



William Schroeder

December 2, 1933 – December 11, 2013

Historian, cartographer, photographer, teacher, are but a few of the titles that can be attributed to the late Bill Schroeder. Born of Sommerfelder roots in Manitoba, Bill remained humble with regard to his knowledge and accomplishments. But to engage him in an historical question he quickly astounded one with his wide ranging interests and abilities.

Early in his teaching career he also wrote the book on the Bergthal Colony, which was the place of his ancestral roots. In his research he discovered he needed better information and especially maps. He was among the first to utilize the US U-2 maps for Mennonite research. Based on those photographs and many other resources from US and Russian archives, Bill began to make maps, which stories have it were safely stored under his bed. Eventually this led to the work for which he is best known, namely collaboration with Dr. Helmut Huebert and the publication of several editions of the Mennonite Historical Atlas.

But while Bill worked constantly at refining his maps and historical writings, he always had time for those little side things he did for others. Personally, it was a chance mention of mine that my Reddig roots were in the village of Kirschwald in Russia, and several weeks later I had a box of maps from him replete with quotes, notations from many publications all on this village—which just happened to be a Lutheran village near Bergthal. In humble Schroeder fashion the research on Kirschwald was left on my chair in the archives and not handed to me personally. When I thanked him he immediately launched into noting other items he had recently found. One quickly realized here was a brilliant mind that never stopped doing research. He definitely was and remains our Russian Mennonite treasure.

While he is best known for all of his historical activity in research, archival work and work with the Manitoba and Canadian Historical Societies, he was first and foremost a great teacher in the public school system and within the church. Just recently I



Bill Schroeder deeply engaged in historical research

— Photo courtesy of Centre for MB studies archives

made contact with Martin Hiebert, a member of the Elmwood Mennonite Brethren church where Bill and his wife Augusta also attended. Martin noted how well loved and appreciated he was as a Sunday School teacher—again a side of Bill that most of us did not know about.

Bill gave of himself tirelessly in pursuit of his Mennonite historical passion. We are all the richer and wiser for it.

— *by Ken Reddig, Pinawa, Manitoba*

Mennonite Historians Gather to Celebrate and Plan

by Conrad Stoesz

The Mennonite Historical Society of Canada met at the Mennonite Heritage Center in Winnipeg for its annual meeting January 16–18, 2014.

Royden Loewen headlined an event open to the public on Thursday evening called “Celebrating Words.” Sixty-five people attended to recognize 16 books published in 2013 by authors from the Mennonite community. Loewen launched his new book *Village Among Nations: Canadian Mennonites in a Transnational World, 1916-2006*. The book analyzes the movement of Mennonite people and their traditions across international boundaries from Canada to Mexico and various countries throughout Latin America. After Loewen’s presentation, the participants interacted with him and the other authors and their books.

On Friday, the members of the Mennonite Historical Society toured Friesens Corporation in Altona, Manitoba, an hour-and-a-half drive south of Winnipeg. The visit to the large book printing company marked the Society’s long relationship with Ted Friesen, former co-owner of Friesens. Ted was one of the founders of the Society in 1968. The 24 members of the Society, representing Societies in each of the provinces from BC to Quebec, were impressed with the technology and the high-quality books produced by industry-leading Friesens Corp.

While the Society continues to value research and the publication of books, such as Esther Epp-Tiessen’s Society - sponsored and newly released book, *Mennonite Central Committee in Canada: A History*, the society heard the need to tell the Mennonite story visually as well. Youth delegates Roger Toews (Paraguay), Emily Thornton (Vancouver), and Kate Woltmann (Winnipeg), gave credence to the call for more work with video to bring the interesting stories of the Mennonite people to a wider audience.

At the meetings the Society gave the green light to the



Dr. Harry Loewen and Gertrude Loewen.

— Photograph compliments of David Giesbrecht

pan-Canadian Mennonite photo database project and to continuing the work on a new genealogy web site that will feature source documents and transliteration of the documents. The Society also heard reports from members of the provincial Societies, institutions, and organizations.

