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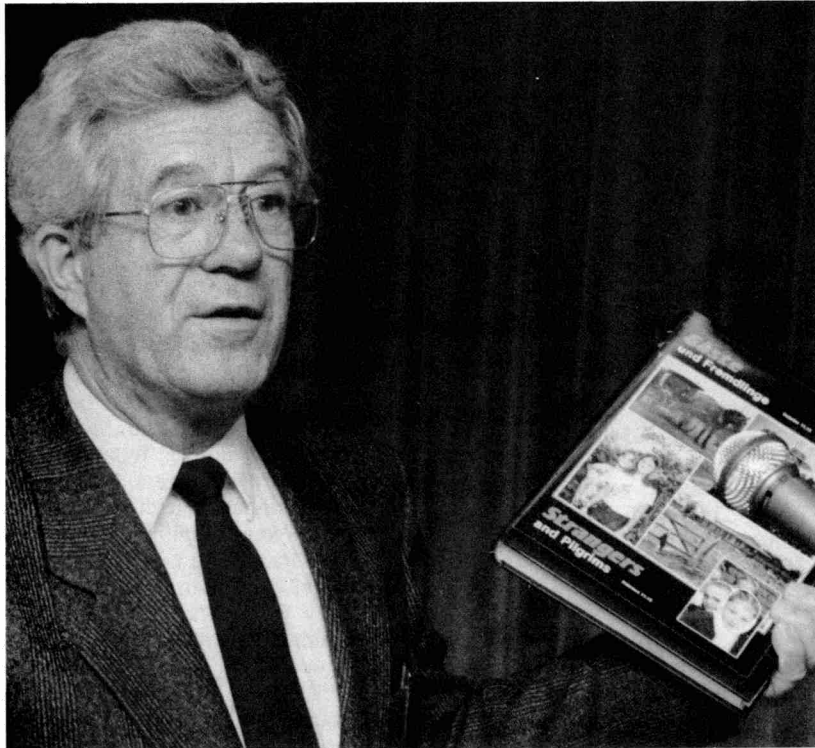
Manitoba  
Mennonite  
Historical  
Society



NUMBER 6

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 1987



About 120 people met on November 26 at the Elim Mennonite church, Niverville, to "unveil" a new book. The title is *Gäste und Fremdlinge. Strangers and Pilgrims*. It is a picture album about Mennonites in Latin America, edited by Abe Warkentin of *Mennonitische Post*.

Art Driedger, chairperson of the board that publishes *Mennonitische Post* (seen above) introduced the book to the guests.

## Preserve precious family memories

by Doris Penner

At family reunions it is natural and enjoyable to recall old times we shared with members of the clan - to become nostalgic and remember events of years gone by. It's important to talk about the past with our children present - this enables them to tie in their lives with the older folk in the family and thus these recollections provide continuity and identity across generations. To help trigger memories, it is good to have mementoes, diaries and the like. Here are some tips to help you preserve your precious memories, treasures and traditions.

**Memory quilts.** When your child wears out a favorite dress, shirt, pair of pants or pajamas don't put it in the ragbag. Find an unworn piece and snip it out. Place in a box marked with the child's name. When you collect enough scraps, sew them into a quilt top. A memory quilt makes a perfect gift when the child leaves home to go to college, takes up a new job or gets married.

**Shadow box memories.** Whether you're looking for a special gift to commemorate an occasion or you simply wish to preserve memories, a shadow box is an ideal reminder of special times. Purchase from a craft shop or make the box - it should be designed with

plenty of compartments of various sizes separated by wood strips. Arrange photographs, wedding announcements, corsages, and miniatures such as typewriters, books or tennis racquets that represent interests and hobbies. Secure items to the box with glue and hang.

**Heritage box.** Pick a sturdy average sized box. Make photocopies of ancestors' pictures and paste these into a collage on one side of the box. Use a map of the countries of origin of the ancestors on another side. Construct a family tree on top. Inside the box place priceless photographs, mementoes of the countries of the birth of ancestors, letters and accounts of their lives. Include oral histories of grandparents still living, recorded on tape. These will be priceless to you and your descendants in the future.

