for Cornelius Wieler. His father is **C1**, *not* Johann Wieler!

C3

Cornelius Wieler b. Feb. 26, 1768
 d. after 1822

m. Feb. 26, 1795

Margaretha Reimer b. 1755

d. May 11, 1813 Ellerwald 1 Tr.¹⁶

Cornelius b. Nov. 1795 d. Feb. 21, 1796

Helena b. Mar. 9, 1809²⁰ (left the church in 1833)²⁰
 Bapt. 1826⁶

2nd m. Oct. 28, 1813

Elisabeth Fast b. ca 1789

Cornelius b. Dec. 14, 1814 m. Anna Fast

Johann b. Apr. 7, 1817

Dietrich b. Nov. 3, 1822

This family lived in Ellerwald 1 Tr.

Cornelius Wieler was the son of Johann Wieler (1727 – 1790; **Jo6**)

Margaretha Reimer was the widow of Dirk Dyck.

Elisabeth Fast was from Leske. She was baptized into the Heubuden congregation in 1809. They were married in Leske in 1813. She was likely the daughter of Johann Fast (1740 – 1803) of Leske.

1811: Ellerwald 1 Tr. Cornelius Wieler (age 43), wife (56) [step]daughters (23, 22 and 21).¹⁹ Births dates for the children are from the Elbing-Ellerwald Family Register Vol. 2, p. 21.²⁰

D1

David Wieler b. 1770 Koenigsberg, EP
 d. July 27, 1808²⁶ Koenigsberg, EP
 m. Sep. 23, 1796²⁶

Maria Roos b. 1768
 d. June 18, 1807²⁶ Koenigsberg, EP

Children:

David b. Jan. 14, 1799²⁶
 bapt. 1817

Maria b. July 26, 1800²⁶ d. 1853
 bapt. 1817

Johann b. May 13, 1802²⁶ m. Johanna Laura Loboda²⁵
 bapt. 1819

Marianna b. Jan. 1, 1804²⁶
 bapt. 1820

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The son of Johann Wieler (1716 – 1802); **Jo11**.

All children were baptized into the Koenigsberg Mennonite church.²⁶

David Wieler was a Gewuerzhaendler (spice merchant) in Koenigsberg. At some point he took over the property and distillery of his brother Bernhard (originally owned by their father).

Son David apparently moved to Russia.²⁵ He is not found in the 1835 Molotschna census and is not found in any of the Chortitza colony lists from the 1840s and 1850s.

F1

Franz Wieler b. ca 1762

d.

m. Apr. 27, 1786⁶

Sara Wiens b.

d.

Children:

Johann b. 1788 d. Mar. 24, 1789¹⁵

Karl b. 1794 d. Mar. 6, 1794¹⁵

Karl b. ca 1798
bapt. 1818⁶

Henrietta b. ca 1793
bapt. 1813⁶

Franz Wieler was the son of Abraham Wieler (1740 – 1796), **Ab1**.

He lived in Elbing from before 1789 until sometime after 1818. He was a Malter (Maelzer).

Hm1

Hermann Wieler b. 1765 Koenigsberg, EP

d. Mar. 8, 1800¹⁵ Elbing, WP

m. Apr. 10, 1792²⁵

Anna Toews b. May 26, 1768

d. Dec. 18, 1828 Fischauerfeld, WP

Children:

Johann b. 1797 d. 1829²⁵

bapt. 1814

son b. d. Apr. 11, 1794¹⁵

Twin sons b. Aug. 19, 1796 d. Aug. 19, 1796¹⁵

Catharina b. 1793 d. June 23, 1794¹⁵

Gertrude b. 1795 d. Dec. 20, 1799¹⁵

The son of Johann Wieler (1716 – 1802); **Jo11**.

This family appears to have died out.

Hr1

Heinrich Wieler b. before 1700
d. Jan. 9, 1761¹⁶ Kl. Wickerau, WP

1st m.

b.

d. July 22, 1729¹⁵

Children:

Son b. d. July 19, 1725¹⁵

Child b. 1738 d. Feb. 1, 1739¹⁶

Magdalena b. d. Dec. 1, 1740¹⁶

Heinrich b. before 1750 d. Dec. 22, 1761¹⁶

Daughter b. d. July 15, 1757¹⁶

The above family could be the combination of two Heinrich Wieler families.