Member organizations continue to speak into current day issues. For example, the Quebec Society co-sponsored a conference on the proposed Quebec Charter, where Anabaptist and French Protestant histories were used to promote religious liberty and respect for others. The conference attempted to provide a forum for various points of view related to faith and to encourage constructive dialogue on political issues. The Saskatchewan Society, along with MCC, reported on its on-going dialog with First Nations peoples.

Space consideration was the concern of several archival centers. The Saskatchewan Society reported that its move into a newly renovated and enlarged space was almost complete. The Mennonite Archives of Ontario is anticipating a move into a greatly enlarged and enhanced area on the campus of Conrad Grebel University College in the next months. The BC Society is working on a plan for more space and the Mennonite Heritage Centre is also looking at its space needs in Winnipeg.

Long-time contributor and advocate for Mennonite History, Dr. Harry Loewen, former chair of Mennonite Studies at the University of Winnipeg and founding editor of the *Journal of Mennonite Studies*, was named this year’s recipient of the Award of Excellence. In addition, the Society welcomed the Mennonite Heritage Village, Steinbach, as a new member of the Society.

The cold Winnipeg weather did not undermine the warm reception extended to the out-of-town guests, thanks in large part to the local hosting committee and generous partners, Friesens Corporation and Canadian Mennonite University. Next year’s meetings will be held in Waterloo, ON.

Conrad Stoesz is the archivist at Mennonite Heritage Centre and Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, Winnipeg.

Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society

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Bergthal School Preservation Report

by **Lawrence Klippenstein**

1913 Year-end Report

The Bergthal School preservation project, based at the National Historic Site in Neubergthal, is continuing and may reach a new important stage in 2014. Here is a summary of developments on aspects central to the project at the end of 2013.

Restoration developments

The exterior work including another coat of white paint (cost approximately \$1500.00) has been virtually completed. Re-shingling the roof remains to be done in the spring of 2014. Herb Heinrichs and Wilf Hiebert expect to collaborate to complete this work. Interior development has been started with focus on electrical installations to begin with. It is assumed the main effort will target a priority of classroom needs for use by the W.C. Miller sustainable energy class.

Some discussion was aimed at working on plans to reconstitute the former teacherage rooms of the building for current use, along with the upstairs area which had been used as living space at some point in the past. It is thought that exhibit space for heritage displays, etc., are to be given prominence in this area. A front entrance, once in place at the teacherage end of the building, is being remembered for possible addition at some point.

Financing

It is estimated that just under \$50,000.00 has been contributed to the project so far. As much as \$10,000.00 is available at year-end for more work to be done in 2014. Discussion of forming a joint fundraising committee with the Neubergthal Heritage Federation (NHF) is underway. Former school teachers, local business persona and others interested are being contacted to help discuss and work on further support of the project. We may need as much as \$100, 000.00 to fully complete the restoration of the total

facility. To contribute contact Joe Braun, Box 444, Altona, MB, R0G 0B0 or email owltree@sdnet.ca

Plans of the Miller Sustainable Energy Program

Dr. Bruce Friesen-Pankratz, director of the program, has reported a group of five or six students active in the energy class at year-end, with double that number ready to begin a second term of work in February, 2014. That part of the program is designed to make even more use of the building than has been the case hitherto. The whole site of the property and the facilities, though still much a "work in progress," has already proven its suitability for the program as a whole.

Public Relations

The NHF board is placing the project design more centrally into its larger development plans. The town of Altona continues to express interest in the future of the project. The RM of Rhineland is looking for, and will receive detailed reporting on what is planned for the year ahead. A group of former school teachers of the West Reserve area met for a reunion on Oct.5, 2013. It will be kept informed about what is happening here at the National Historic Site of Neubergthal. Golden West Radio, Winnipeg Free Press and Heritage Posting are helping to publicize what is in the works here.

Next Moves

Bergthal Committee board meetings, and conversations with the NHF board are expected to resume early in the new year, perhaps as early as February. Small groups may gather to give impetus to plans in preparation for board work to come. Fundraising will necessarily be a priority in 2014. Some historical research work on Altbergthal is underway to remain in tandem with the building program. We welcome responses of any kind to the information reported here. Thanks much for your interest and help.



