



## Celebrating 225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Of Mennonite Migration To New Russia

by Gladys Terichow

A seminar in Winnipeg and celebrations in Steinbach marked the 225th anniversary of the first migration of Mennonites from Prussia to New Russia, now Ukraine, 1788-1789.

Guest speakers at the events held Nov. 15 and 16 shared historical research on the political, religious and economic forces that led to the migration of Dutch, Flemish and German Mennonites to New Russia.

"Today we have the image of Mennonites as people who migrate from country to country; that was not the image in 1789," explained John J. Friesen of Winnipeg, one of six presenters at the seminar held at Mennonite Heritage Centre Archives (MHCA).

Mennonites, he said, settled along the Vistula and Nogat River valleys in the 16th century and lived under Polish rule for about 10 generations.

Friesen said among the many reasons for emigration to New Russia was the partitioning of Poland in 1772, placing the majority of Mennonites under Prussian jurisdiction.

A formal invitation to settle in New Russia coincided with changes in laws about military recruitment and restrictions on the purchase of land. Those changes created interest in migrating to New Russia where land was said to be more readily available. Most of the 228 families in the 1788-1789 migration were landless.

Keynote speaker, Mark Jantzen from Bethel College, Kansas, said Mennonites living in Prussia were part of the larger community. Each religious group in the community were given different sets of rights, freedoms and restrictions. For example, Mennonites were granted military exemption but were required to pay fees for this exemption. They also needed special permits to buy land.

In Russia, the separately administered colony system was imposed on Mennonites and other religious groups migrating to Russia at that time.

The first wave of migration started with Mennonites in Prussia selecting two men, Jacob Hoepfner and Johann Bartsch, to investigate settlement possibilities in New Russia.

People at the seminar heard about the challenges Hoepfner and Bartsch faced during their land scouting travels through letters written by Bartsch to his wife, Susanna, and to a church leader, David Epp.

The letters, read by Winnipeg historians Lawrence Klippenstein and Edwin Hoepfner, are part of a 109-page collection of documents that were passed down through the generations to Henry Epp of Calgary, a descendant of



From left to right, Henry Epp, Lawrence Klippenstein and Corey Dyck.

— Photo by Gladys Terichow

David Epp's family "I believe I hold an important piece of Mennonite heritage in my hands and I like to share it with people," said Epp. "I feel this information belongs to the people."

Klippenstein has been following the collection as it passed from one family member to the next for over 30 years.

The collection, now being translated from Gothic German script at MHCA, contains items thought to be long lost and destroyed. They are not original documents but legible, handwritten copies of the originals that are believed to be part of the collection known as the Hildebrand Nachlass (Hildebrand papers). "This is an amazing find," said Corey Dyck, MHCA director. "Having access to these letters fills an historical gap when researching Mennonite History." Bartsch, Hoepfner and their Russian emigration agent, Georg Trapp, departed from Prussia October 30, 1786. Bartsch wrote his first letter to Susanna, Nov. 11, 1786 from Riga. In this letter he says he expects to be home by late spring.

His second letter was written from Dubrovno, Dec. 1, 1786. He wrote the third letter from St. Petersburg, Aug. 28, 1787, as they were preparing for their trip home. His final letter was again written from Riga, Oct. 18, 1787.

"It had been a daring but very important venture, taken at considerable risk, but certainly contributing much to make the larger group's move a more informed and better organized undertaking," said Klippenstein.

\*In re-printing this column we acknowledge Mennonite Church Canada. The report can also be found at the church website: <http://news.mennonitechurch.ca/celebrating-225th-anniversary-mennonite-migration-new-russia>

# How I Celebrated Louis Riel Day

by Lawrence Klippenstein

In case it somehow passed you by, Louis Riel Day was celebrated by many people on February 16. It's a provincial holiday, not federal, I was reminded, so the Free Press took a rest that day, but the postal people kept trudging on. I was at liberty to choose to celebrate or not as I saw fit.