The Dutch Naamlijst of 1743 lists him as a "Prediger" in the Elbing-Ellerwald congregation from 1738 on.²⁷

Hr2

Heinrich Wieler b. before 1700

d. Jan. 30, 1729¹³ Kl. Mausdorferweide, WP

Child b. d. Mar. 15, 1729¹³

Lived in Klein Mausdorferweide in 1727 and owned 1 Hufen of land.¹²

Hr3

Heinrich Wieler b. before 1725

d. 1772-76 Neustaedterwalde, WP

1st m.

Catharina b. 1720

d. June 14, 1759¹⁰ Tiegenhof, WP

2nd m. 1759-60

Elisabeth Berentz^{*23} b. 1735

d. Apr. 9, 1762¹⁰

3rd m. 1760s

Unknown

Children (from all marriages):

Claas** b. 1760 m. Anna Janzen (1781)⁶

Margaretha b. Apr. 14, 1761²³ m. Peter Steffen (1782)²³

m. Berend v. Bergen (1785)²³

Helena b. ca 1762

bapt. 1782³⁰

Heinrich b. 1765 d. Dec. 23, 1768¹⁰

Heinrich b. d. Sep. 14, 1772¹⁰

Susanna b. 1768 d. June 27, 1789²⁹

bapt. 1788³⁰

Anna b. ca 1771

bapt. 1791³⁰

This family lived in Altendorf (1758 – 61), Petershagen (1761 – before 1768) and Neustaedterwald (before 1768 – 1772/6).

1772: Neustaedterwald 11/10/02/00 Mietsgaertner

* Her name comes from the Danzig Family Register entry for daughter Margaretha (Vol. 2, p. 27)²³

** It is also possible that he is the son of Heinrich Wieler (**Hr6**).

Hr4

Heinrich Wieler b. before 1745

d. Aug. 20, 1779²⁹ Halbstadt, WP

Children:

Anna b. ca 1769

Bapt. 1789²⁹

Heinrich b. ca 1770 m. Anganetha Ens

Son b. 1772-76

Margaretha b. Feb. 21, 1773²⁹ d. July 18, 1779²⁹

Claas b. July 6, 1777²⁹

1772: Halbstadt 11/01/01/00 Renter¹

1776: Halbstadt 11/22/00 Renter¹⁷

All dated events took place in Halbstadt/Klein Lesewitz,

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

WP. This family is recorded as living in Halbstadt and Klein Lesewitz at various times between 1772 and 1779. These two villages were within 2 miles of each other.

It is not known if son Claas survived childhood. There is no death record or a baptism record for him.

Hr5

Heinrich Wieler b. before 1750
d. Apr. 8, 1782²⁹ Kalthof, WP

Children:

Heinrich b. Sep. 5, 1775²⁹ d. Oct. 19, 1781²⁹

Jacob b. Sep. 5, 1775²⁹ d. Feb. 5, 1782²⁹

Johann b. 1776-1778 m. Anna Woelck (1798)²⁹

Jacob b. ca 1782 d. June 1, 1784²⁹

1776: Kalthof 11/20/00 Farmer and Renter¹⁷

The baptism of Johann, which should have occurred between 1794 and 1798, is not found in any of the existing West Prussian church registers.

Hr6

Heinrich Wieler b. before 1740
d. after 1794 WP

1st m.

Children:

Johann b. 1758 m. Elisabeth (1782)¹⁰

Claas* b. 1760 m. Anna Janzen (1781)⁶

2nd m. Nov. 1782³¹

Widow Schorberg

Children:

Daughter b d. 1794³⁰

1772: Haberhorst Eigenthuemer & Leinweber
11/10/00¹

1776: Haberhorst Weber 11/10/00 Eigenthuemer¹⁷

In 1782 Heinrich Wieler transferred from the Flemish Mennonite church at Tiegenghagen to the Frisian church at Orloffelfelde.³¹ He likely did this in order to marry a non-Mennonite (widow Schorberg), which was forbidden in the Flemish church. On Jan. 19, 1794 his stepson Michael Schorberg died at the age of 15 ½ years.¹³

* It is also possible that Claas is the son of Heinrich Wieler (Hr3).

