

One Hundred Issues!

HERITAGE POSTING



No. 100

October 2021

Some HP History . . .

By Lawrence Klippenstein and Glen Klassen

The Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society was organized in 1958 but did not have its own newsletter until 1984, when the first issue of the *MMHS Newsletter* appeared, with Royden Loewen as editor.



Royden Loewen
First Editor

Before publishing the newsletter, the Society depended on *Mennonite Historian*, CFAM Radio and local publications such as *Heritage Happenings* (Winkler Heritage Society), and *Neubergthal Notes* for publicity. CFAM Radio gave the Society dozens of free broadcasts of Mennonite history narrated in

Low German by Gerhard Ens. Mennonite Heritage Village also provided public relations on many occasions.

For the years 1973-75 MMHS published "100" a newsletter inspired by the anniversary of the first arrival of Mennonites in Manitoba. It was edited by Lawrence Klippenstein and focused on

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Mennonites and political observers, often an unlikely pair, know that September marked an important moment in the history of Manitoba Mennonites.

On Sept. 1, 2021, Steinbach MLA Kelvin Goertzen became the 23rd premier of Manitoba upon his selection as interim leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Manitoba.



The Hon Kelvin Goertzen,
23rd Premier
of Manitoba

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The MMHS Board that launched Heritage Posting in 1984



Back row (left to right): Dr. Reinhardt Friesen, John Dyck, Doreen Klassen, Ed Schellenberg and Abe J. Dueck. Front row: Ted E. Friesen, Delbert Plett and Ruth Bock. (MHA Photo)

From the first issue, p. 2 . . .

Dear Editor,

November 19, 1984

Looking back, I can count 13 news items about the MMHS which appeared in *Mennonite Historian* since the formation of the society on March 1, 1980. Lawrence Klippenstein has quite faithfully put news into the *Historian* and he has also sat on the Board from then until March, 1984. Lawrence wrote all but 4 articles - Peter B. Petkau wrote 2, Royden Loewen wrote 1, and Rhinehart Friesen 1.

So it is not only with some newly born calf legs that you start the "MMHS Newseltter." We do have some fatherly guidance to fall back on.

And I am enclosing our newsletter proposal. All the best in your editorial work.

Sincerely,
Dennis Stoesz
Archivist,

Mennonite Heritage Centre

Thanks, Lawrence . . .

Lawrence Klippenstein has decided to step down from his position as Contributing Editor of *Heritage Posting*. He has been in this job since May 2018 but earlier he was involved



Photo by Noreen Janzen

further contributions which will add something to an already voluminous personal publications list. He has served MMHS in some capacity for 50 years!

He has always been a fount of new ideas for celebrating the Mennonite adventure and has participated fully in implementing them. Thanks, Lawrence! Please keep on writing! (GK)

Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society

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A member has made a designated donation to cover the extra cost of colour printing for this issue.

From the Editor . . .

Who's the bad guy?

I was visiting with folks at the Dirk Willems Peace Garden at MHV recently when a small family with a six-year old came by. The little boy played around the base of the statue and then came up with, "Who's the bad guy?" I guess he had been told something of Dirk Willems standing on the "ice", and the pathetic figure of the "thief-catcher" in the "water".

I told him that there were no really bad guys in the story but it really got me thinking.

We (Anabaptists), of course, think of Willems as a saint for rescuing his pursuer and as a martyr for his horrific death a few days later. Surely he was the good guy. And he was.

But look at it from the viewpoint of the man in the water. For him Willems was a dangerous radical who threatened the very basis of ordinary life by breaking the bond between baptism and the norms of society. If you were not baptised at birth you were not really a member of society. Not only that, if you were to die unbaptised you would face hell. Willems was willing to risk the eternal happiness of little children. In spite of this the rescued man pled unsuccessfully for the freedom of his rescuer. Surely he was also a good guy.

However, we must still insist on accountability. When Willems was burned at the stake in Asperen, his home town, not only was his life taken, but all his possessions were forfeited to the king. Who was this king? None other than Philip II of Spain, who was briefly married to Queen Mary I of England. He was also known for the destruction of the Incas in South America and their forced conversion to the Church. Definitely a bad guy.

(Continued from page 1)

Goertzen is thought to be the first Mennonite to hold the office of premier in Manitoba. He says that "I am proud as someone with Mennonite roots coming from a Mennonite community to be able to take on this role. I hope that the community is proud of me too."

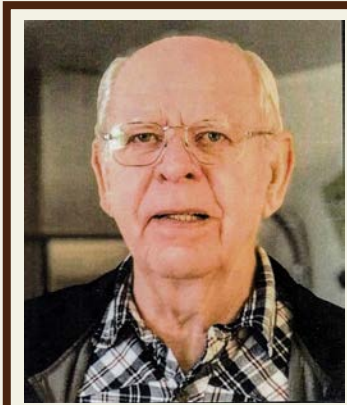
Satirist Andrew Unger has found, after consulting GRANDMA, that Goertzen is the 5th cousin of Brad Wall, former premier of Saskatchewan. Both stem from a Peter Martens who was born in about 1769. (Source: Twitter) Kelvin has replied, "I believe this is true. Although because Brad Wall is an @ssaskroughriders fan, we have grown distant."

Goertzen will serve as premier until Oct. 30, when the Progressive Conservatives will elect a new leader.

