



## Mennonite Heritage Village Museum Gearing Up For 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

by Barry Dyck

This year's theme at Mennonite Heritage Village is *Windmills: Sailing the Skies*. Our curators have done a lot of research on both the historical and contemporary use of wind power. Our exhibit in the Gerhard Ens gallery uses written text, photos and models to educate our guests. A recently restored portable windmill previously used by a farmer to cut wood and grind animal feed is on display on our village main street. Many tourists have used it as a photo backdrop.

Our Education Program staff was busy with thousands of students through May and June. During July and August they were occupied with running several Pioneer Day Camps and hosting numerous daycare centres which brought children to MHV on field trips.

The artifact collection at MHV continues to grow, strictly by donation. We are particularly interested in objects that we don't already have in our collection and that bring a story attached to them. Not nearly all the artifacts brought to our door meet those criteria for acceptance.

Our first festival of the season on Victoria Day, *Spring on the Farm*, was rained out. Things picked up after that. Attendance for *Canada Day*, *Pioneer Days*, and *Fall on the Farm* were all strong. Even our general attendance and our school program have seen increased activity this year.



Portable windmill.



Windmill exhibit in Ens gallery.

We have seen a number of capital improvements this year. The Barkfield School has a fresh coat of paint, the Peters Barn has a new cedar roof, and the Steamer Shelter will see a fresh coat of paint before the summer is over. Our community has been very supportive of these restoration projects.

In 2014 we will celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a variety of special events. Stay tuned to [www.mhv.ca](http://www.mhv.ca) or "Mennonite Heritage Village Museum" on Facebook for more details.

# The Braun Farm: A Century Farm in Burwalde

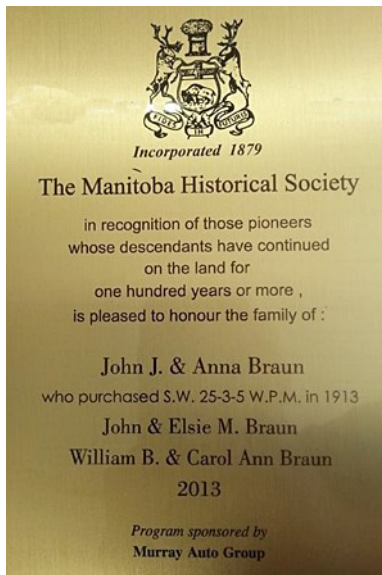
by Barry Dyck

Both the Manitoba Historical Society (MHS) and Manitoba Agriculture, Food, and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI) have "Centennial" or "Century Farm" programs to recognize farms which have been owned and operated by one family line for at least 100 years. More than 1500 Manitoba farms have achieved this status.

On July 14, 2013, the descendants of the late John J. and Anna Braun, together with more than 100 family members and friends, celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their farm in Burwalde, northwest of Winkler. This farm situated at SW25-3-5W was purchased by John J. Braun in 1913. It is located north of the Dead Horse Creek, one mile west of the former location of the Burwalde School and the current location of the Winkler Bible Camp.

Bill Braun, grandson of John J. Braun and current owner of the farm, reported: "In 1956 he (John J.) purchased a Ford 860 tractor with two implements for around \$1300. Farming, though, was not his only passion. He had many hobbies that included photography, showing films in schools, growing various fruit trees and plants in a large garden that also included many varieties of peonies. He also learned how to wire houses when hydro became available. He was involved with the start of the Stanley Agriculture Society."

The Braun's son John and his wife Elsie (Brandt) took over the farm in 1960 when the elder Braun retired. During this generation the farm began producing crops such as corn, peas and beans for the local cannery. John Braun Jr.



also purchased a baler and was often found doing custom baling in the neighbours' fields.

In addition to some fine musical entertainment and a great meal, guests were treated to some reminiscing by members of the family. Both MHS and MAFRI were in attendance to make presentations.