Hr7

Heinrich Wieler b. 1744
d. after 1811
wife b. 1759
d. after 1811

Children:

Son b. 1802

Daughter b. 1783

1789: Klein Mausdorf 2H 15M¹⁸

1811: Klein Mausdorf 67, wife 52, son 9, dau. 28.¹⁹

He is not in the 1776 census and may not yet have been married at that time.

Hr8

Heinrich Wieler b. before 1755
d. before 1796

Children:

Catharina b. ca 1776
bapt. 1796³⁰

Maria b. ca 1779
bapt. 1799³⁰

Helena b. ca 1780
bapt. 1800³⁰

Possibly: 1776 Reinland Arbeiter 11/03/00 Renter.¹⁷

His surviving daughters were living in Platenhof, WP at the times they were baptized into the Tiegenghagen church.³⁰

Hr9

Heinrich Wieler b. ca 1760
m. May 17, 1789⁶ d. before 1801 Schoenhorst, Russia
Catharina Sawatsky b. ca 1765
d.

Children:

Heinrich b. 1789/90

He was the son of Bernhard Wieler (B6).

Moved to Russia between 1795 and 1797. His widow remarried to Jacob Thiessen.

His son Heinrich was living with Claas Wieler in Rosenthal in 1808 but can not be found in the 1816 Chortitza census.

Hr10

Heinrich Wieler b. before 1770
d. 1808 – 1813

Children:

Gertrude b. d. Sep. 28, 1790¹⁵

Bernhard b. 1797 d. Nov. 1, 1798¹⁵

Peter b. 1796 d. Mar. 26, 1799¹⁵

Heinrich b. 1791 d. Mar. 9, 1803¹⁵

Child b. Dec. 22, 1808 d. Dec. 22, 1807¹⁵

Lived in Elbing-Vorstadt in 1808 (owned 5 Morgen of land). His widow was living there in 1813.⁶

Hr11

Heinrich Wieler b. 1770
m. ca 1790 d.
Anganetha Ens b. ca 1777
d.

Children:

Heinrich b. 1797
Anna b. Mar. 8, 1801

Agnetha b. d. Mar. 12, 1802

Agnetha b. June 26, 1803

Isaac b. 1805

Johann b. 1806 d. 1827

Maria b. 1809

(Continued on page 10)

Tree Planting Ceremony

by Gilbert G. Brandt

On Thursday, Oct. 4, a tree was planted on the CMU campus, near the Mennonite Heritage Centre. Then, on Friday, October 5, 2007 at 3:00 pm a group gathered around the tree to celebrate and recognize the reason for this special tree.

This tree is a gift to the Mennonite Heritage Centre from Mennonite Genealogy Inc. in recognition of the contributions made by Abram Andreas Vogt, founder of MGI. Vogt (1887-1968) was a teacher in Russia before he came to Canada. Once in Manitoba, he started the first hospital in Steinbach, began a home for invalids, was instrumental in building Bethania Home and later helped establish Westgate Collegiate in Winnipeg.

In 1967, just a year before his death, Vogt founded Mennonite Genealogy Inc. in order to preserve the many records he had collected over the years. Now, after functioning as a stand-alone agency for many years, the MGI has discontinued its operations and delivered all its records to the Mennonite Heritage Centre. These genealogical records include 400 family histories, 1100 other books and writings, 200,000 index cards with data and about 20 file drawers of clippings, etc. This represents some three generations of collecting which now will be available to any researchers using the MHC facilities.

The ceremony itself was directed by Alf Redekopp, MHC director. Conrad Stoesz, MHC archivist, provided input concerning the importance of genealogical research.



Alf Redekopp, Margaret Vogt Kroeker and Hannah Vogt Rempel in front of the newly planted tree.

— Photo by Susan Brandt

Many of the Vogt family members were present. Vogt's two daughters, Margaret Kroeker and Hannah Rempel, were especially recognized by Redekopp. Then Abram Rempel, son-in-law of Vogt, spoke the family. He stated that MGI has completed its work with the transfer of the Vogt (Mennonite Genealogy Inc) Library to the Heritage Centre. Therefore, this was a good time to recognize Vogt's contribution, and that a tree was a good symbol in that it was so often used to represent extended families.

Sven Eriksson, Denominational Minister for Mennonite Church Canada commented that the leaves represent all the outworking of family relationships; the stem symbolizes the hard, dedicated work, and the roots illustrate the hidden treasures of the many family stories. He then closed with a dedicatory prayer.