Goertzen was elected as the MLA for Steinbach in 2003 and re-elected in 2007, 2011, 2016 and 2019. He previously served as Manitoba's deputy premier, minister of legislative and public affairs, minister of education, minister of health, seniors and active living and government house leader.

To many people, Peter K. Reimer was known as PK, always friendly and with a smile on his face. He was an avid hockey fan, cheering on the Steinbach Pistons, and he was the IT guy at his condo. To his family he was the loving father and grandfather always interested and involved in the activities of his children and grandchildren.

But thousands of people knew Peter as a genealogist. I got to know Peter at the annual Family History Days sponsored by the Hanover Steinbach Historical Society about 25 years ago. When this event was discontinued, some of us, with Peter's help, decided to offer ancestry information at the Mennonite Heritage Village during special event days. There is a long tradition of Mennonites being interested in family history and genealogical research, and Peter was a fine example of that. With the advent of computer technology, it became possible to create a database using a genealogy program. This was done by the California Mennonite Historical Society and called GRANDMA. Peter became an expert in this program and was one of the few people who were trusted to enter information directly into this program. As a result, he received continual emails and letters from all over the world containing family



Peter K. Reimer
1942 – 2021

trees, church records, additions and corrections.

I had the impression that Peter had a special place in his heart for members of traditional Mennonite churches. This was especially evident during the special event days at the museum. If they wouldn't approach Peter at his table, then he would approach them and draw them into conversation. I believe that Peter felt a connection to this group of people because he had lived in Belize and Mexico during part of his life. Peter was very much aware of what was going on in the Mennonite communities in Mexico, Paraguay,

Bolivia and Belize. He was in the process of entering the Rudnerweider *Gemeindebuch* into GRANDMA at the time of his death, completing approximately half of the book. The completion of this work will fall on the shoulders of someone else. Because Peter was so well known for his genealogy work, he will be missed by that community. Hopefully there will be others that will now come forward and continue this very important work. It is important because present and future generations will depend on the GRANDMA for their ancestral histories.

Al Hamm

The new 64-foot Niverville Heritage Wall manufactured by Leon Desmarais of Fusion Industries (Niverville) was set in place around 6 AM on Canada Day, July 1st. Fittingly, around noon Mayor Myron Dyck and MLA Ron Schuler cut the ribbon at a brief "opening" of this new attraction along Main Street. MLA Schuler was instrumental in obtaining the grant under the Provincial Heritage Grant Program, and Mayor Dyck represented the Town which also provided a generous grant, as did the manufacturer. The basic design of the Wall (by Dustin Krahn of Excel Graphics, Niverville) has ¼ inch steel backing with raised cutouts and stainless steel accents, which were added by Darren Sakwi of Stainless Concepts Inc. (Winnipeg), who also provided the final concept drawing and the computer input file for Fusion. The Corten backing will quickly turn to a rich rust colour which will allow the dark semi-gloss finish of the cutouts to stand out sharply. Several figures extend over the top edge to give a sense of height, notably for the elevator and train station. Interpretative boards, content in consultation with Niigaan Sinclair (U of M) for Indigenous



background, Armand Jerome (Métis cartmaker) for the Métis community, as well as local historians will be placed underneath, and a sponsor board added. The wall is a "multi-layered, metal, visual representation of the history of Niverville," according to Shirley Hoult who was inspired to create this by the metal Upper Fort Garry wall in Winnipeg. Photo credit: Ken Kliewer, Altona, MB.

One Hundred Issues

(Continued from page 1)

the Centennial. The inauguration of *Mennnonite Historian* in 1978 greatly enhanced the awareness of Mennonite heritage throughout the country and promoted the work of MMHS.

In 1983 the MMHS board, then chaired by Delbert Plett of Steinbach, felt it needed more visibility for its goals and achievements, so the prosaically named *MMHS Newsletter* was begun in 1984. Royden Loewen volunteered to edit the



Dennis Stoesz

piece, and to help determine more specifically what its schedule and content would be.

Early issues consisted of four pages in each issue summarizing



Doris Penner

the work of the committees from time to time, and making announcements for upcoming historical gatherings. A few photos usually found their way into its pages.

In March, 1999, the editors (Bert Friesen and Lawrence Klippenstein) chose the name *Heritage Posting* and expanded it to 8 pages and then in 2002 to 12 pages. In June, 2003, Ted Barg joined the team as their layout editor and has brought every issue to press since then. The iconic font for the periodical's title, with its antique appearance was



Bert Friesen

Ted's idea. Counting the current issue, 920 pages have been published. In November, 2011, members could access HP online.

The issues of emphasis in the content have been under review more than once. Some wanted it to contain nothing except items strictly related to our society, while others were quite open to extended coverage to other themes



Lawrence Klippenstein

not so strictly tied to our program. The length of articles has come under review with the direction that longer pieces mixed with shorter ones would be acceptable. As a result recent issues have varied from 8 to 20 pages. In recent decades HP has become a little more like a magazine than a newsletter with news items supplemented by stories and book reviews.

And then there has been the issue of what is "Mennonite History" and what is not. This has been left largely in the hands of the editors. No mission statement has been drafted but it is understood that all things "Mennonite" are fair game. Occasionally articles from sister newsletters in other provinces have been included. Unsolicited items are welcome and should be sent to the editor.