Here at Lindenwood Terrace where I now live valentines were in sight all over two days earlier, but Louis Riel Day celebrations did not show. The few people with whom I chatted about this briefly remarked, "He was that criminal who was hanged, wasn't he?" I said, "I am not sure about the criminal part, but he was hanged for treason, right." I was not sure if a celebration is where they were at.

But I did have my "two minutes" of silence, as it were, and want to explain what took me there. I did not know Louis Riel personally of course, but I think I have stopped at his cemetery headstone at one point. And I am somewhat familiar with his story, especially why he was viewed with such respect by many of his fellow-Métis. Riel was not a Mennonite, to be sure, but he was a devout Christian by all accounts. He had powerful convictions regarding helping his people of the Red River Valley, and did in fact offer strong objections to what Ottawa had in mind for them.

What has given me some feelings of kinship with the Métis is, along with other things, the fact that I lived with them for four years in 1954 - 1958, the first two in Grand Rapids as a teacher in the public school, and then two more when LaVerna and I, ten days after we married, took up a pastoral post on Matheson Island. Both communities are part of the larger Lake Winnipeg population. Both were settlements of 150 - 200 people, and both received me and later us together, in a very friendly manner. I will never forget them.

I do not recall teaching the Métis story in school at Grand Rapids though, regrettably, instead of learning their language, I forbade them to speak Cree on the school yard

(as per government regulations). And I recall visiting Batoche in Saskatchewan some years ago. At Matheson I was impressed by a group of five brothers, and a sister, the Settees, who were of Scotch-Aboriginal descent. Only four of the six remained resident on the island. They were all drawn into the Mennonite fellowship group we were working with. Several had moved to Winnipeg where one was active in the Pentecostal church.

Much of this came back to me when I learned that one of the Settee descendants, Harold Bennett, passed away recently. His mother was Martha Settee. Harold had been the Mayor of Matheson Island for some years, as had his older brother Billy. Both were energetic, gifted, forward-looking individuals with strong families, who stood out as leaders in the community over the years. They were connected to the Anglican Church but also visitors at the Mennonite church at times in our day.

When my brother Ray and his wife Anne visited me recently I asked if they remembered Harold, since they had also taught at Matheson Island while we were there. Ray remembered Harold only vaguely, so I brought out the book *From Paddles to Propellers: The History of Matheson Island: A Fishing Community*. The 619 page book, edited by Neill von Gunten and Edith von Gunten, was published by the Matheson Island Community Council in 2003. This volume, which includes many photographs and documents, records much of the history of Matheson Island over a period of over one hundred years.

When we celebrated the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the West Reserve at Fort Dufferin in 2000, quite by chance we were visited by members of the Manitoba Métis Historical Society heading out to do cemetery reclamation south of the border at Pembina. We were able to get one of them to speak impromptu to our gathering. They were very grateful for the chance.

I recall thinking then that the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society and the Manitoba Métis Historical Society ought to collaborate on a project sometime. And there is still a story to be written about how Métis drivers and others helped the first Mennonite families as they arrived at the Rat River and the Red River 140 years ago. These people would much later sell some of their land to Mennonite farmers moving into the Landmark area around 1915. I am glad we have some Red River ox carts at our museum to keep us in touch with this story.

I am determined to get hold of a fine book written by Dr. Gerhard Ens, Jr., on the story of the Métis in Manitoba. Perhaps a seminar on Métis/Mennonites interrelationships during early Manitoba Mennonite history might help to uncover some of those early stories.



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# Report on the MMHS Workshop

January 10, 2015 9:30 a.m.  
Mennonite Heritage Village Museum

by Eleanor Chornoboy

On January 10, 2015 the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society Advisory Council met to bring together the various groups in the province that preserve and tell the Mennonite story.

The morning featured a workshop with affiliated groups reporting on their respective mandates and activities. Groups pondered the question of how to make Mennonite history come alive for the current generation and the next generation. Participants were invited to vision Mennonite History in Manitoba in 2024, when Mennonites will have been settled in Manitoba for 150 years.