Many of the fifth-generation descendants of the farm's original owner were present. They heard the stories of their ancestors' vision and determination to succeed as farmers. They heard how neighbours supported one another for mutual benefit. They heard how faith sustained them in challenging times. And once again, they were reminded of the importance of remembering and telling the stories from our past, which continue to shape our future.

## November Is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

November has been designated Domestic Violence Awareness Month in Manitoba. During November, Voices for Non-Violence, a program of MCC Manitoba, invites you to bring abuse out of the shadows and into the light by installing purple lights or lighting a purple candle in a highly visible location in your office, place of business, church, organization or your home. This small act sends the message that home should not be a place that hurts, and that those who are hurting are not alone – that their pain does not go unnoticed.

During the month of November, be part of something illuminating by participating in the **Purple Light Nights Campaign**. You are invited to attend the launch of the Purple Light Nights campaign at 12:00 on Tuesday, November 5, 2013 at Sam's Place, 159 Henderson Highway, MCC's café and used bookstore.

## MCC History Remembered

The Chair in Mennonite Studies at the University of Winnipeg is hosting a conference that asks you to remember the history of MCC Canada. You may have helped assemble Christmas bundles for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) to share with needy children in a distant war-torn country. You may remember mealtime discussions about MCC and Vietnam, the Middle East, and a simmering Cold War. You may remember serving overseas somewhere as a young adult. These are Esther Epp-Tiessen's memories and those that guided her thinking as she set out to write the history of MCC Canada. The conference begins with a launch of Esther's book on Friday evening, December 13, 2013 at 7:30 in Convocation Hall at the University of Winnipeg. On Saturday there will be presentations and discussion of the book by former MCC workers and both Mennonite and other scholars. Saturday's discussions begin at 8:30 and end at 5:00 pm. For more information go to: [http://mennonitestudies.uwinnipeg.ca/events/mcc\\_in\\_canada\\_2013/MCC\\_in\\_Canada\\_brochure.pdf](http://mennonitestudies.uwinnipeg.ca/events/mcc_in_canada_2013/MCC_in_Canada_brochure.pdf)

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# Hanover Rural Municipality Historic School Sites Marked

by Lawrence Klippenstein

Most of the various original markings of pioneer locations in the East Reserve have vanished over the years. This includes most of the rural school sites which came into being in both the East and West Reserve. Removing many road markers by the Hanover municipality describing smaller specific locations raised a question among some local folks about whether it was historically wise to do so.

Partly this concern has been spoken to now by the decision of the EastMenn Historical Committee to put up simple name signs at the original sites of small one- room schools which about 45 years ago were consolidated into larger area teaching centres now located in Steinbach, Niverville, Kleefeld, Blumenort, New Bothwell, Mitchell, and other chosen new sites. None of those original country schools, as they were called, remain as active classrooms in their original form— the buildings themselves have sometimes been converted into other kinds of usable structures, dismantled or moved away from their original sites.

Twenty-seven Hanover school sites have received such signs through this signing initiative. Half a dozen had been set up earlier by non-Mennonite communities in the region, notably the Willow Plains group consisting of Ukrainian schools. Organized instruction of children began in many villages almost as soon as they were established. Some of the original schools were simply rooms chosen for use in homes, others built as regular classrooms already in the late nineteenth century. Virtually all of them were closed in 1966-68 when a unitary school division was set up in the area.

I recently visited the location of a new sign for the Moray school district, once the village area of Bergthal a few miles southwest of Blumenort. It marks the public school yard which once had a two classroom building on it and got its new name when the private school period ended there in 1919. Those school buildings have now been replaced by a family residence with barn and other out buildings. Teachers for this school have been listed by researchers as continuing to teach until 1968. My grandfather, Peter H Klippenstein, born in Bergthal, East Reserve, in 1878, will have been among the earlier pupils. His parents, Heinrich and Sarah, with their seven children, moved to the village of Alt-berghthal (Altona), West Reserve, in 1891.