Maria Falk Lodge



TED BARG

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Royden Loewen	Ed. Dec. 1984 – Dec. 1987	1 – 6
Dennis Stoesz	Ed. June 88, Asst Ed. Dec. 1986	4, 7
Doris Penner	Ed. Dec. 1988 – Dec. 1991	8 – 14
Richard Thiessen	Ed. Dec. 1995 – Dec. 1997	18 – 20
Bert Friesen	Ed. June 1998 – June 2005	21 – 47
Lawrence Klippenstein	Asst. Ed June 1998 – Dec. 1999	21 – 27
Gilbert Brandt	Asst. Ed. June 2003 – Jan. 2005	41 – 47
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Glen Klassen	Ed. Mar. 2017 –	86 – 100
Lawrence Klippenstein	Contr. Ed. Mar. 2018 – Oct. 2021	89 – 100
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VOL.1NO. 1 NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 1984

Editor's Note — Royden Loewen

This newsletter marks a new venture for the MMHS. With the Society's growth in members, committees, projects and donors in the recent years, there has also grown a need to enhance the medium of communication among members. This newsletter aims to meet that need. As awareness of the society's activities and achievements grow, so too will the strength of the organization.

This issue contains numerous reports from active MMHS groups. These include the following committees: The Genealogy and Local History Committee, The Mennonite Book Club, The Russian Mennonite Monument Committee, The Research and Scholarship Committee and the Arts and Interdisciplinary Committee. These reports tell of a recent Family History Symposium, the formation of a book club, a very successful Dankfest, a soon-to-be released edition of Arnold Dyck's work in Plautdietsch, and a Mennonite Composers' Competition. Read the reports and discover what your society is doing. For further updates and information plan to attend the Annual Membership Meeting in February.

The editor gratefully acknowledges the enthusiastic response from the contributors and the counsel of fellow members of the Publicity Committee, Dr. Rhinehart Friesen, Ruth Bock and Dennis Stoesz. Happy reading. May the joy of the first Christmas be yours this season.

President's Report — Delbert Plett

This newsletter represents an historic milestone for the M.M.H.S. A newsletter serves as a vital bonding agent and communication link for a society such as ours and I hope that this will become an annual feature. Congratulations to editor Roy Loewen for bringing this issue to press.

Roy has also asked me to make a few comments with respect to the general affairs of the M.M.H.S. over the past two years. A brief historical review will provide a helpful background. The M.M.H.S. was formed in 1958 and the most successful project to date has been the Mennonite Village Museum in Steinbach. This project came to absorb almost the full resources of the M.M.H.S. so that relatively little was done in the area of promoting cultural, educational and

theological development in general. As a result, the M.M.H.S. was separated from the Mennonite Village Museum in 1979 and incorporated as a completely separate body with these activities as its sole function.

During the past five years our society has been struggling to fulfill its new mandate of serving as a vehicle for the historical, cultural and religious interests of all Manitoba Mennonites. Our membership has quadrupled from 37 charter members in 1979 to about 160 regular members today. It would be exciting to see another fourfold increase over the next five years. The society has also grown by expanding its areas of involvement. The directors minutes from 1980 reveal that only four committees were functional, namely, Research and Scholarship, Arts and Interdisciplinary, Historical Sites, and Membership and Publicity. This has grown to the present ten committees. Hopefully, two more, namely, Education and Resources, and Inter-Mennonite Faith, can be activated in the coming year. This growth is also reflected in our financial statements. I was surprised to realize recently that our cash turn-over for 1984 will be almost \$30,000.00.

It is helpful to note that all of the activities of the M.M.H.S. are planned and carried out through the various committees. Each director also serves on one or two committees which are active in areas of interest to him or her. Ideally each committee will also provide a number of members who are not directors thus providing an opportunity for individuals to become involved in areas of concern to them. This newsletter contains an update by each committee. If you would like to get involved in some of these activities please contact myself or any one of the committee chairpersons.

I would like to refer briefly to the three new committees which were organized at our board meeting in June 1984, namely, Nominating and Constitution, Program Committee, and Finance Committee. The Nominating Committee is in charge of finding suitable candidates for our board of directors, recommending as to committee appointments, as well as a review of our constitution. The 1984 committee consisted of

Dr. John Friesen, Ted Friesen and myself. The selection of nominees for the 1985 board is now complete and I must say that we are very pleased at the quality of the people who have agreed to serve if elected.

The Program Committee originally consisted of Henry K. Friesen, Steinbach and myself. Later we were joined by Wilmer Penner, well-known director of the Landmark Drama Club. The Program Committee also hopes to recruit several additional members in Winnipeg as well as in "Jant Sied". The committee had planned to sponsor a major drama production for the fall of this year but regrettably these endeavours did not come to fruition. This committee is also in charge of the programming for our annual membership meeting coming up in February or March.

One of the more important developments for the M.M.H.S. was the establishment of a Finance Committee. It was a matter of some concern that many of our expenditures in the past were made on a spur-of-the-moment basis. The Finance Committee hopes to remedy this through strict budgetary control. Another goal will be to insure that each committee and interest group can obtain a fair share of our strictly limited resources. The committee has also recommended that each project adopted by the society should be at least partially self-supporting. ie. from revenues, individual sponsorships, grants, application fees, etc. In this way the general revenues of the M.M.H.S. will achieve a far greater effect.

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Upcoming Events

January 14, 1985 — MMHS Board Meeting at Heritage Centre, Winnipeg.