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Son of Heinrich Wieler (d. 1779); Hr4.

Moved from Halbstadt, WP to Blumenort, Molotschna Colony in 1804.

If anyone has information on any descendants of this family please contact the author.

It is possible that Isaac and Johann are the same person but the names were confused in the Russian censuses.

Hr12

Heinrich Wieler b. 1772 Schoeneberg, WP¹
d.

Maria Goossen b. 1781
d. Feb. 4, 1813³² Mierauerfeld, WP

Children:

Maria b. May 3, 1803³³ d. May 3, 1803³³

Heinrich b. Feb. 18, 1805³²
bapt. 1825

Maria b. ca 1807
apt. 1827

Jacob b. ca 1813
bapt. 1833

2nd m. July 25, 1813²⁹

Catharina Penner b. Apr. 2, 1787 WP

He was the son of Nicolas Wieler. Baptized in 1792 into the Tiegenhagen church, no village of residence given.

Lived in Waldorf in 1803 and in Mierauerfeld in 1805 and 1813. They later lived in Stadtfeld (1825, 1827 & 1833).

The family lists will be continued in the next installment of this series.

Note: The last installment of this series on the Wieler family will report on the results of the Wieler DNA Project. If you are a male Wieler and are interested in participating please contact the author* or Erwin Wieler (Surrey, BC; ph: 604-535-2406; email: eowieler@pacificcoast.net).

All references will appear at the end of the last installment.

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Altona Sunflower Festival

Features quilt display, queen crowning, Neuberghthal heritage and garden tours

by Elmer Heinrichs

Once again thousands from across southern Manitoba and farther away enjoyed the Manitoba Sunflower Festival, a gala event which wrapped up Sunday in sunny hot weather.

The 43rd Sunflower Festival opened in Altona Friday in warm temperatures under sunny skies and hundreds came out for a free pancake breakfast, and for the other events of the day such as the fishing derby, stage shows, senior slo-pitch, men's fastball, and Day 1 of the quilt show.

Co-ordinator Grace Braun says "the Sunflower festival was fantastic with good crowds for most events. Seven gardens were toured by over 100 people in the backyard tours. The dog show was popular, Celebrity pig racing created interest, and stage shows were crowd favourites."

Altona recreation co-ordinator Ron Epp says the festival with several new events went very well. "The weather was warm, hot ... and the pool was filled to capacity for free swimming."

Tom and Lori Neufeld entertained hundreds at the Credit Union's pancake breakfast Friday, and Southern Blues were enjoyed by a large breakfast crowd Saturday. The scavenger hunt and a 4-H Fun Horse Club day by the Prairie Pony Rider Club were favourite events for many.

The turnout was good for the Heirloom Quilters annual quilt show. Some 100 entries were exhibited, and the show, sale and tea, included a special tribute to late member Hilda Friesen.

At Neuberghthal, some 100 festival-goers also took in a tour of the Bernhard Hamm homestead or the restored Friesen house-barn in the Mennonite village. Guests were treated to a bit of heritage, enjoying tasty fresh bread from a central Russian-style oven, says Karen Martens.

At the festival's climax a thrilled and delighted Erin Reimer was crowned 2007 Manitoba Sunflower Festival Queen by outgoing Queen Lisa Krahn at Saturday night's stage show before a large crowd. Jenn Falk was named first princess, and Katie Heinrichs took 2nd princess honours.

Falk was also chosen Miss Congeniality, and Samantha Braun was chosen Miss People's Choice. Queen contestant speeches were featured on the Friday afternoon stage show, and local dignitaries took part in the evening's opening, featuring music by the Harlequin group.

On Friday night's stage were Emerald, Australia guests, Queen Jessamine Davison, joined by MSF Royalty, and queen contenders Samantha Braun, Jenn Falk, Dayna Fehr, Katie Heinrichs, Nellie Neufeld, Holly Penner, Erin Reimer and Sierra Sawatzky.

On Saturday hundreds more enjoyed the morning pancakes, and countless numbers lined the parade route for the huge festival parade; and many enjoyed the farmers market, and pork BBQ.

Many took in a community worship service Sunday in the park with singing, groups performing, puppeteers Dana Bergman and Carey Friesen entertaining the children, and a message by Rev. Tim Sawatzky.