Few traces remain of the original village of Bergthal (Moray SD). The creek bed and banks are still there, and somewhat to the south of it is a cairn erected fairly recently, which lists names of persons buried in a cemetery once located there. It is a soybean field this fall. One may assume the very first school building was in the village. The marker, one of the 27 placed in the municipality as part of the project, is set some distance away from the original village, in plain view from a road passing by.



— Photo by Ernest Braun, Niverville, Manitoba

Other projects recently completed by the EastMenn Historical Committee include the publication of a book of essays titled **Settlers of the East Reserve: Moving In-Moving Out-Staying**, edited by Adolf Ens, Ernest Braun and Henry Fast ((2009), Dennis Stoesz's **A History of the Chortitzer Mennonite Church of Manitoba 1874-1914** (2011) , and a **CD** of 1946 aerial photographs of the entire RM of Hanover in southeastern Manitoba, edited by Ernest Braun (2012). Members of the committee include Henry N. Fast, Ernest N. Braun, Glen R Klassen, Adolf Ens, Jacob E. Peters, Orlando Hiebert and Ben Funk.

## Sources

Jacob Doerksen, "Bergthal," *Working Papers of the East Reserve Village Histories*, edited by John Dyck (1990), 13-32.

Ian Froese, "Marking historic Hanover school sites," *The Carillon*, July 25, 2013, 5A.

Lawrence Klippenstein, *Peter H. and Maria Dyck Klippenstein: A Brief Sketch of Their Life and Work* (Steinbach: The Klippenstein Cousins, 2008).

John K. Schellenberg, *Schools-Our Heritage: From 46 School Districts to Hanover Unitary School Division, 1878-1968*, (Steinbach: Hanover School Division No. 15, 1985)



# Creek Stories

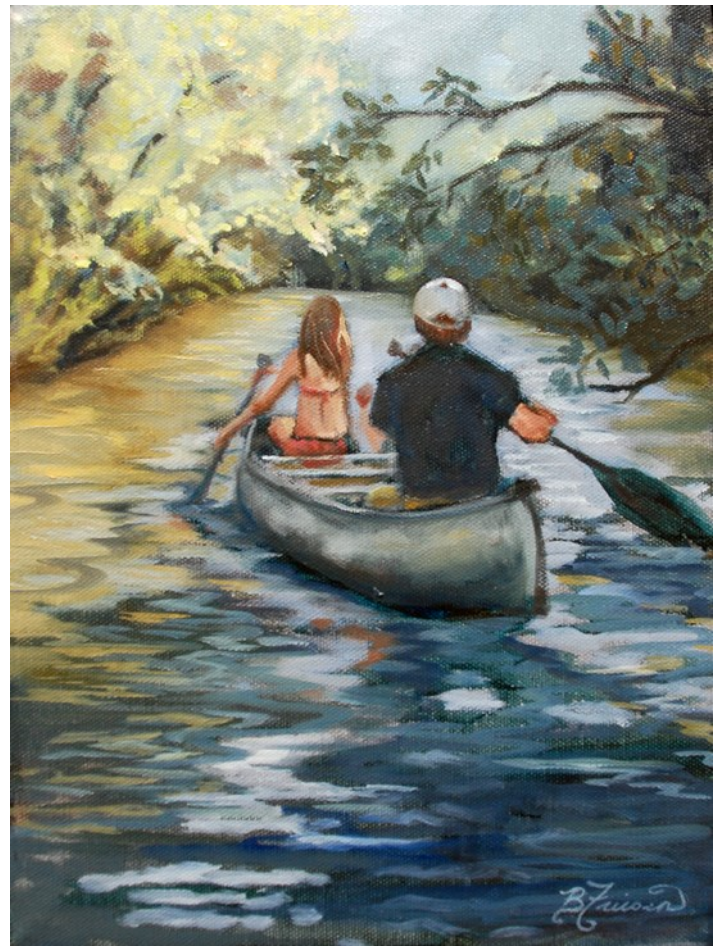
by Lois Braun Altona, July 30, 2013

A group of visual artists in the Altona area call themselves the Buffalo Creek Artists, after a meandering series of natural and man-made channels draining the waters of the Pembina escarpment into the Red River.