1947 graduates of the MCI – May 27, 2013. Left to right: Lois (Dyck) Peters, Elizabeth Friesen, Phyllis (not a 1947 graduate) and Herb Peters, Lydia (Enns) Ammeter, Susan Hildebrandt, Anne (Bergmann) Froese, Margaret (Enns) Peters.

— Photo courtesy of Susan Hildebrandt

Conscientious Objectors in Tsarist Russia: A Research Note

by Lawrence Klippenstein

Working on conscientious objection themes related to tsarist Russia has brought us into contact with Soviet scholars also interested in the topic. Several of them have made interesting comments on Conscientious Objectors.

One contact of several years ago has been with a school teacher from the Ukrainian community of Terepenie, located across the Molotschna River just west of the one-time Mennonite village of Altenau. His name is Alexander Chukhrenko.

I contacted Alexander about his research at one point, looking for information on the location of Neu (Novo) Berdiansk forestry camp, one of the first ones to be built in the Melitopol area after alternative service was granted to Mennonites ca 1880. Neither he nor a friend, Dr. Nicholas Krylov of the Melitopol Pedagogical Institute, could help me.

Then Alexander asked me for a copy of my dissertation written in the 1980s on Mennonite state service in Russia. I had mentioned it as a source for studying Mennonite pacifism under the Russian tsars, and also stated that I had once heard that the Neu Berdiansk forestry camp might have been located near the town of Povrovka (Pokrovka?).

With this additional note the two men, Chukhrenko and Krylov, took another look at their maps and sent the following note: "Today that would be the site of the Dzekel'ninskaya forest summer residence which had a Mennonite camp there at one time. The residence existed there even after the Revolution, and in the 1920s was considered for renovation as a real home for farm workers. But that did not happen. Instead the trees of that area were cut down for firewood because drought conditions did not favour retaining a forest area there. Today the site is located between the modern village of Nadezhdino and Ghirsovka of the Priazovsky area. Some maps suggest that there were once gardens there."

About the dissertation which he did receive, Alexander said: "I have now gathered a lot of information about Mennonites from it, and now have a clearer understanding of 'biblical nonresistance' as Mennonites hold it." Earlier he had told me that Dr. Krylov had also read the material (in an English version) but did not say where he had access to the copy.

Terepenie, it could be added, is one of the villages built up by the Doukhobours along the west bank of the Molotschna River when they were resettled there by Alexander I around 1805 (when the Mennonites also first moved into the area).

As it happens, the Doukhobours were one of the Russian sects of the 18th and 19th century which also held strongly to pacifist thinking from the beginning of their existence as a group separated from the Russian Orthodox Church.

References

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Continuing Conversations

by Tina Fehr Kehler,

Program Coordinator, MCC Canada Low German Mennonite Services, Winkler

On October 25, 2013 service providers who work with Low German Mennonites came together for "Continuing Conversations", an event put on by Mennonite Central Committee's Low German program together with its domestic violence prevention program, Voices for Non-Violence. Over 70 representatives of numerous organizations gathered at this event, a follow-up to "Beginning Conversations", a presentation to the community on Low German Mennonite culture, religion and migration made by Tina Fehr Kehler in March, 2013. Members of the education field, health care services, children and family services, among others gathered at the Quality Inn in Winkler to hear Mary Friesen speak and to network with each other on how better to serve Low-German speaking Mennonites.

Mary, formerly the coordinator of MCC Canada's LGM services in Mexico, has years of experience working with Low German Mennonites and brought insight into building bridges with members of this community. She shared examples of programs that have successfully made these connections, like staff at MCC Alberta's Tabor office who approached individuals in the community to discern what they wanted in a school, helping them feel more comfortable sending their children there. She also told of a health authority in Kansas who enlisted young women from a Low German background who had grown up in the USA to help farm labour families register for health insurance.

Mary encouraged attendees to form an inter-agency group that would continue to explore issues in the community and how best to address them. She also encouraged a similar gathering of members of the Low German community themselves to discuss needs and solutions from their perspective.

Participants in the event commented on how much they appreciated the speaker as well as the chance to network with other service providers.