February, 1985 — MMHS Annual Membership Meeting. Watch for further announcements.

Spring, 1985 — Volume One of the Arnold Dyck Edition to be released.

Spring, 1985 — Russian Mennonite Cenotaph Construction to be commenced.

May 15, 1985 — Mennonite Composers' Competition closes.

New acquisition might be the oldest Mennonite grave marker in Manitoba

By Ernest Braun

This headstone is the oldest surviving Mennonite headstone known on the Mennonite East Reserve and may be the oldest one in all of Manitoba. It was photographed in the Alt-Bergfeld cemetery in the later 1950s by Prof. John H. Warkentin who included it in his 1960 doctoral thesis. At that point the stone appeared to be in its original place, over the grave of Peter Klassen, born February 10, 1811, in Schönhorst, Chortitza, the son of Abraham and Agatha Klassen. Peter later moved to the new Bergthal Colony, settling in the village of Heuboden, likely just after he married Sara Kroeker in 1839. In the spring of 1875 they emigrated with three grown children, to become one of the pioneering families of the village of Bergfeld on the East Reserve, Manitoba. There is no record of his entering a homestead, although a Peter Klassen received a patent for NE 6-5-5E, probably his son Peter K. Klassen. He is listed in the 1876 *Brottschuld* for Bergfeld, but died September 25, 1877 of causes unknown. The headstone inscription was etched in fine calligraphy, probably by son Peter Klassen who went on to a long career as village teacher in Bergfeld, whose Latin P and K letters, preserved in some school booklets, are identical to those on the stone.

The Mennonite village of Alt-Bergfeld was sold with all its land and buildings in 1923-24 in preparation for the move to Paraguay. Investors owned the property until 1937 when James Robertson bought it. During the time that

the land was farmed by the Robertson family the cemetery was not fenced in so that the cattle could keep the grass short and the weeds under control. Another photograph taken by Abe Warkentin in about 1973 still shows the stone in place amid underbrush, but as the land reverted to pasture, whatever markers existed (rough



unmarked field stones, or wooden stakes with perhaps a piece of tin nailed to them) were lost.

So it was that in about 1980 the owner of the land at that time, William B. Braun, noticed the stone when his cultivator snagged it while turning over some pasture land in the area. He stopped to pick it up, turned it over and noticing the inscription, and took it home. Upon his death it came to his son Harold, who stored it in his shed. Had the stone been left outside, weathering on the soft limestone would by now have left the lettering indecipherable. Harold preserved it intact until spring 2021 when he contacted Ernest N. Braun, long-time Alt-Bergfeld *aficionado* (whose ancestors are also buried in that village cemetery) and passed the stone to him to look after in an appropriate fashion. In the meantime,



Mrs. Katarina Wiebe, age 99, and her son Rev. John Wiebe transfer the headstone of their ancestor Peter Klassen 1811-1877 to Andrea Klassen, senior curator of Mennonite Heritage Village, on September 13, 2021. The photo was taken in front of the semlin on the museum's grounds, as this type of sod house would likely have been the type of dwelling in which Peter Klassen lived at his passing in Bergfeld. Harold and Karen Braun, long-time custodians of the stone, were on hand to witness the handover. Martin and Donna Reutter, current owners of the village site, were unable to attend.

a cairn listing all known deaths had been erected in the general area where the cemetery was presumed to be, and marks the spot today. Access is permitted by the current owners provided permission is obtained in advance.

On September 13, 2021, a great-granddaughter of Peter Klassen, Katarina Wiebe with her son Rev. John Wiebe entrusted the stone to Mennonite Heritage Village, represented by senior curator Andrea Klassen. As a displaced cemetery stone, this artifact may not have an actual owner, and since its original place has been lost, the Wiebes respectfully consigned it to the Museum for other members of the family and the public to view. This notice will also serve to alert other descendants, many of them in Paraguay, about the stone.

Pastoring in a Pandemic

By Kyle Penner

Assoc. Pastor, Grace Mennonite Church, Steinbach

Palmer Becker states that one of the unique traits of Anabaptism is “Community is the centre of our lives.”

A similar trope is the story of someone being asked if they are a Christian, and the response being: “You’ll have to ask my neighbour.”

But I’ve been inspired by our resilience. We’ve arranged food drop offs for people in need. We’ve done quite a few collection projects for local charities. We’ve called and recalled everybody in the congregation to see if they need anything. We’ve sacrificed lots of the things that we love about church

In March 2020, we at Grace Mennonite Church in Steinbach were the first church to close its doors to worship because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Very few of us knew what the next year or two would hold, but we did know that we were scared, and that we wanted to keep our community safe.

We at Grace quickly pivoted to providing pre-recorded services, and on Sunday mornings at 10 we invited our entire church to watch church on YouTube together.

As time went on, we grew more accustomed to gathering apart. We kept faithfully watching church, while making sure to check in with each other to make sure everybody was doing alright.

In June, the public health guidelines allowed for us to gather at reduced capacity, so we slowly reopened the church for worship. Masks were mandatory, households sat 6 feet apart, and there was no congregational singing.

After months of being told to stay apart from people, coming back to church and seeing other people was strange. Too strange for some, and they still preferred to worship at home. While others were quite okay with being parts of crowds again. How to respect both sides of that spectrum was a challenge.

When fall came, the second wave started, and public health restrictions meant less and less people were allowed into the building. So we started offering some Sunday hikes for church, and livestreaming the services that happened in our building on YouTube.