Participants representing the EastMenn Committee, the West Reserve and affiliated organizations including Mennonite Heritage Village, Mennonite Heritage Centre, Centre for MB Studies, the Plett Foundation, and the Chair in Mennonite Studies presented details on their mandate, their constituency and their five year projections. Common themes that arose from the presentations and discussions, were the general recognition of the aging volunteer and donor base, declining institutional and government financial resources, and the potential to enlist support and interest more locally.

The forum began discussions on ways to promote interest in Mennonite history. Among the ideas that were floated, was hosting a Manitoba Mennonite History conference that would interest a wide range of people and could include historical organizations throughout Manitoba; create a web presence for Manitoba Mennonite History along the line of the Manitoba Historical Society; share AGM minutes between the various historical committees province-wide; bring back the stories to the AGMs.

In the afternoon, Professor Royden Loewen presented a travelogue on Mennonites in Indonesia whose beginnings date to the first Mennonite missionaries from the Netherlands. In 2010 and in 2013 he investigated how the Mennonite ethos is experienced by farm people at that local level.

Java is the fourth point on earth where Mennonites



Hans Werner chairing the meeting.

— Photos by Ernie Braun

settled. The other points are Friesland, Iowa (1840s), East Reserve and West Reserve, Zimbabwe, Siberia (1907) and Bolivia (1967). There are three conferences in Indonesia with a total of 108,528 persons. They identify as Mennonites at the community level and have their own thread to the Anabaptist side through Amsterdam in the 16th century.

The day ended with participants being invited to the MMHS Annual General Meeting scheduled for Saturday, March 28, 2015.



Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society Advisory Council, January 10, 2015.

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Many subscribers have chosen this option. If you want to receive your next copy in electronic format, please respond by e-mail to our address in the box on page 2. Thank you.

— The editors.



# Mennonite Heritage Village in 2015

by Barry Dyck

We have just completed a very busy and successful year. The celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mennonite Heritage Village (MHV) and the launch of *Freedom 15*, our debt-repayment campaign, will be remembered as two of the year's highlights.

Our 2015 strategic plan is already well into development. Following are some the highlights we see coming up in this new year.

Our 2015 theme has been selected and titled. *Mennonite Food: Tastes in Transition* will be the focus of our exhibits and our programing. For those who are acquainted with Mennonite food, it's probably not a huge stretch to imagine a year-long theme based on this topic. But how many bowls of *Borscht* and *Plueme Moos*, and how many *Vereniki* with farmer sausage can one eat in a year? Rest assured, the exploration and celebration of this theme will not include an eating contest. To be sure, we will continue to serve great ethnic food throughout the year, but our theme will involve more than that.

Our topics of exploration will likely address questions such as these: Where did our Mennonite food items originate? What social and economic factors contributed to the popularity of particular items? How did migration impact popular foods? Which Mennonite groups have little or no exposure to the foods we consider to be ethnic staples at



**The Livery Barn Restaurant will provide expression to the *Mennonite Food* theme.**

— Photograph credits: MHV archives

MHV? Our curators are already doing the research and are eager to share the resulting exhibits with our guests. Our program staff will incorporate this theme into our Education Program as well as our festival events.

Our collaboration with the Mennonite World Conference (MWC) will produce a new hands-on exhibit in the Main Gallery. We will be installing a touch-screen computer which will take our guests to the website of MWC, where they will be able to explore the various locations around the world where Mennonites live and learn more about Mennonite life in those locations. Some of us may be surprised to learn which countries have more Mennonites than Canada has.

We will continue to promote our *Freedom 15* campaign. After a very successful launch in 2014, we will again invite supporters to invest in MHV by assisting us in the payment of our accumulated debt.