MCC Canada – 50 years later

by Maria Falk Lodge

A large gathering of family, friends and supporters of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) came together at Convocation Hall, University of Winnipeg, on December 13th, 2013 for the launch of Esther Epp-Tiessen's book entitled *Mennonite Central Committee in Canada – A History*.

All who were present on that cold December night in Winnipeg were given rich insights into the work of MCC Canada as we heard Esther reflect on this book, and what writing it meant to her personally. Esther has a long history working within the framework of MCC, and was keenly aware of how this *insider* role might influence her perspective in the writing of the book. In her own words, "My life has been profoundly shaped by MCC." The book, created to celebrate MCC Canada's fiftieth anniversary, was writtend under the auspices of the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada, and its supervision enabled Esther to gain some distance from MCC for this project. Her book is divided into eight chapters, and provides us with a picture of the unfolding story of MCC.

The book launch was the beginning of an Academic and Community Outreach Conference, which continued the next day. The Conference was sponsored by The Mennonite Historical Society of Canada, and was hosted by Dr. Royden Loewen, Chair in Mennonite Studies at the University of Winnipeg, who also introduced the event. During this conference we heard from various individuals both from within MCC as well as those from outside its usual sphere of influence.

We were reminded during the course of this conference that MCC has been shaped by both generations and gender. Its focus has shifted over time, but its goal of meeting needs has remained constant.

Early on women found involvement with the work of MCC mainly in the context of activities such as quilting, in collecting material goods, and in establishing thrift stores. In time, however, largely at the insistence of women, their voices came to be heard, and they too came to hold places at the tables of boards and boardrooms.



During the Conference we heard that MCC acts as a connector between diverse Mennonite groups, and has in fact shaped Mennonite identity. When facing morally ambiguous situations, MCC has found ways of walking a fine line, even if in some circumstances its constituents hold a very specific view.

Paul Bramadat, speaking on the topic of *MCC Canada and the Global Community* raised the question of what happens to groups now served by MCC and other similar associations in areas such as poverty alleviation and newcomer integration, if such organizations disintegrate. Youth, in his view, are not drawn to traditional churches and institutions, but they are spiritual, and are searching or meaning in life. The challenge for organizations like MCC is to tap into that search.

In envisioning the future we were reminded that MCC will be different, and that it will have to reinvent itself. We will have to learn how to be inclusive while retaining the value of the gift of the largeness of the tent that is MCC.

The Conference was told that MCC is needed more than ever. Winnipeg has the largest aboriginal population as well as one of the largest urban concentrations of Mennonites in the world. With that demographic as a reference point, we were reminded of the need for conversation in order to bridge the gap between MCC and others.

It is imperative that MCC continues to work for peace and to re-engage its constituent churches in that conversation.



Gordon Zerbe, CMU Press preparing to pass the ceremonial first copy of Esther Epp-Tiessen's new history of MCC in Canada to Lucille Marr, Mennonite Historical Society of Canada, who then passed it on to the author.

— Photograph compliments of Eileen Klassen Hamm

A Sense of Place with Deep Roots

by Lois Braun

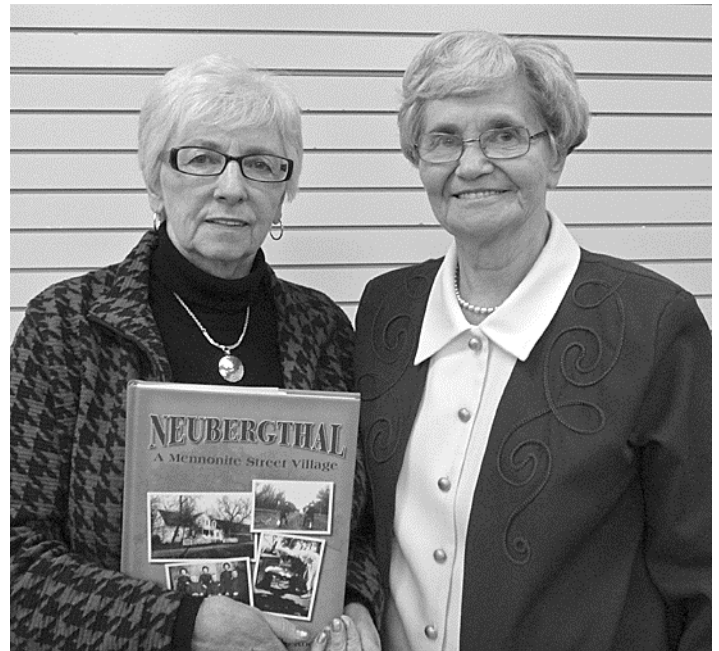
"We admire the beauty of a tree, but it is the roots that keep it from falling. Many of us enjoy searching for family roots today. To understand ourselves in the present and look to the future we need to know the past."