Shortly after that, Steinbach had so many Covid cases that our test positivity was 40%, schools were closed, and we were all put under household restrictions. Since we were not supposed to gather with anybody from outside our houses, that meant that worship moved to video chat (Zoom). 100 households would gather and worship live together from our computers, phones and tablets.

Throughout all of this, we did our best to bring food to those who needed it, we continued to encourage collections

of items for charities, we called and recalled everyone in the church to see if there was anything we could do, and we did our best to connect and take care of each other while staying apart.

When the local Covid cases decreased, we were slowly allowed back into our building. Some people were excited to come back and worship in person, while others were cautious and preferred staying at home and watching the livestream. Youth moved from Zoom to gathering around the fire outside, where the teenagers played games and shared

stories. Adult education times were on Zoom every week, alternating between theological topics and having people share from our own congregation.

And then when the third wave of Covid hit in May, well, it was back online for us until July.

Worth noting is that a vaccine for Covid was approved in December 2020, and by July 2021, anybody in Canada who wanted to vaccinated against Covid could be. Southern Manitoba in general, and Mennonites in particular, were recognized as a low “vaccine uptake” community, so I found myself, not only helping advise the government on vaccine programs, but also being one of the public faces encouraging people to get vaccinated so we can put this pandemic behind us. Since our church has 5 doctors, 1 ER nurse, and 2 lead nurses at the vaccine clinic, I felt well supported in being a vaccine advocate. And despite some push back from some vaccine resistant folk from across

the country, the feedback from the medical community was good.

And now, 18 months into the pandemic, we’ve settled into a bit of a pattern: High vaccination uptake and strong public health guidelines means we’re slowly coming back to the building, including singing behind masks. Children’s Church and youth continue to meet outside. We’re still livestreaming the service for people who are more comfortable at home. And we’re waiting for the day when the vaccine will be approved for children so we can continue to gather safely.

Palmer Becker states that one of the unique traits of Anabaptism is “Community is the centre of our lives,” and being a community of Jesus followers together when we’re supposed to stay apart has been a challenge. But I’m inspired by our resilience, our creativity, our continued effort to protect the vulnerable, and by our commitment to both God and each other.

It’s my hope and my prayer that however, and whenever, this pandemic ends, we will be able to look back and say with confidence that we did our best to follow Jesus as the body of Christ.

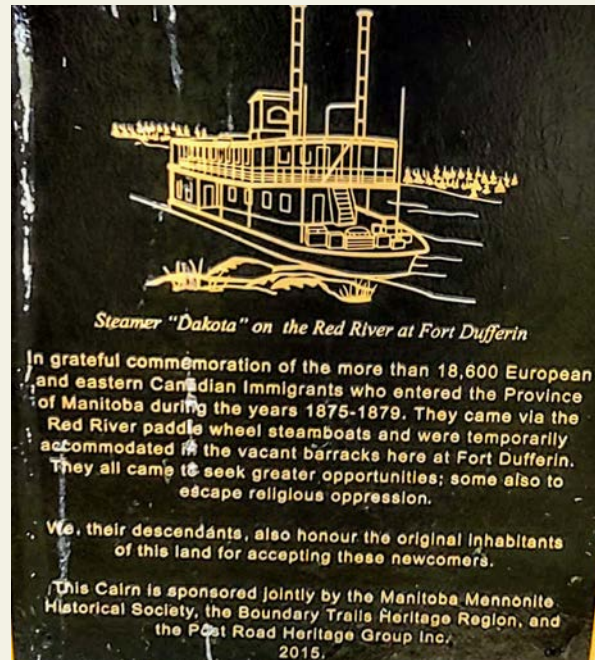


Kyle Penner



The plaque at the Shantz Immigration Sheds site has finally been affixed to the granite boulder. The site is two miles south of Niverville on 6th Avenue. The crew who worked at it for about 8 hours (granite is hard to drill!) is, (left to right): Cornie Loeppky, Ed Krahn, Ernie Braun, Glen Klassen and Orlando Hiebert. Missing from the photo is Harold Dyck.

The plaque was designed by Glen and departs from the usual brass presentation, giving more information than a brass plaque could. The art works were created by Don Hoepfner and Neil Klassen. Orlando is wearing his Russian cap to complement the Imperial Russian flag flying to left of the cairn. The two flags signal the origin and the destination of the immigrants who gathered at the cairn in 1874-75. The cairn also honours Jacob V. Shantz, the settlement agent who facilitated immigration by providing temporary shelter at this site. The project was planned and brought to completion by the EastMenn Historical Committee, an affiliate of MMHS. (Photo: Ernie Braun)



The Fort Dufferin plaque. MMHS 2015 (GK)

Below: Gemma Dyck was a volunteer at Mennonite Heritage Village, where she and her friend helped the Garden Club stabilize the banks of the pond. After stabilization and shaping of the banks with posts and mats of coconut fiber, the banks were planted with native flowering plants and grasses. Paradise Landscaping was in charge of the project which was supported by the local Conservation District.

The “new” pond will be surrounded by a limestone walking path with stops at the Dirk Willems Peace Garden, the Berlin Wall section, and a new bridge at the south end. Its 1 Km length will include a woodland path around the Lichtentau Church site. (Photo: Gary Dyck)



Book Reviews

MaryLou Driedger, *Lost on the Prairie*, Wandering Fox, 2021, 224 pp.