These artists usually devise their exhibits around a theme and the Spring show at the Gallery in the Park this year was called "Creek Stories." Each artist – be it potter, metalworker, sculptor, or painter – was encouraged to invoke the spirit of Buffalo Creek. At the time that the artists met to plan the show and the stories and memories about experiences at the creek began to flow, someone suggested that, along with the visual interpretations, there should be an opportunity for members of the community to tell their stories about what influence the creek has had on their lives. It was decided that the artists would host an evening at the Gallery called "Creek Stories."

The event was held on the spacious patio beside the Gallery on a pleasant evening and was emcee'd by Lloyd Letkeman. About 40 people turned up. Armin Wiebe had been invited to read and he chose a section from one of his novels about a young couple's first tryst on the bank of a creek. Two musicians – Paul Krahn of Neubergthal and Paul Bergman of Altona – sang songs that conveyed a pastoral or waterside atmosphere.

Audience members came forward to share. We heard both legend and historical fact surrounding the role the creek played in the buffalo hunt of the First Nations and about the artifacts they left behind; about young wags finding secluded spots to build fires, drink beer and smooch with their sweeties; about a ragtag group of protesters back in the '50s that gathered creekside to rail against the "communist" co-op movement; about a man walking in hip-waders from the road to his house one night during a flood keeping a wary eye on the hydro wires that were nearly touching the surface of the water; about an effort back in the 90s to create a Buffalo Creek Recreation and Resource area that failed because of lack of cooperation from the farmers whose land bordered the creek; about artists who photograph and paint scenery



— Photo by Bev Friesen

along its banks; about hunters and fishermen; about how, before the man-made segments for the drainage system were completed, the creek widened out near Rosenfeld to form a large lake; about how the creek was used as a baptism location by at least one church at least once. Lawrence Klippenstein's book about Peter H. and Maria Dyck Klippenstein's homestead on Buffalo Creek was shown around and proved to be a valuable resource in imagining the impact of the creek on pioneer life in the West Reserve.

This event just scratched the surface, however. It is quite possible that Creek Stories II will follow, perhaps in the fall of 2014, when it is hoped that even more people will come forward to share their stories.



**The Altbergthal school building, now moved to Neubergthal, is ready to be re-shingled. A chimney is also planned for the roof and a second exterior paint job is in the plans for further work this fall.**

— Photo by Dorothy Friesen, Altona, Man.



# A Teachers' Reunion with a Difference

by Conrad Stoesz

Well over 100 people converged on the Bethel Bergthaler Mennonite Church, south of Winkler for a gathering of country school teachers on October 5, 2013. Attendees were encouraged to bring along photos and documents about their teaching career. Displays were created by some; others brought scrapbooks and posters displaying textbooks, attendance records, and photographs. The role of education on display covered a wide span: from the closing of the Reinfeld school in 1991, to a scribbler from Russia dating from 1846, with full-color artwork by Peter Klippenstein. A digitization station complete with scanners and digital cameras was set up to capture the materials. The event was organized by the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society's Local History Committee, which is embarking on a project to explore and document the educational history of the former Mennonite West Reserve now encompassed by the Rural Municipalities of Stanley and Rhineland. However, participants in attendance also taught in the R. M. of Hanover, Winnipeg, and in remote northern communities such as Shamattawa, which is 715 km by plane from Winnipeg, and in Mexico.

Speakers covered the topics of the one-room school, permit teachers, the role of sports, religion, German, Christmas program, and music. Mary Anne Zacharias led a hearty singing of old favorites such as "The Ash Grove," "God Save Our Queen," and "Early one Morning." Jim Dyck talked about the rivalries between schools and even teachers at the school picnic.