Co-ordinator Grace Braun says a better than expected turnout came for the seven-yard back-yard garden tour Sunday, and despite it being a hot humid day, what they saw "looked good."

Entertainment continued Sunday afternoon on the park stage with various family performers. Free *Faspa* of Rollkuchen and watermelon, served by the town of Altona and the RM of Rhineland, delighted many. A Southern Gospel Concert ended the Manitoba Sunflower Festival Sunday night.



Second princess Kayla Toews (foreground), along with queen Lisa Krahn and first princess Karensa Voth head up Altona's float in the Sunflower Festival parade. It was one of the last formal duties for the community's outgoing royalty, with a new queen and princesses crowned at the festival's climax on the Saturday night stage.

— Photo by Elmer Heinrichs

Book Review

by Lawrence Klippenstein

Linda, Diana, and Marilyn Klippenstein, eds., *A Time for Everything: Descendants of Isbrandt and Catrina Klippenstein* (Herbert and Trossachs, SK: by the family, 2006), CD format, 410 pp. Gwen Rempel, ed., *The Klippenstein Sisters: Anna, Katharina, Sara and Lena* (Lloydminster, SK: by the family, 2004), 200 pp.

Genealogical research on the far-flung Klippenstein tribe has ramped up in recent years. In Manitoba it has caught the attention of John Klippenstein of Steinbach, the late Ben Klippenstein of Winnipeg, Shirley Klippenstein of Manitou, as well as Ted Friesen and Lawrence Klippenstein of Altona and Winnipeg respectively. Henry Klippenstein of Vancouver, BC, did a fine sketch of his immediate family, the Dietrich and Lisa Klippensteins (*Thicker than Water* – 2004). In the United States Tom Mierau Wichita, KS and Don Klippenstein, Goshen, IN, have weighed in on the topic. There have been Klippenstein reunions in Germany and reports of Jewish Klippenstein families and Klippensteins from Russia. An occasional newsletter titled *Klippings*, begun in 1987, has sought to gather up some of the strands into a more comprehensive depiction of the clan.

In these books the Saskatchewan and Paraguay people are brought into the bigger picture. Gwen Rempel began her story in Siberia, Russia, with a Johann Klippenstein (b.1845)-Helena Wall (b. 1855) family story and went on from there. Their son Johann married Helena Derksen who had six children including the sisters of the sub-title of her book: Lena (b.1904), Sara (b. 1905), Katharina (b. 1907) and Anna (b. 1911). When Helena remarried, to a widower, Kornelius, six more children came into the family. With their twelve children Helena and Kornelius eventually moved to Paraguay. From there Anna, Katharina and Sara Klippenstein and their families emigrated to Saskatchewan (see p.35 for a photo). Here they began to have reunions which served to keep the larger story alive, and laid a foundation for this book.

A sizable portion of the written stories derive from reminiscences prepared for the several gatherings of the family. The book is well-illustrated with photos, and the family groups are clearly delineated. The summary of the Klippenstein-Unger family helps to tie all the material

together, and a current (2003) family directory complete with addresses and phone numbers makes it easy for anyone to follow up material in this study.

"*A Time for Everything*" is "primarily about the descendants of three Klippenstein brothers, Bernhard, Johann and Diedrich", all part of the Russian Mennonite emigration to Canada in the 1920s. The parents of the three men, Isbrandt (b.1855) and Catrina Siemens, (b.1856?), married in 1874, lived in the village of Blumengart in the Old Colony of Chortitza from where they moved to Zentral in the Arkadak settlement, in 1910 where Catarina passed away shortly after that and Isbrandt in 1920. The three brothers with their family made their way to Canada in 1924-25, and settled in Saskatchewan. Their family tree of descendants appears on p.9. A good collection of brief stories from many of the families is included.

Some of the relatives of this group remain in Europe (notably in the former Soviet Union and Germany), and there have been visiting exchanges with some of the émigrés to Germany ending up in Manitoba by now. *Klippings* has featured some of these interconnections from time to time. This volume also contains a current family directory.

Both of these volumes (and *Klippings*) are available in Canadian Mennonite University library (Contact aredekopp@mennonitechurch.ca). Details of family groupings and family histories can be followed up here.

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The Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society Newsletter, Heritage Posting, welcomes letters and reports pertaining to the historical interests of society members.

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