Paying off our debt will make it that much easier for us to proceed with a building project that is already well into its planning stage. We expect to introduce a project shortly which will replace the large white tent we use on our grounds every summer with a permanent three-season building. It is being designed to provide our guests with all the functionality of the existing tent and much more. With a concrete floor, washrooms, a warming kitchen and other amenities, it will be a desirable venue for wedding receptions, company picnics, and other group functions. The washrooms will also be accessible to Livery Barn Restaurant patrons.

Other high-priority projects will include the installation of new humidifiers in the Village Center and the re-shingling of the Livery Barn Restaurant's leaky roof. If sufficient money can be raised, we will paint the Old Colony Worship House.



**Roland Sawatzky and Andrea Dyck at the launch of *A Collected History*.**

# George Loewen: A Man of Principle

by Ray Kehler,  
grandson of George Loewen

For the people who knew him, George Loewen was a man of few words, and when he did speak his words were always well chosen. He was careful about what he said of others, as he could not stomach gossip. His precept was that it was best to remain silent if there appeared to be nothing positive to say of others.

He was known as one ready to help and assist others in need, providing encouragement and comfort to those who were sick or lonely.

George was "called" to the ministry on August 22, 1937 when he was ordained in the Sommerfelder Mennonite church. He continued to farm, and remained active in this church until 1951, when due to circumstance he felt the only option was to leave.

George was described as a man of principle by those who knew him. He was soon recognized as being different from other members of the clergy, and was sought after by many young people preparing to take their marriage vows. During his ministry, George registered 101 wedding services, some being as far away as 40 miles. Not much of a trek by today's standards, however at that time most of the travelling was done by horse and buggy, and by sleigh in the winter.

Church members liked the way he spoke, and the content of his messages. They focused on higher principles and directions on how to live one's life to the fullest extent. George was a bit of a "free thinker" and frequently broke with the tradition of the church at that time.

It was common practice for brides to be dressed in black garb. He failed to see a reason for this, and would not hesitate to marry brides who chose to dress in white. He would also accommodate families by conducting ceremonies at the homestead when asked.

It was only a matter of time before this man would be challenged for the manner in which he conducted himself. George and two other colleagues were seen by the Bishop, and told that they must stop this practice, and return to the traditions of the church. They were instructed to recant, and publicly acknowledge their transgressions or to be put out of the church.

George disagreed and challenged the Bishop to point out where there were instructions in the Bible to hold to these traditions. ". . . it is not the dress that is worn by the bride which is holy it is the vows which are taken that are. . ."

Needless to say, George was put out of the Sommerfelder Mennonite Church in 1951. It should be noted that many people approached him, asking him to



**Artist's image of his grandparents, George and Margaret Loewen; artist: Ray Kehler**

start another church. They were prepared to move if he would do so. George declined. Rather than criticize and condemn the Bishop for what he had done, George pointed out that one must follow the values and principles that you know to be true.

Of the two colleagues also challenged by the Bishop, one was expelled with George, while the other recanted and "returned to the fold", of the Sommerfelder church.

George left the Sommerfelder Church and joined the Berghaler Church in 1951; he did not however, continue to remain an active member of the clergy.

A bit of an irony exists in that the newly elected minister of the Sommerfelder Church from which George had been expelled, approached him and asked for his sermons. George had written these during the years of his service and felt it would be better to see these works carry on, even if they were being used by another clergyman and so he gave them to the new minister. In my view, he was truly a man of principle.

It should be noted that George not only had his faith, but was truly blessed by the strength and support of his wife, Margaretha Loewen. Without her being at his side in good times as well as bad, I doubt that he would have been able to live in the manner he did.

The image accompanying this article is a work of art by Ray Kehler. In his words, *The image is composed of 4 different photographs which I edited on my computer to create the final image. The individuals are in fact my grandparents, George and Margaret Loewen (from Silberfeld/Gretna).*

Mr. Kehler's work can be viewed at: [ray-kehler.blogspot.com](http://ray-kehler.blogspot.com)



# Schellenberg Family Reunion

by Bob (Schellenberg) Strong

Last March, Margaret Schellenberg, b. 1918 in Gretna, MB, asked me to try to determine the level of interest in a reunion of descendants of our mutual grandfather David Schellenberg (1861-1955), an original settler of a Neuanlage homestead on Cairn Corner (Highway 14A @ Post Road).