The crowd was enthusiastic and had many stories to tell, so much so that at times these teachers needed to be reminded to get back to their seats, use inside voices, and to pay attention! After lunch and coffee breaks, the participants were called back together with the aid of a hand-held school bell. The Reinland community's ladies group served a marvelous meal of mashed potatoes, farmer sausage, veggies, pickled beets, and an assortment of pies.

The role of education continues to be an important topic in our communities; it has a long history that has yet to be



Gathering of teachers on October 5, 2013.

fully told. For Mennonites in Manitoba, the issue of education reaches back to the European Reformation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century that placed a new emphasis on individuals reading their own Bibles. For this to occur, people needed to be literate. Anabaptist groups, such as the Mennonites, soon established schools designed to educate people so they could function within the Mennonite society. Education was firmly placed as a responsibility of the family and church. Within a year of coming to Manitoba, Mennonites built schools in order to continue this practice. British-Canadian elites who held many of the most influential posts in Canadian society also recognized the power of education and saw its potential for creating a British culture and loyal citizenry among new and diverse groups of immigrants. While Mennonites had negotiated the right to operate and direct their own schools with the Canadian government, education was a provincial responsibility. This muted the value of the promise of educational freedom extended to the Mennonites in 1873.

Teacher training, higher education, government support for schools, teaching of English, the role of religion, the Manitoba Schools question, school divisions, division amalgamation, all became contested issues for the people of southern Manitoba. This backdrop provides context to the role of education in Manitoba today and the group of rural school teachers that gathered for the local history event.

*All photos by Conrad Stoesz*



Scribbler with artwork by Peter Klippenstein.



Elenore Chornoboy, Anne Peters and Anna Ens.

# Book Reviews

## **The Fehrs Four Centuries of Mennonite Migration**

*by Arlette Kouwenhoven, 2013 Winco Publishing  
translated by Lesley Fast from the original in Dutch.*

*Reviewed by Tina Fehr Kehler*

Kouwenhoven writes about the Mennonite migration story following the De Veer / DeFehr / Fehr family line from the first known sources through the line that migrated to Sabinal in northern Mexico. She contextualizes the story of this one family line within the larger Mennonite experience. As a point of comparison and contrast, she juxtaposes the path of the conservative / separationist Fehr line with the more liberal and integrated branch of the family.

The central question she explores is how, from the beginnings of Anabaptism, this Mennonite group in Sabinal came to be where they are and how they live. The Fehr line was chosen since it is one of a few family lines in the cultural Mennonite tradition that can be followed to the early days of Anabaptism.

The conservative branch of the Mennonite faith that migrated to Latin America has seen little less than derision from the larger Mennonite family. To this day, they continue to be a little studied, understood or accepted branch of the Mennonite tree. This book makes an inroad into uncovering factors that led them to where they are today.

Kouwenhoven is a skillful storyteller and engages the reader in the events and sentiments of the time in the various periods throughout Mennonite history. Kouwenhoven paints a picture of each era, taking us down the streets, into the buildings and across the lands that the Mennonites experienced. Because of limited records from the past of the lives of individuals, the author often speculates about how the individuals may have responded according to recorded historical events.

The book begins in 1612 with Gijsbert De Veer, a grain merchant in Amsterdam and member of the Old Flemish branch of the Anabaptist church. From Danzig to Amsterdam, on to Poland and New Russia, to Canada and Mexico, Kouwenhoven follows the line of Fehr's to the present day David Fehr III in Sabinal, Mexico. Throughout, she works on the theme of how the Mennonites adapt their religious beliefs to changing circumstances. They adapt from their position on the margins of society, either accepting aspects of the status quo thereby losing "cultural" or "religious" distinctions or reacting against

change by entrenching long standing practices as religious imperatives.

The Fehr descendants in Sabinal live in a colony that continues to use horse and buggy and tractors without rubber tires, and that does not use electricity from the state. They believe they maintain the directives of Menno Simons, living simple and sober lives, continuing on the road of the suffering Christ.