One Friday night in Altona, at the end of November, while the Mall was busy with carolers, shoppers, children's activities, and people greeting friends and neighbours, a special kind of festivity began to unfold just off a busy corridor. Residents of Neuberghthal, past and present, as well as the descendants, admirers and supporters of this unique community, were gathering to witness the unveiling of a collection of stories and photographs depicting the history and heritage of their village.

Officially, *Neuberghthal, A Mennonite Street Village: A Sense of Place with Deep Roots* was two years in the making. But it was in reality the culmination of a long period of collecting pictures and stories, as Rose Hamm Hildebrand, during her many years as one of the editors of *Neuberghthal Notes*, was busy gathering material for the village newsletter. Her pile of photos and memoirs and anecdotes grew, and it became apparent that something needed to be done to preserve these valuable records and honour the village's past. Once the die was cast and a committee had been struck, word travelled that the editors were seeking memorabilia and family histories to include in the book, and the process of assembling material and conducting interviews commenced, resulting, after much patience and diligence, in a handsome volume, courtesy of Friesen Printers.

The book has thirteen chapters with titles like, "Village Patterns," "The Role of Women," "The Village Store," and "Community Celebrations." The first chapter consists of family chronicles, and is sub-divided into "Northeast Yard Stories," "Northwest Yard Stories", etc. The book is jam-packed with fascinating, carefully captioned photos and diagrams, contributing to the rich tapestry of history that unfolds within the text. Intriguingly, the endpapers, front and back, form a picto-map of how the properties were originally laid out along the single street. And the editors have made clever use of the icon of a pig wearing a saddle!

This 205-page, hard-cover publication was launched into readers' hands on Nov. 29, 2013. Musician Dennis Reimer of Heischratje en Villa Honig fame opened the launch with a Low German song specially composed for the occasion. Ted E. Friesen, a descendant of Johann and



Joyce Friesen (left) and Rose Hildebrand (right), co-editors of *Neuberghthal, A Mennonite Street Village: A Sense of Place with Deep Roots*

— Compliments of Lois Braun

Agatha Klippenstein, early Neuberghthal pioneers, offered praise and congratulations to the committee, and Ben Dueck, a member of the team that was responsible for bringing the project to fruition, thanked the organizations that supported the book financially: the Altona Community Foundation, Altona Access Credit Union, and the Plett Foundation. Joyce Kehler Friesen, one of the book's editors, spoke to the crowd about the Mennonites' "zany sense of humour", and proceeded to quote peculiar Plautdietsch sayings, many of which are scattered throughout the publication. She also read a few passages from the family chronicles. Her co-editor, the aforementioned Rose Hildebrand, recited the prayer of dedication that appears among the opening pages of the book.

Fittingly, the ceremony ended with a Faspa: Tweekback, "Pripps", Zockastetja, and a good deal of spezeare.

*Neuberghthal is on Parks Canada's official list of Historic Sites.

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— The editors.

Visit the Ens Heritage Homestead

If you are looking for a "closer to home" outing during the summer, why not consider visiting the Ens Heritage Homestead at 141 Reinland Avenue, Reinland, MB, but be sure to call Abe/Helen Ens at 204-325-4494 before heading out.

Book Reviews

Village Among Nations: "Canadian" Mennonites in a Transnational World, 1916-2006 by Royden Loewen, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 301pp. \$23.07.

Reviewed by Hans Werner

Royden Loewen's new book applies his insightful way of telling the story of Mennonite ethnic and religious worlds to those who migrated to Mexico and Paraguay in the 1920s. Many of these emigrants came from Southern Manitoba and then spread out to places like Argentina and the Peace River country of Alberta, East Paraguay and Alymer, Ontario, but also to Winkler, Steinbach, and North Kildonan.