When it became apparent that there was enough interest to justify holding such an event, organizational efforts got underway. The first challenge was to find a suitable venue, close to the Altona area where many of our most elderly kin reside. The Town of Altona offered the use of the Curling Club, which upon inspection proved to be a most attractive option. Besides wonderful meeting space, it was also convenient to marvellous outdoor space in adjacent Sunflower Park.

Tony and Donna Klassen, current owners of the Neuanlage homestead, found a Gretna caterer who was willing to provide the Mennonite food we had all enjoyed in our youth, and which we still enjoy whenever we can. Dozens, if not hundreds, of emails flew across Canada and into the US, trying to get attendance numbers to facilitate further planning.

When the initial chaos ended, we waited for the big day to arrive. Accommodations proved difficult, but not impossible, to secure. Some attendees had to take rooms as far away as Winkler.



**Gravestone of David A. Schellenberg 1832-1911, father to David Schellenberg 1861-1955.**



**Gravestone of David A. Schellenberg next to Memorial marker commemorating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of Mennonite pioneers west of the Red River.**

— Photos by Clarise Klassen

When I arrived mid afternoon on Friday, August 29 to begin setting up, nearly a dozen over-anxious relatives were already there, quickly catching up on what had happened in the 50 years since they had last seen one another. And as more people arrived, it was amazing that it seemed like only yesterday we were in the same room, most often in Grandpa David's dining room over a holiday meal.

Thirty-five cousins, from Gretna, Altona, Strathclair, Tilston, Brandon, Portage la Prairie, Killarney and Winnipeg, MB, Regina, SK, Calgary and Fort Saskatchewan, AB, Nepean and Thunder Bay, ON, shared memories and laughter over the next 2 days. Others dropped in as time permitted, and wasted no time in joining the festivities. Esther (Loewen) Peters had prepared a large wall chart, showing all the branches and leaves in our family tree, and this drew a lot of interest. Descendants of all branches were in attendance.

Meals were served in the Gretna Senior Centre, and readers will no doubt salivate over the food we had, including Cottage Cheese Perogies, Farmer Sausage, Zumma Borscht, Plumeh Mous (and Blueberry, thanks to Esther (Loewen) Peters), Cracklings, Schmaundtzuup, Schaubelzuup, Kielkje met Schmaundfah, Watermelon with Rollkuakeh, and much more.

Tony and Donna had invited everyone for Sunday waffle brunch, but the skies opened and a heavy rainfall forced us back to the Senior Centre. Undeterred, we ate and visited as planned until we had to go our separate ways. What a wonderful time was had by all, and we are truly blessed to have had this time together.

Thanks to cousin Margaret for inspiring this event, and particularly Tony & Donna for all their efforts in making this a memorable and successful event.

## A Place in the Kingdom

*A Place in the Kingdom: Paintings and Heritage Stories Celebrating Farm Animals* is the name of an exhibit at the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery, Winnipeg, Manitoba by artist Lynda Toews, running from March 13-June 20, and opening on Sunday, March 15, 2015. Please see the following website for details: <http://gallery.mennonitechurch.ca/LyndaToews>

The following are excerpts from the artist's statement:

***A Place in the Kingdom***, a two-year project, has involved producing 50 acrylic paintings and collecting 22 stories from Manitobans who grew up on farms. Farm animals are typically represented in craft or folk art. I propose that they are a worthy genre for fine art (as quilts have come to be accepted in recent decades), and a worthy topic in the Mennonite story.