**Special event scrapbook.** Writing about family activities and pasting a year's worth of photographs into a picture album may be overwhelming so why not record short spans of time - a special vacation, one summer or a 75th birthday? At the beginning of the year buy a photo album for each event. On the first page write the event or period of time covered. As days go by and pictures and mementoes accumulate, slip them into the books. By the end of the year your books will be full of recorded memories which can quickly be put in place.

**Family quilt.** Each member of the family contributes one block of his or her own design. Any form of stitchery or even fabric crayons may be used. To use the crayons, the design is drawn on a sheet of typing paper (make sure the names and ages are signed). Letters and numbers must be written backwards. Then place the drawing or design face down on a quilt block (a square of muslin or other lightweight heat-resistant fabric works well). Iron, following directions on fabric crayon package. Each block will reflect the donor's talent and personality. The quilt is a decorative and lasting family memory.

*Reprinted from The Carillon. Used with permission.*

## MMHS Board at Work

by Doreen Martens

Should MMHS accept grant funds gathered through government lotteries?

A lively discussion on that topic highlighted the November 26 meeting of the board, held at the Mennonite Central Committee offices in Winnipeg.

The question has become increasingly pertinent in recent years as funds flowing through the provincial multicultural office have come to be drawn more and more exclusively from so-called "gaming funds" -- a term that is used at the top of application forms required to obtain funding for specific projects such as the Arnold Dyck series.

Some members of the Society have expressed concerns about MMHS use of lottery proceeds, in view of traditional opposition to gambling and what is often described as a "voluntary tax on the poor".

Victor Doerksen, speaking on behalf of the Research, Scholarship and Publication Committee, said he has written to the government minister responsible asking whether she could approve a donation for the project from discretionary funds in lieu of gaming funds. Government officials are sensitive to Mennonite concerns on the issue. But "are we just playing with words?" he asked.

Not accepting provincial funds of this type might make it difficult to carry on major publishing projects, since it is difficult to raise private support sufficient to complete these projects.

A variety of views were expressed on the subject. One view is that, while lotteries are a regrettable development, since the money is being raised it should be put to the best possible use. Many other organizations rely much more heavily on government funding than does MMHS.

It was also pointed out that projects undertaken by the Society are not strictly for the benefit of the Mennonite community; they have a broader perspective which also adds to the body of scholarship on Manitoba history and as such merits a share of grants available.

However, a number of board members expressed their discomfort with accepting lottery funds and their fears that the Society has slipped too easily into the academic's habit of accepting research funds wherever they are made available.

"I think there would be something splendid about a Mennonite organization totally separating itself from funding of that kind, without making noise about it," Doerksen said. However, he added, it would be hard

to be scrupulous about this, since according to government officials it is only a matter of time before it will be impossible to distinguish which government funds are derived from lotteries.

Ken Reddig suggested a public forum be held on this subject in the coming months, to give members of the Society a chance to discuss this issue from a variety of perspectives.

The board also heard an update on the Arnold Dyck Vol. III project, for which donations are now being solicited. Total costs of the project will be \$16,750, of which \$2,700 will be derived from sales of Vol. I and II, \$3,000 as a donation from Friesen Printers, \$2,500 from a projected grants and \$3,550 from a direct letter campaign.

The board agreed to allocate the final \$5,000 needed from accumulated funds. It was also agreed to set up a small committee to handle marketing of the series, in preparation for the Vol. IV project.

A preliminary budget was also passed, allocating \$700 to each of seven committees, \$500 to the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada, \$2,000 to the publicity and membership committee and the previously mentioned \$5,000 to the Arnold Dyck project.

The Society expects to raise \$2,000 through memberships, another \$2,500 in general donations, \$1,825 through a provincial operating grant and \$500 through interest income. Amounts yet unspecified will also be obtained through a Jobs Grant and special donations for the Isaac Mueller and Jacob Peters projects.

## MMHS Annual Meeting

**Date:** Saturday, January 16, 1988  
**Place:** Canadian Mennonite Bible College  
 600 Shaftesbury Blvd.,  
 Winnipeg, Manitoba

### Events

Business Meeting - 4:00 p.m.  
 Evening Meal - 6:30 p.m.  
 Program - 8:00 p.m.  
 \* "Sharing Memories of Dr. Paul Hiebert"  
 \* Readings by Di Brandt  
 \* Singers: *Deetscha Shpoos*  
 (Ens Family Group)

If you are planning to come please contact Mennonite Heritage Centre, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, Man. Ph. 888-6781.