The book follows a chronological structure beginning with chapters focusing on the circumstances leading up to migration, examining settlement in Mexico and Paraguay, the difficult years in the 1930s, new migrations to Paraguay in the late 1940s, secondary migrations to then British Honduras, and Bolivia and return migration to Canada in the 1960s and 70s. The book ends with two chapters, one of which looks at the 'pan-American' village these Mennonite migrations created, and a final chapter that explores the theme of the book by a careful listening of how migration played out in the lives of specific women interviewed for the book in 2006.

Village Among Nations is much more than the story of the dramatic series of migrations undertaken by Mennonites in the 20th century. Using diaries, memoirs and extensive use of letters written to the *Steinbach Post* and then later the *Mennonitishe Post* Loewen shows how Low German Mennonites superimposed a village on top of at least seven nation states and created and maintained this virtual village through a combination of family networks, the medium of the *Post*, and improved mobility brought about largely by improved cars and highways. Low German Mennonites are shown to be an important example of migrants who live 'transnationally', that is, their lives are not defined by the borders of nation states. Loewen weaves a rich tapestry of stories, analysis and discussion to show how transnationalism "manifests itself in the everyday life of migrant peoples." (p233) Along the way readers will also be challenged to understand how Low German Mennonite peoples constructed their religious worlds, how they viewed Canada, modernity, and how they reinforced, embraced, and rejected the boundaries they created for themselves.

Village among Nations will be of interest to readers of Mennonite history, but is a must read for anyone who lives and works with and among immigrants from Paraguay or Mexico, Belize, Bolivia or Argentina. It is an important contribution to a part of the Mennonite story that we have heard little about.

Daughters in the City: Mennonite Maids in Vancouver, 1931-61 by Ruth Derksen Siemens (with Sandra Borger) (Vancouver, B.C., Fernwood Press, 2013), 93pp

Reviewed by Eleanor Chornoboy

Daughters in the City: Mennonite Maids in Vancouver, 1931-61, is a significant addition to recorded Canadian history. This beautifully designed book is important because it remembers and details a segment of Mennonite history in Canada. Derksen Siemens, also known for *Remember Us: Letters from Stalin's Gulag (1930-37)* and *Through the Red Gate*, masterfully provides the reader with a comprehensive narrative of the Mennonite people, placing them in a historical context. In her book, she gives a sociological and historical account of young Mennonites girls employed as maids for upper-class Vancouver families from 1931-61. Some girls were as young as thirteen.

The author has succeeded in her purpose to preserve the historical account in an accessible form for the Mennonite women and their descendants whose lives were shaped by domestic service in Vancouver, and to inform a wider audience about the role of those young women.

The girls arrived in Canada with their families in two groups. The first group were refugees from Russia that had escaped the Communist regime in the 1920s, and the second group arrived after World War II. The families were without financial resources and with a significant debt to the Canadian Pacific Railway for their travel expenses.

The focus of the book is on two Mennonite Girls' Homes, Mädchenheim: the Mary Martha Home (General Conference of Mennonites) and the Bethel Home (Mennonite Brethren Conference). Both the General Conference and Mennonite Brethren Conference shared the perception that the city was an evil place. To protect and support the girls working in the city and away from their homes and families, Girls' Homes were formally established.

Urban life was foreign to these girls who came from rural settings. Families were warned against sending their daughters to work in the city, but the girls' income was critical to help pay off their families' travel debts.

In interviews, former maids shared stories of their confusion around the language, their desperate loneliness, and their long days of hard work. The Girls' Homes provided them with a home away from home where they gathered on their days off and where they stayed between jobs or when they were sick. The Homes became informal employment agents for the girls. Vancouver families called the Homes to "Send Us Another Mennonite Maid," and the matrons set forth unconditional requirements of employment including "time off for the girls" and "exempting the girls from serving alcoholic beverages." Those same matrons also often acted as surrogate mothers for the young, lonely girls,

Book Notes

by Lawrence Klippenstein

Memoirs by Otto Klassen, a Russian Mennonite construction owner/manager and film maker from Winnipeg, Manitoba, are now available in *I Remember: The Story of Otto Klassen*, trans. by Jacob Klassen (Winnipeg, MB: Klassen Publishing, 2013), pb., 234pp., \$20.00. It is an account taking readers "from growing up years in the village of Schoeneberg, in south Russia (Ukraine), through the dark days of World War II and to family life and business success in Winnipeg, Canada" (Doreen Klassen notes).