I was born in 1962 and grew up in Winnipeg. I spent summer holidays with Mennonite relatives in the country where I developed a love for nature, including animals. Since moving to rural Manitoba I find myself drawn to the individual personalities and beauty of the local farm animals and was inspired to paint them. Spectators of the paintings will encounter the straightforward gaze of fellow creatures who share the earth. They are bathed in warm light and depicted with a strong commitment to artistic technical facility.

Working with this subject matter led me to explore the symbiotic relationship between farm animals and the Mennonite journey of survival (I am sure many other cultural journeys are similar). Historically and today we are dependent on farm animals for many things. They provide labour, transportation, meat, eggs, milk, cheese, butter, wool, lanolin, glue, heat (use of manure bricks for fuel), alarm clocks (roosters), mouse traps (cats), fertilizer, insulation, security (guard animals), artist brushes, leather, violin bow hair, gut strings, certain medications, porcine heart valves, companionship and fun. We provide farm animals with food, care and protection.

Consequently, as well as being inspired to paint farm animals I began to collect personal stories of past Mennonite farm life as it related to animals.

To share personal stories from older Mennonites about their relationships with their animals will hopefully forge stronger connections between the generations, and urban and rural people. (Many city children think that eggs and milk come from the store, and they seem insulated from the reality that this is connected to farm animals.) With our 21st century city lifestyle surrounded by hard, cold metal, glass, and concrete, or exhaust, noise, and cyberspace, we can easily forget the beauty in natural things – soft fur and warm breath and the smell of hay.

My hope is that these stories and paintings will evoke contemplation of the beauty, intelligence, individuality, and loyalty of these animals as well as the love that can exist in the human/animal relationship. May they find a special place in our hearts and kingdoms: the animal kingdom, the "Mennonite kingdom", the "art kingdom", and in a sense, the kingdom of God. After all, they were even present at the Nativity.

## The WestMenn Historical Committee

Following the restructuring of the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society (MMHS), Lawrence Giesbrecht and John Giesbrecht are guiding the development of a set of guidelines for the WestMenn Committee and its sub-committees, to help them meet the goals and objectives of the MMHS. Responsibility for most of the Committee's projects is carried by sub-committees. The following is a progress report for a number of these:

1. The *historic sites and monuments* sub-committee, under the guidance of Abe Ens, John Giesbrecht, Edwin Hoepfner and Peter Priess, is seeking to complete two inventories:
  - (a) to obtain and catalogue photographs and descriptions of cemeteries and burial plots in the former West Reserve; and
  - (b) to obtain locations and photograph historic markers and monuments within the same area.
2. Under the leadership of Henry Unger, Bruce Wiebe, Martha Martens, Jim Dyck and others, the long-dormant project of researching and writing the *history of all villages* for which no published history is available as yet, is being revived.
3. The *History Seekers* organize public presentations on a variety of historical and cultural aspects of Mennonite life. For the past decade or more, four evenings of lectures and presentations were annually organized by an independent committee and focussed on the Altona area. Dave Harms and Joe Braun head this sub-committee.
4. MMHS has for some years had an informal link to the Neuberghthal Historic village site. Lawrence Klippenstein and Joe Braun are the official liaison, especially in connection with the *Bergthal School project*, which is currently developing programs even as the last phases of restoration are moving to completion.
5. The *Post Road committee* has recently renewed the material for self-guided tours from Fort Dufferin on the Red River to Mountain City on the Pembina foothills. Lecterns have been upgraded and their texts revised, under the leadership of Abe Ens and John Giesbrecht. The committee works in close cooperation with the Post Road Heritage Group at Emerson.
6. The Fort Dufferin ad hoc committee is working at a new monument and plaque in memory of the some 18,000 immigrants who arrived in Manitoba via the Immigration sheds during the decade of the river boat steamers.