While Kouwenhoven attempts to understand these isolated Mennonites, she still seems to view them from the framework of a modern, educated and economically success-driven society. From this perspective, they will always fall short. Success needs to be judged from the people's own perspective, not those of others.

With the almost gushing afterward on the success of the Canadian DeFehr's; one is left with the impression that the Fehr's in Sabinal could also have found themselves on this path had they made better choices.

We are, unfortunately, left with the impression that the Sabinal Mennonites are hopelessly backwards and the authors of their own demise.

## **The Start of our Story: Mennonites Recall Russian Beginnings**

*By Lawrence Klippenstein*

Dr. Nicholas Bidloo, a doctor from Amsterdam who was hired by Peter the Great early in the eighteenth century and worked in his court may have been the first resident Mennonite in Tsarist Russia. We are not fully informed about this contact, but historians hold it to be true.

We are much better informed, and have done wide research on the story of Mennonite families from Danzig and West Prussia (sometimes referred to simply as northern Poland) settling in New Russia (later Ukraine) near the end of the eighteenth century. A young Mennonite dairy farmer, Johann Bartsch, and Jakob Hoeppner, a hotelier (innkeeper) from Bohnsack (both Danzig suburbs), are generally believed to have paved the way for that move with a land scouting trip in 1786-87, bringing back an official Russian document called a *Privilegium*.

This Charter of Settlement contained a twenty-point agreement of colonizing arrangements. It spelled out a mutual agreement between the Mennonites and Vice Regent Grigorii Potemkin speaking for Tsarina Catherine the Great regarding terms of settlement which started in 1788-89. This settler venture did not roll out quite as expected, but it was the start of a Mennonite story which will have unfolded for 225 years in 2014 – and has not really ended yet.

A Mennonite celebration of the start of this re-location to Russia is the topic of an anniversary discussion underway at the moment. Plans by non-Mennonite Germans from

*(Continued on page 7)*

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— The editors.

# Book Review

## VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS

by **Peter A. Elias**

(edited and translated by Adolf Ens and Henry Unger)

**Reviewed by Peter Zacharias**

Thanks to the release of this work the writings of Hochfeld blacksmith Peter A. Elias are finally accessible to a much wider readership. It opens another window into the first 50 years of West Reserve history.

Born in 1843 in Rosengart, Chortitza (popularly known as the Old Colony), in South Russia, Elias was 32 years old at the time of his emigration to Manitoba. This gave him the ability to see developments in his church and in the West Reserve Mennonite settlement in the light of his South Russian experience. He was well versed in the Scriptures, had read Menno Simons and the Marytrs Mirror, was at least somewhat acquainted with Reformation history. His learning under schoolmaster Isaak Bergen must have been highly efficacious. He read throughout his life, carried on a lively correspondence and was a sharp theological and critical thinker.

Elias was an astute observer of church and colony affairs in Manitoba. He regretted the early breakup of so many of the villages, the early church division in the settlement. Never just a simple yes-man, never an acquiescent and servile church member, he constantly held the ministerial, including the bishop, to account. One incident, among several, where this was especially so, concerned a shipment of flour to the new and needy Swift Current settlement in Saskatchewan. The flour was donated by the church; it was to be free. The CPR delivered it free of charge to its destination, and then to Elias' consternation, he discovered that apparently the flour had been sold at the other end. This created new hardship because some people found it extremely difficult to pay and the wealthier could afford a higher quality of flour than the poor. It became a major issue of social concern for Elias. On this and other issues such as the relationship between the Waisenamt and usury (using Waisenamt funds to secure mortgages), Elias is consistent and persistent. His quill is loaded with conviction. Again and again he leans on the authority of Scripture and his understanding of Anabaptist teaching. And yet Elias remains, certainly in his view, as a loyal member of the Reinländer Mennonite Church; he never threatens to leave the fellowship. While criticizing strongly, he does so as an insider, as one who loves the church.