Preservings, Issue No.33, 2013, edited by Dr. Hans Werner and Dr. John J Friesen, both of Winnipeg, is now in readers' hands. It includes a well-researched and presented series of essays related to Mennonites in Poland, among other themes with which readers are already familiar. The journal, appearing annually, is sponsored by the D.F. Plett Historical Research Foundation. For further info and to order contact plettfoundation@gmail.com

The University of Toronto Press has released a new volume by the well-known researcher and historian, Dr. Royden Loewen, head of the Chair of Mennonites Studies at the University of Winnipeg, in Manitoba. It is titled *Village among Nations: Canadian Mennonites in a Transitional World 1916-2006* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013) 301pp. \$23.07. Drawing on a wide variety of informal and formal sources, the study "will be of interest to anyone curious about the experience of the transnationalism" of some 250,000 traditionalist "Canadian" Mennonites by now scattered to a dozen or more nations of the world.

Robert Zacharias, associate editor of the *Journal of Mennonite Studies* and a Banting Post-doctoral Fellow at the University of Waterloo, has connected the theme of Mennonites and migration to other related writings in this genre of Canadian literature generally, in *Rewriting the Break Event: Mennonites and Migration in Canadian Literature* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2013), pb., 227pp., \$31.95. Five chapters of rich contextual analysis follow a significant introduction to provide an integrative discussion that goes well beyond the narrative historical depictions of Mennonite migrations dominating this area of study until now.

All these titles can be purchased at the Mennonite Heritage Village and other Mennonite bookstores. Contact Roxannam@mhv.ca or info@mhv.ca

A new village history from the former West Reserve (near Altona) comes to us from Rose Hildebrand and Joyce Friesen, editors of *Neubergthal: A Mennonite Street Village. A Sense of Place with Deep Roots* (Altona, MB: Neubergthal History Book Committee, 2013), hdc., 205pp., \$60.00. For further info or to order contact cstoesz@mennonitechurch.ca

A significant portion of Dr. Albert W. Wardin's *On the Edge: Baptists and Other Free Church Evangelicals in Tsarist Russia 1855-1917*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2013), pb., 544pp., \$60.00 US, is devoted to the involvement of Russian Mennonite Brethren in the story told here. For further information contact james@wipfandstock.com

(Continued from page 7)

offering them warmth and comfort.

The girls looked forward to their days off at the Homes when they spoke their own language with each other, embroidered, visited, sang, and ate their bagged lunches in each other's company.

Many of them formed a lifelong bond that Derksen Siemens has beautifully portrayed through short vignettes.

The book is exquisitely laid out with many photographs of the girls at work, in the home, with the children they cared for, and with the matrons. The author has included want ads such as "EXPERIENCED MAID WANTED — One who reflects on a good home; wages \$7 month. . ." Coloured pictures of the girls' handmade crocheted doilies and embroidered verses are interspersed among the pages, and here and there one finds a coloured picture of a pretty cup and saucer as if the reader is being invited in for a cup of tea. For the most part, the photographs are crisp black and white, underlined with descriptions.

Daughters in the City honours the young girls who left their families to work in lonely environments, away from all that was familiar and comforting to them. The book also honours those who established the Girls' Homes and the staff who welcomed the girls and gave them a sense of belonging in a big, lonely city.

Celebrating 50 Years

The Mennonite Heritage Village (MHV) is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year under the theme *Celebrate With Us*. The MHV website www.mhv.ca will provide you with updates and announcements, and includes a calendar of events. Of special interest is the signature Anniversary Event to be held on the weekend of July 5th and 6th. In addition to tours, a gala dinner is being planned, along with a special worship service. Also being organized for this weekend is a *Saengerfest*, surely a *must* for those who cherish memories of such special events in the distant past.