Reviewed by Aria Klassen, Ste Anne Collegiate student

Lost on the Prairie was a tale of a young boy going into the world on a grand adventure, which I think many people of that age (myself included) dream of doing. Equipped with only his mind, limited resources, and, of course, his trusty steeds, he somehow finds his way across miles of wilderness back to his family. Also to think that this was based on a true story of the author's grandfather is really quite fascinating. It is interesting to see how things have changed.

The integration of the Dakota people into the story was also refreshing to see, as well as inspiring. I am not very aware of the history and how they were treated but I enjoyed the way MaryLou was able to portray the attitude towards them as not being hostile. The “hollow” was also a nice touch, adding some legends to the story and shedding light on some indigenous stories, which was very nice to see.

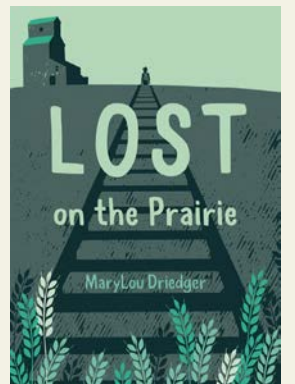
The way Driedger also weaves words to create such a vivid image for the reader is amazing. The scene where both Joe and Peter are sitting on the hill to watch the sunset was so clear in my mind, I could imagine how the pinks and oranges painted the sky and how the Little Thunder's home looked from up at the crest of the hill.

The hotel that Peter stayed at right before he is finally reunited with his parents was probably the thing that stuck with me the most. I could imagine every detail of it right down to the mouldings. The descriptions given to, not only the settings, but also the characters were all well done and thorough without dragging on. Peter's perspective as a curious and adventurous boy pulled the reader right into his world with him, sharing the experience of his journey. The

characters that helped Peter on his adventure were made up of a variety of different people, included to but not limited to a wise hunter, a kind farmer and a cheerful girl. The difference in characters is always something that I look for in books and whenever I see it; I always get excited to become invested in all these new personalities.

There is also a study guide at the back of the book which makes it perfect for book reports. Reading through some of the questions I really liked the way the author has the reader try to connect with what Peter is going through on his trip, such as asking the reader about previous vacations they had been on as well as the one book they would bring on a trip. In my opinion, I believe that this book would be really good for middle-year kids with a taste for adventure. I think teachers should also look into this book so that their students can study more local writers rather than big names. It also teaches us about the travel some of our ancestors had to go through to get to Canada and that it was not as simple as going from one place to another.

All in all, I would recommend this book to those that are looking for local writers to read and for those looking for a lighthearted and fun book to read or get for their kids. Fellow lovers of *The Boxcar Children* will also love this story as they have similar elements to them, with both the story as well as how the characters interact with their environment. All things considered, it was a good read and I'm glad that I was able to write this review!



Richard Klassen, *Something I Must Do*, Derksen Printers, Steinbach, 2021.

Reviewed by Donald Thiessen

This book is subtitled, *Memoirs of a Small Church Preacher*, which characterizes the book very well. I might quibble a bit with this subtitle – the author tries to differentiate between a memoir account and a biographical account. Both will inevitably express the author's perspectives and biases. Second, as I read the memoir, I am convinced that he was more than a preacher, he was a pastor who served the churches in wonderfully wholistic ways.

In a biographical account it is tempting to fill out the story by weaving in the stories of family and friends who contribute so much to

a life. The author weaves them in throughout the narrative but does not steal their story and keeps the story focused on his own experiences. His wife and children will still be able to tell their own stories – he has left it for them to tell their stories.

Another sensitivity that he handles well is that of stories from the churches. A biography can often become an opportunity to “tell all” and once and for all set the record straight. This can be particularly true of one who has lived a public life and will inevitably have been misunderstood in the course of his work. In the church many situations arise where the leader's role can be misconstrued. Klassen narrates the stories of the churches and individuals that crossed his path with sensitivity and care without the need to prove where he was right and others were wrong. The churches and individuals can read this book with the confidence that they are discussed in good taste and always with a touch of humour. By the way, when we read a book by someone we know, we look to see if we might appear somewhere. I do in a couple of places, but in the

(Continued on next page)

one place my name is misspelled!

Which leads me to another point. Those who know Klassen personally, will have experienced his wry, dry, poker-face humour. His resonant, bass, rumbling voice does not come through in the book, but the humour certainly does. A word here, a phrase there, a well-told story with obvious humour are sprinkled about liberally indicating that the author views the world around him with an inner wellspring of laughter ready to burst forth without warning. This probably is one of the key components of his life that contributed to his successful ministries in five of our provinces. To view all of life with the sense that there is likely something funny in there somewhere, is invaluable in any kind of people work.

The bulk of the book deals with his ministry as a pastor

Lydia Loewen, *Under the Linden Tree* (Steinbach/Winnipeg: self-published, 2020), pb., 208 pp., 28.00 plus postage. Helen Reimer, *I Just Swallowed the Fly and Kept on Singing* (Rosenort/Winnipeg: self-published, 2016), pb, 120 pp.

Reviewed by Lawrence Klippenstein

Both of these volumes are autobiographies. That means each person essentially shares a life story as a self-portrait.

An editor once said to me, "I am really tired of editing these kind of books. I asked, "Why so"? Well, this person replied, "They seem to be mostly a kind of ego-trip – telling us about a person's many achievements in life, even a little boastful at times", adding, "You would never publish a book like that, would you?"