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The Community Centre at Reinland is planning a celebration of the 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of the first

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# Book Notes

by Lawrence Klippenstein

The celebration of the 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mennonites coming to Manitoba is again helping to create some very informative publications. Much of the early history of the genesis of Mennonite life in the province is reviewed in the latest issue of *Preservings* (No 34, 2014, 87 pp), published by the D.F.Plett Historical Research Foundation, Inc. in Winnipeg. It reviews with fuller intensity the first moves of 1874 bringing Mennonite families from south Russia (later Ukraine) to what became the East Reserve (now largely the Rural Municipality of Hanover) in Manitoba. Dr. Hans Werner of the University of Winnipeg and Dr. John J. Friesen, emeritus professor of the Canadian Mennonite University, also in Winnipeg, continue to serve as editors of the journal. To order contact [plettfoundation@gmail.com](mailto:plettfoundation@gmail.com)

Last year Turnstone Press released *What Lies Behind*, a debut of poetry written by Luann Hiebert, adjunct professor at Providence University College, Otterburne. In her poetry Luann unpacks everyday things to see the hidden beauty of things around us that hide their beauty unless we have moments to look more deeply at reality. As a paperback of 93 pages *What Lies Behind* is available at bookstores for \$17.00, or call 204-947-1555.

A very attractive coffee table paperback of 67 pages and titled *A Collected History: Mennonite Heritage Village* is receiving wide acclaim by specialists and the general public. It has appeared as a product of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of 2014 at the Village and is available at the Village Bookstore ([roxannam@mhv.ca](mailto:roxannam@mhv.ca)) as well as at Mennonite Heritage Centre ([kdyck@mennonitechurch.ca](mailto:kdyck@mennonitechurch.ca)) and other outlets. The exceptional quality of photos found on every page, well illuminated by a flawless text, definitely sets it apart from other volumes in its category. Editors of the volume are Dr. Roland M. Sawatzky, curator of Manitoba Museum, and Andrea M. Dyck, senior curator at MHV.

*Johann Friesen of Poland and His Descendants Telling Their Stories*, is a title aptly summarizing the contents of this paperback of 176 pp., published by McNally Robinson in 2014. Author Henry A. Friesen has been a teacher, plumber and pastor, active now at the Regina Christian School in Regina. The stories not only sketch experiences of the family, but tie its wanderings to general developments in several Mennonite areas – Poland, Russia, and Manitoba, Canada mostly. As a commentator puts it, "... a multilayered study of cultural dynamics and the relationship between faith and the wider culture".

Going well beyond Mennonite experiences, Ulrich Merton helps us hear *Forgotten Voices* share about the "expulsion of the Germans from Eastern Europe after World War II". Transaction Publishers had the volume on the market in 2012. As a paperback the book with its 336 pages packs a very big topic into a tightly researched and written expose of something Mennonites know a lot about too though not singled out here for special mention. The author was born in Berlin, Germany, and has resided in the USA since childhood. He has served with the Bank of America, and is now working in Cuba with a non-government organization. A second volume on this topic is going to press shortly. For copies write to the publishers at 10 Corporate Place South, Piscataway, NJ, USA 08854

In 2014, Teodor Rempel of Samish Island, Washington, USA, with the help of Agatha Klassen, translated, edited, and published *Letters of a Mennonite Couple, Nicolai and Katharina Rempel: Russia: War and Revolution 1914-1917*. It is put out by the Center for MB Studies in Fresno, CA. The book appears in hardcover as a 250-page well-illustrated volume, which in the words of one scholar depicts life of Russian Mennonite medics on trains during their WWI service, as well as or better than any other known source of such materials. To order contact CMBS at 1-204-669- 6575, or [jisaak@mbconf.ca](mailto:jisaak@mbconf.ca)

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Mennonite settlers on the West Reserve in 1875. The all-day event includes "an innovative parade," rededication of the cemetery, lunch and evening entertainment. The date is set for July 18, 2015.

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The Sommerfeld Mennonite conference is planning a 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration at Fort Dufferin on a Sunday in August, 2015. The event will include a program and Faspa.

Submitted by Adolf Ens for *Heritage Posting*, March 2015