He engages church leadership on issues like Sabbath

observance vis a vis Sunday observance, footwashing, and even sheds light on charismatic activity that perplexed both Ältester Johann Wiebe and Elias, albeit for different reasons. He comments on the beginnings of the rift between the Reinländer and the Berghthaler and also on the later consequences and repercussions of that rift. His commentary continues right up to the emigration to Mexico (on which Elias did not embark).

If I were to select a theme for this book, it would probably be this quotation from Elias' book (p. 60):

**"... we are called emigrants in a physical sense. If only we were also so in a spiritual sense."**

This is the lament of Peter A. Elias.

This is also his hope and his aspiration.

This is where the minds of Johann Wiebe and Peter A. Elias intersect.

*(Continued from page 6)*

northern Poland, both Luthern and Catholic, for such a celebration have actually provided the impetus for our consideration of such an event. These are folks whose ancestors made the same move at that identical time to that very same part of the world and want to make sure their "start" in the Black Sea region is not forgotten. The Germans from Russia Heritage Society has in fact invited Mennonites to join them for a convention in Portland, Oregon, in 2014. We are now looking for someone to make a presentation on our Russian story to read in their midst.

An outline of the Mennonite version of such a commemorative event has not been firmed up yet. Several projects have quite coincidentally come along to tie in with other ideas. One is to construct a replica of the Jakob Hoepfner monument which was moved from the former Island of Chortitza to Steinbach in 1973 and to erect it at the exact site where the original stood. Maxim Ostopenko, a Ukrainian Cossack museum director out there is ready to help.

Another event, already in the works, is a tour from Poland to Ukraine being scheduled for next spring (2014) by Len Loepky of Steinbach. It could offer a setting for a re-enactment of the historic journey of our forefathers and foremothers from the south shore of the Baltic to the leafy giant 800-year old oak tree in the former Cossack *sech* (fortress community) of Chortitza. You can reach Len to ask about joining the tour, at [aloepky@mymts.net](mailto:aloepky@mymts.net) or calling 1-204-326-2613.

A mini-conference of semi-scholarly presentations on the early history of Mennonites in Russia is what some people might wish to see. There are thoughts of sharing parts of a collection of documents not brought to light until recently. The late Dr. David G. Rempel called it the "Hildebrand Nachlass" (Hildebrand personal papers). Several studies based on it are almost ready for presentation. It could work. If such a conference is to happen, we need to find a date and place soon. Let's think about it, and see where this goes.

## Correction

June 2013 issue: On page 7, the reference to David Reimer as nephew of P. D. Reimer, to read David Reimer, grandson of P. D. Reimer.

Also note: The photo comes courtesy of Jim Peters, Steinbach, MB.

# Book Notes

## by Lawrence Klippenstein

Nettie Balzer, *Helena: A Peek into the Past* (njbalzer@sasktel.net, 2012), pb., 371 pp, \$24.00. Fiction and biography. Stories told to the author by her sister earlier in life about her mother, Helena Banman Friesen of Kleefeld and Neuendorf in the former West Reserve.

Rachel Epp Buller and Kerry Fast, eds., *Mothering Mennonites* (Bradford, Ont.: Demeter Press, 2013), pb., 312 pp., \$34.95. A dozen or so very well written-essays about mothers of Mennonite background.

Esther Epp-Tiessen has written a history of MCC Canada, published by the Canadian Mennonite University Press, to be launched at a special 50<sup>th</sup> MCC anniversary conference at the University of Winnipeg on December 13-14 this year. Esther, long-time MCC staff person, earlier published a historical study of the town of Altona, Manitoba, and a biography of former Conference of Mennonites in Canada leader, Rev. J. J. Thiessen. For further info on the conference contact r.loewen@uwinnipeg.ca

Dora Dueck, *What You Get at Home* (Winnipeg: Turnstone Press, 2012), pb., 178 pp., \$19.00. Cover art by Miriam Rudolph. Personal experiences and what one hears at home. An earlier book (fiction) of Dora's came out as *This Hidden Thing*.