I replied, "I must say I have not given it much thought. But I will keep your warning about self-portraits in mind". Which I tried to do when I wrote mine (still unpublished). And I did, as promised, for the most part try to keep her comments on self-portraits in mind.

These books resemble each other in some ways, hence the decision to review them together. And not so much for evaluating them as personal projects but as letting them teach us a few things about undertaking such an effort.

They are both what I would call book-club born and bred. That means created in the setting of living through the experience of writing about oneself in sympathetic company – lots of compassionate sharing and critiquing, and being able to pick up good ideas for one's own thoughts into words and onto paper in some form. After all it has been said: anyone can write a book if you set your mind to it – even if only a short one.

These books in fact succeed in a number of ways. To begin with they are relatively short, and will not require months and many stages of working at it until you finish. Many people have short attention spans. These books will help them get done fairly quickly and go on to another one. Secondly they are written in easily understood language. A really good reader might start them before going to school

in EMC churches in Canada. He refers to the strength of his call to ministry even though he sees himself as a shy, slow-thinking, deliberate kind of personality that would not have chosen such a public career as a life's work. Several times he expresses surprise at being chosen to serve in positions such as moderator of the denomination even though he sees himself as a retiring, "in the background" kind of personality. If there is a fault, maybe he reminds us a bit too often of his perceived inferiority complex.

The book is easy to read, written in a conversational style reminding you of someone sitting down after a busy day to tell you a bunch of stories. You will not find any heavy theological challenges as you might expect from a seasoned pastor. Buy the book and enjoy!

(believe it or not!). And a grandparent might enjoy them long afterwards. They have a lot of brightly colored and well-reproduced photos – a really big asset. Pictures make the best reading!

Some readers like indices and division indicators in books they read. These books have them. "Sketches" is how some readers would describe the content. Really interesting stories of personal and family life is what you get in spades! HP has offered some rather "heavy" reviews of late. This note is not like that. More "heavy" one are waiting in the wings.

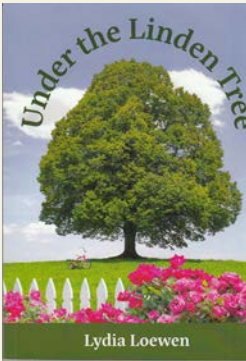
And as a one-time editor, I would want to add – all of it well-edited and put together. No book can escape having ultimately, to authors especially, at least one glaring printing error. Readers, don't even try to find them – not worth the effort. Will likely be one in each, at least! Basically clean as a whistle in that regard.

Be sure to catch the humour in the stories (all true, I gather) or you will omit the dessert, as it were. About the Linden tree, and the fly in the choir (see titles again). Perhaps the books will say more.

So who were the authors in fact? To discover that you need to borrow, beg, or buy (not steal!) the books and have the fun of becoming acquainted. It takes many hours, and days and months to write a book. Amazing what could be packed into one life. Right – good books do cost money but they can be passed down to later generations, and hold their gems for new readers for years and years.

These authors have families, not so small either, with all the surprises that brings to daily life. They have had problems, not to forget the sober side of life, but they met those challenges too. They have lived happy lives in those families, almost all of them with us still, but not really able to fill the gaps left by those who are departed. Perhaps a book can be a memorial also. Certainly these can.

If you want to get in touch for more information on the books ask the editor of HP to help you find the addresses you need for that. For starters cstoesz@cmu.ca might do.



Book Notes

By Lawrence Klippenstein and Glen Klassen

Bill Franz, *Mutti and Papa : A Love Story* softcover, 188 pp, \$25.00. This is according to its cover note "a family history that traces the love story of the author's parents." It offers a new perspective on "the layered nuances of the Holocaust, Mennonite culture and love thriving through wartime." The letters written between the parents in their engagement form the main resource for creating this narrative. Contact cstoesz@cmu.ca for further information and to order a copy.

John and Aileen Toews have given us a somewhat related story in *Letters from Lena*, 78 pp in Vol 1 with two more volumes promised. This one covers the period from 1924 -1935 (Trying to leave the Caucasus) after which a period of silence follows and then the letters are continued. Well-illustrated. For more information contact Nita Wiebe at 1-204-32-9661 (the MHV gift shop).

Mark Reimer presents his first novel titled *The Four Horsemen: Portrait of a Family Crisis* (Altona, Friesens, 2021), softcover, 212 pp,

A Personal Note

This may be the place to also mention Issue No 10 of *Klippings*, the final number of a series begun some years ago as a family newsletter. The issue, just off the press (laid out by John Friesen at Lindenwood Terrace in Winnipeg) is comprised almost entirely of photos. Nos. 1- 9 are available at Mennonite Heritage Archives, with some back numbers still held by yours truly. The series was edited throughout by Ted E Friesen and Lawrence Klippentein. The cost including postage is \$10. Back numbers are free. For further info contact lawklippenstein@shaw.ca

I have also managed to get nearly 500 of my photos annotated and placed with MAID (with catalogue to browse through). They are about my family, and our working in northern Manitoba) and include 40 years of a (nearly) daily family journal– still a work in progress.



Klippenstein Castle is located in Radeburg near Dresden in eastern Germany. It is now a resort centre widely sought out by tourists and others. Its history goes back to the Middle Ages, we are told. Info here courtesy of Dr. Glenn Penner, Winnipeg, MB. Check Google for more data.