A recommendation to continue providing the *Mennonite Historian* as part of the membership benefit package for 1988 was also approved. This costs the Society \$4 per member.

## Donations Acknowledgements

Thank you for your generous support!

### Sustaining Members (\$25. to \$99.)

Ken Braun, Altona; Jake Banman, Steinbach; Anne Berg, Rosenfeld; Frank E. Dueck, Winnipeg; John P. Dyck, Winnipeg; Henry Dyck, Winnipeg; Frank F. Enns, Winnipeg; Henry W. Enns, Winkler; Adolf Ens, Winnipeg; Gerhard Ens, Winnipeg; Abram E. Ens, Winkler; John J. Epp, Winnipeg; Arthur Fast, Winnipeg; John P. Friesen, Winnipeg; William A. Giesbrecht, Steinbach; Lawrence Giesbrecht, Altona; Garner Goertzen, Regina; Peter A. Hiebert, Steinbach; Susan Hildebrandt, Winnipeg; Dr. Helmut T. Huebert, Winnipeg; Dr. Jacob E. Isaac, Winnipeg; Larry Kehler, Winnipeg; Heinz Kampen, Winnipeg; Margaret Kroeker, Winnipeg; Jack B. Loewen, Steinbach; Abe Loewen, Gretna; Menn. Village Museum, Steinbach; Joseph E. Miller, Winnipeg; Wilmer Penner, Steinbach; Dr. Paul Peters, Steinbach; Delbert Plett, Steinbach; Heidi Plett, Steinbach; Dr. Victor Peters, Winnipeg; David G. Rempel, Menlo Park, Ca., U.S.A.; William Rempel, Niverville; Edwin Redekopp, Winnipeg; Henry W. Redekopp, Winnipeg; Peter J. Reimer, Steinbach; Herman Rempel, Morden; Lora Sawatsky, Winnipeg; Levi Schellenberg, Kleefeld; John Schellenberg, Headingley; Erwin H. Siemens, Winnipeg; Guenther Sickert, Winnipeg; Ron Suderman, Winkler; Walter Thiessen, Winnipeg; Abram J. Thiessen, Winnipeg; Peter Wiebe, Winkler; Frank Wiens, Grunthal; Willmar Windows, Winnipeg; Frank Zacharias, Gretna.

### Supporting Members (\$100. to \$499.)

Ed Friesen, Steinbach; Dr. R. F. Friesen, Winnipeg; Victor Doerksen, Winnipeg; Art DeFehr, Winnipeg; Helen Janzen, Winnipeg; Doreen Klassen, Steinbach; Roydon Loewen, Steinbach.

### Life Members (\$500. and more)

Neil Dueck, Teulon; Derksen Printers, Steinbach; D.W. Friesen, Altona; Charles H. Loewen, Steinbach; Kroeker Farms, Winkler.  
*Jacob Rempel*

The MMHS Newsletter is published twice a year by the Publicity and Membership Committee of the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society. It welcomes letters and reports pertaining to the historical interests of society members. Correspondence should be mailed to the MMHS Newsletter, 600 Shaftesbury, Winnipeg. Editor: Royden Loewen. Other committee members: Lawrence Klippenstein, Doreen Martens, Jacob Rempel and Dennis Stoesz.



Photo by Dennis Stoesz

## Stoeszes Gather at Niverville

by Dennis E. Stoesz

Over 70 people gathered in Niverville on Saturday afternoon, November 21, to celebrate the unveiling of *Our Stoesz Heritage, 1836-1987*. The program included a welcome, singing, a book report, a prayer of dedication and unveiling. Coffee and fasha was served afterwards. Organized by the Book Committee, participants included Dick Blatz, Steinbach; Jake and Helen Wiebe, Selkirk; Ed Wiebe, Landmark; Gus Dueck, Mitchell; Tina Froese and Kay Martens of Niverville; Mary Blatz, Steinbach; Betty Dueck, Mitchell; Ruth Peters, Altona; Betty Ginter, Rosenfeld; and Dennis Stoesz, Winnipeg. The Open House was to celebrate the completion of a five-year project which had its beginning at a 1982 Stoesz Reunion in Winkler.