Sarah Klassen, *The Wittenbergs* (Winnipeg: Turnstone Press, 2013), pb., 404 pp., 21.00. A first novel for Sarah. She has published about half a dozen books, mostly poetry, earlier. She is scheduled for an award presentation for a volume of poetry, *Monstrance*, not yet launched. The author presently resides in Winnipeg.

Walfried and Helene Rempel Klassen, trans. and eds., *Love and Remembrance: From the Journals of Diedrich and Helena Mathies Rempel, Vol. 1* (Abbotsford: Judson Lake House Publishers, 2013), pb., 180 pp., \$25.00.

Katharine Martens, ed., *They Sleep in Silence: Far Away – Their Stone Reminds Us of Them – Here* (Winnipeg: Art Book Bindery, 2013), pb. 35 pp., \$10.00. A coffee table edition, very well illustrated. The story of finding the hidden burial headstone of Jakob D and Wilhelmine Strauss Reimer, formerly of the village of Wiesenfeld, in Ukraine. The marker was unveiled and dedicated at the Mennonite Heritage Village, Steinbach, Manitoba, on July 25, 2010. For further info contact reimer5@shaw.ca

Julie A. McNeice.ed., *Kroeker Family Legacy: The History of the Klaas Kroeker Family (1860 -1928)* (Morden, Man.: by the author, 2013), hdc., 337 pp., \$65.00 CND. Very well illustrated and artistically organized. The book includes a preliminary research booklet on the topic published in 2004 by Lynne Kroeker Ward of Winnipeg, Man.

Lovella Schellenberg, et al eds., *Mennonite Girls Can Cook Celebration* (Harrisonburg, VA and Waterloo, Ont.: Herald Press, 2013.), hdc, 319 pp., \$29.99 Contributions by ten women of devotions, recipes, poems, photos, etc. ALL contributors were involved in publishing its antecedent, best-seller *Mennonite Girls Can Cook*, which was published in 2011.

All volumes can be ordered from the Mennonite Heritage Village Bookstore via 1-204-326- 9661 or from their website [www.mennoniteheritagevillage.com/](http://www.mennoniteheritagevillage.com/) as well as from other Mennonite bookstores

Volume 31, 2013, pb., 278 pp. \$27.00, of the *Journal of Mennonites Studies*, edited by Dr. Royden Loewen, Chair of Mennonite Studies at the University of Winnipeg, is now off the press. It includes an index of JMS for the years 2003-2012, several major research reports, book reviews, and seven papers read at the "Anti-Modern Pathways: Horse and Buggy Mennonites in Canada, Belize and Latin America " conference held at the University of Winnipeg in 2011. Copies and more information are available from r.loewen@uwinnipeg.ca.

## The Constructed Mennonite Report

### by Eleanor Chornoboy, October 1, 2013

Author and renowned Mennonite historian, Hans Werner, presented *The Constructed Mennonite*, an account of his father's life shaped by Stalinism, Nazism, migration, famine and war. The presentation was held in the Millennium Library, Carol Shields Auditorium on Monday, September 30, 2013.

In the introduction to the book, Werner says that the book has two purposes: "to tell the story of an otherwise ordinary person (his father) who experienced the upheavals of the twentieth century in the form of war and totalitarianism from a unique perspective," and "to explore

the nature of autobiographical memory."

A powerpoint presentation with photographs of his father in the company of family and friends accompanied Werner's readings and discussions. The photographs showed his father as he took on variations of his name - Hans, Ivan, Johann and John to mark the various ethnic and national identities that he negotiated.

Werner engaged the audience with his honest story telling. He told stories he had grown up with and surprising family secrets he had uncovered in his research. The presentation of *The Constructed Mennonite* appealed to genealogists, World War II historians, amateur historians, and those interested in Mennonite history.