I will add one further comment. I will be resigning from work with *Heritage Posting* after publication and distribution of this issue. Waiting to get attention on my desk after that are my memoirs, volume II of *Peace and War* (hopefully also to publish), and submission to MAID of the rest of my photos (500?).

Thanks much to all who have made working at these projects worthwhile and enjoyable over the past 50 years! LK

Hedy Wiebe, *There's a Place Deep inside Called Courage: A Memoir*, Word Alive Press, 2020. Recovery from serious injury with God's help.

Abe Dueck, *Mennonite Brethren Bible College: A History of Competing Visions*, The Mennonite Brethren Historical Commission, 2021.

David Elias *The Truth About The Barn: A Voyage of Discovery and Contemplation*, Great Plains Publications, 2020. The barn's place in culture and religion, art and literature.

Joanne Epp, *Cattail Skyline*, Turnstone Press, 2021. Poetry. The narrator returns to the landscape of her childhood, taking inventory of the ways it shaped her.

Miriam Toews, *Fight Night*, Knopf Canada, 2021. About someone who knows intimately what it costs to survive in this world, yet has found a way—painfully, joyously, ferociously—to love and fight to the end, on her own terms.

David Bergen, *Out of Mind*, Goose Lane Editions, 2021. A companion piece to his novel *The Matter with Morris*, a Scotiabank Giller Prize finalist from 2010. Inside look at a contemporary secular family.

Carla Funk, *Mennonite Valley Girl: A Wayward Coming of Age*, Graystone Books, 2021. Stories of 1980s adolescence in a traditional community.

S.L. Klassen, *Menno-Nightcaps:cocktails inspired by that odd ethno-religious group you keep mistaking for the Amish, Quakers or Mormons*, Touchwood Editions, 2021. Satire from the author of the Drunken Mennonite Blog.

Coming Event

On October 30th, *Pandemic Willing*, the EastMenn Historical Committee and Mennonite Heritage Village are sponsoring a *Map and Geography* event at MHV.

The Saturday afternoon session will feature the work of **Brent Wiebe**, Stettler, Alta, who has taken the art of village cartography to a new level with his beautiful reconstructions of Mennonite villages in Europe and in Canada. Other mapping projects will also be displayed.

The evening session will consist of a talk by **Bill Redekop**, author of *Lake Agassiz: the Rise and Demise of the World's Greatest Lake*.

Mennonite Historian (Sept., 2021)

Shaftesbury Campus at Canadian Mennonite University marks 100 years. *Unehelich*: Mennonite Genealogy and Illegitimate Births part 2 of 3. Friedrichsthal: Last Village of the Bergthal Colony: Part 2 of 2. A New Look at an Old Diary (Johannes Dyck 1826-1898)

The Memory Shop

"I want to buy a memory," I said, to the bearded man in the shop.
"You must have something in these shelves stuffed full from bottom to top"
The old man took a look at me, with more than a casual glance,
And said, "This shop's been here awhile now. Did you wander in by chance?"
I didn't know if Destiny or Fate had led me here.
"I'd like some tokens and souvenirs of things that I've held dear."
He merely smiled and peered at me, with grey and watery eyes,
And with a deep and gentle voice, he simply asked me, "Why?"
The question caught me by surprise, I really must admit,
I'd had a rather interesting life and yearned to keep track of it.
I told him I wanted keepsakes of memories good and bad,
As reminders of all that Life had given, of experiences I'd had.
"And in this life of yours, tell me what you've found?"
I told him that that was why I was here. He responded, "Look around".
As I gazed upon the loaded shelves packed full from floor to top,
I knew that some form of Destiny had brought me to this shop.
Passing among the crowded shelves was like walking in a dream,
Where completely separate incidents were somehow connected by a theme.
I saw a thousand people, and countless familiar faces.
I recognized the sights and sounds of warm and friendly places.
I also realized quickly, with sharp and painful regret,
The clear and obvious images of things I'd rather forget.
Some memories stood out clearly and distinctly on the shelf,
And some that I could easily see, were a very large part of myself.
Some memories were dusty, and not so easily discerned,
While others were of people I'd known, of lessons that I'd learned.
My heart cried out with a soulful sound that only I could hear,
To be so close to all the things once lost but now appearing so near.
I thrilled to see these memories, these things I'd held so dear.
But as my hand reached out to grasp, the memory disappeared.
Again and again I extended my hand to touch a piece of time.
I wanted to hold my memories, these treasures that were mine.
I returned to confront the proprietor, filled with profound despair,
To find him keenly observing me, now seated in his chair.
"So what did you find," he quietly asked. I knew my voice would shake,
"My life's all here, everything that I want, but nothing I can take."
His steady gaze and wizened eyes, in a gentle, forgiving face.
"This isn't the shop you're looking for. There is a better place."
"You see, my friend, the memories of your life and indeed yourself,
None of these can go with you, their place is on the shelf."
"Just up the road around the bend . You'll find a path that leads,
To the shop that you are looking for. With everything you'll need."
"It's a craft shop to create new memories, That's really what it's for.
Just take a look and you will find a lifetime's worth and more"
And so I left with a lightened heart, despite leaving so much behind,
To venture forth, with hopes and dreams, to the future that I'd find.

Nathan Klippenstein

Nathan is a teacher in Vancouver