The book is in hardcover, has 239 pages and includes 228 family stories, over 400 photographs, and a complete genealogy. The first chapter introduces the reader to the

wider Stoesz story, starting from 1. Cornelius Stoesz (1731-1811), of Prussia. The bulk of the book tells the story of 3.9 Cornelius (1836-1900) and Aganetha (Wiebe) Stoesz and their descendants. They emigrated to Manitoba in 1874, and descendants are spread almost evenly on both sides of the Red River.

The book sells for \$30.00 and can be ordered from Gus Dueck, Box 1255, Steinbach, Manitoba, R0A 2A0, or call 326-1891.

## Also Available

The following genealogy books may be ordered from Mennonite Heritage Centre, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, Man. R3P 0M4.

Alf H. Redekopp, ed. **Jacob Thielmann and Helena Kroeker Family History and Genealogy of Their Descendants** (Winnipeg, 1987), 315 pp., pb., \$25.00.

John and Rudy Friesen, eds. **Descendants of Cornelius Friesen** (Winnipeg, 1986), 250 pp., hdc., \$30.00.

Mary Jeffery, ed. **Aeltester Johann Funk, A Family Tree** (Winnipeg, 1980), 229 pp., pb., \$10.00.

## Research in Progress

by Bruce Wiebe

Some time ago many Mennonite genealogists of Manitoba handed in "Research in Progress" forms. We are now able to share the results. We list the names of researchers in bold, and their topics above these names.

- 1) Derk Dyck (\*1818) & Anna Penner  
Jacob Froese (\*1779) & Anna Doerksen  
**Brian Dyck**, 1080 Sunset Dr., Winkler, R6W 1P1
- 2) Schwarz family  
**Reinhard Schwarz**, Box 183, Altona, R0G 0B0
- 3) Peter Harms  
David Stoesz  
H. Doerksen  
**William Harms**, Box 84, Altona, R0G 0B0
- 4) Johan Klassen & Ann Wiebe (1st), Maria Blatz (2nd)  
**Mary Klassen**, Box 218, Gretna, R0G 0V0
- 5) Vogt, Neufeld, Harms, Penner, Klassen  
**Mary E. Neufeld**, Box 367, Winkler, R0G 2X0
- 6) Peter Klippenstein family  
Bishop Abram Doerksen family  
**Helen Wahl**, Box 1502, Altona, R0G 0B0
- 7) Friedrich Wall (\*1807)  
Philip Dyck & Margaret Hiebert  
Anna Penner (\*1853)  
Jacob Martens  
**Anna Wahl**, Box 1502, Altona, R0G 0B0
- 8) Heinrich Heinrichs family  
**Cleo Heinrichs**, Box 303, Plum Coulee, R0G 1R0
- 9) Zacharias, Froese  
**Leslie Zacharias**, 139 9th St., Winkler, R6W 1W5
- 10) Peter Mueller (\*1721)  
Austria & Elizabeth Winkler (\*1739)  
Jacob Wiebe (\*1780) & Anna Fast (\*1756)  
**Bruce Wiebe**, RR #1, Box 79, Winkler, R6W 4A1

We are hoping to get other returns in the near future, and encourage you to send such a form (if you haven't yet). The results will be published in the next issue of the newsletter.

Mail forms to Mary E. Neufeld, Genealogy and Family History Committee, Box 367, Winkler, Manitoba, R0G 2X0.

## Genealogy and Family History Workshop

**Date:** Tuesday, March 29, 1988  
**Time:** 7:30 p.m.  
**Place:** New Horizons Drop-in Center  
287 Main Avenue  
Plum Coulee, Manitoba

Sponsored by the West Reserve Mennonite Genealogical Committee.  
For further information call Bruce Wiebe at 1(204)325-9082.

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## West Reserve Mennonite Village Seminar Meets

by John Dyck

Forty people met in the Community Centre at Reinland, Manitoba, on Tuesday, October 27, to hear the early histories of several Manitoba Mennonite villages. It was a follow-up to a similar meeting held at Altona a year ago to look at early West Reserve Mennonite leaders.

In his opening remarks at this session, Rev. Abram Wiebe of Winkler noted that knowledge of our history calls us to gratitude to God as we see how He worked in the lives of our forefathers.

The first paper, drawing on journals of Peter P. Elias, provided interesting comments on the experiences and thoughts of an 1875 immigrant. Reader Bernie Elias of Reinland gleaned interesting details of that journey as well as the early history of Blumenfeld from his grandfather's writings. He noted, for instance, that in 1875 the elder Elias purchased two quarter sections and a semlin (sod house) for \$30.00. Inflation doubled the price to \$30.00 for one quarter in a short time. The book on Blumenfeld is a good source for this study.

Bill Schroeder of Winnipeg reported on Blumstein, which was established as a village when the first sod houses were built there in 1876. When the 24 resident families built more permanent homes shortly thereafter, they were all set on their homesteads instead of in the village. It brought village life to an end. First names in the village included Funk, Hoepfner, Wiebe, Unger, Dyck, etc.

Jacob C. Fehr of Plum Coulee told the story of Old Rosenfeld (two miles south and a little west of the present town site) which was founded by his grandfather with three of his brothers-in-law in 1875. Of the 16 families living in the village in 1880, six were Klassen related. Seven years later, the village began to break up when the first villager moved his residence on to his nearby homestead. The name was transferred to the town on the railroad not far away.

In his portrayal of the early years of Alt Bergthal, Dr. Lawrence Klippenstein noted that his great-grandfather, Heinrich Klippenstein, had been one of the pioneers in the 1890s. Like most of the residents of this village, he came originally from the Bergthal Colony in Ukraine. Klippenstein then settled in Bergthal, on the East Reserve. Alt Bergthal, begun around 1880, was the home as well of Johann Funk, the first Bergthaler Aeltester of the West Reserve. The village still exists today.

Rev. Peter D. Zacharias, in his closing remarks, reminded the audience that the building where they were meeting was the first Mennonite church to be built in western

Canada. That made it an appropriate choice for this occasion.

The meeting was sponsored by the Local Histories Committee of the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society. Several persons took out new memberships in the Society during the evening. The program was taped and copies of the tape may be obtained from

Bill Harms, Gretna, Manitoba. R0G 0V0.

**Note:** Anyone interested in getting the book, *The Rural Municipality of Rhineland. Volost and Municipality, 1884-1984*, by Gerhard Ens, should write to William J. Kehler, Altona, Manitoba, R0G 0B0. It is in hardcover, has about 300 pages and costs around \$15.00.

## New Sources of Alt Bergthal History

by Laurence Klippenstein

John Rempel of Halbstadt recently brought to the Mennonite Heritage Centre two important documents on the history of Alt Bergthal village. One is the record of land-holding registration for this West Reserve village, dated 1891. It spells out exactly the extent and location of land holdings pertaining to each villager at that time.

A total of 19 signatures, concludes the document: Heinrich Dyck, Johan Funk, Julius Banmann, Abraham Froese, Gerhard Dueck, Jakob Dueck, Peter Sawatzky, Heinrich Klausen, Heinrich Klippenstein, Abraham Schroeder, Johan Wieler, Gerhard Martens, Johan Klassen, Johan Dueck, Johan Penner, Peter Sawatzky, Johan Wieler, Johan Dyck, and Martin (?illegible). The last name is not repeated in the legal listing of names that precedes and follows the signatures.

The other document, dated 1897, is a release from joint registration. It gives each owner the right to hold his land privately, hence also to sell it off when he saw fit. It has the following signatures: Heinrich Dueck, Johan Funk, Isaak Dyck, Peter Funk, Gerhard Dueck, Isaak Giesbrecht, Jakob Dueck, Heinrich Klippenstein, Peter Sawatzky, Johan Wieler, Heinrich Klausen, Maria Vogt (administratrix to the estate of Jacob Sawatzky), Heinrich Klassen (administrator to the estate of Johann Klassen), H. M. Klassen (administrator to the estate of Martin Klassen), Martin Klassen, Johann Penner, and Gerhard Martens.

The land titles offices of the province of Manitoba, and of Ottawa, should have such agreements for all villages, says Mr. Rempel. He himself has obtained about a dozen others, including those of the village of Bergthal in the East Reserve (now also at the Mennonite Heritage Centre).



A photo of an Alt Bergthal school group taken ca. 1897. The teacher is either Franz Siemel or Jakob Kliever. Can anyone tell us more about the people on the photo? Photo courtesy of the late Sarah (Mrs. A. A.) Braun, who grew up in the village and most recently lived in Winnipeg, Manitoba.