



Newsletter

Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta

Volume XIX Number 1

March 2016

The 2015 Fall Conference of The Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta

by Donita Wiebe-Neufeld

Kim Thiesen's rendition of "Give Yourself to Love" was a perfect thematic opening to the Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta's 2015 Fall Conference highlighting the history of the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)



Donita Wiebe-Neufeld

(Continued on page 9)

Opportunity, Risk and Adventure

by
Ike Glick

Ancestry

My ancestral roots have been culturally diverse and sufficiently unlikely that my chance to even "show up" is 'opportunity' beyond winning the lottery!

A Norwegian lad, James Nilson Peterson, crossed the Great Divide to North America at age sixteen in 1872 with his parents and five siblings on "The North Star" sailing vessel. After marriage to Emma Anderson, his son, Theodore, crossed a cultural divide to wed an Amish-Mennonite gal, Maude Smoker, in a nearby community of south-east Virginia. Though my mother, Lillian Peterson, was born in that home, the marriage failed when she was very young. She was adopted and raised by her grandparents, Benjamin and Lizzie (Beiler) Smoker, who moved to Lancaster County, Pennsylvania (PA), by team and wagon when Lillian was seven. She grew up there where she met and married Daniel M. Glick of Smoketown, PA, December 20, 1923.



Millie & Ike Glick

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The MHSA AGM & Spring Conference

will be held on Saturday, April 30, 2016 at Holyrood Mennonite Church (9505 - 79 St. Edmonton, AB). The AGM will begin at 10:30 AM, lunch at 12 Noon, Conference at 1:00 PM, & Fasma to follow.

Conference Topic: "Rethinking Mennonite History in Light of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission"

Speakers: Roger Epp, Millie & Ike Glick, and Chief Calvin Bruneau

Registration: \$20.00, RSVP - financemhsa@gmail.com, office 403-250-1121, or David Jeffares 780-438-0404

Editorial Reflections:

by Dave Toews

"Dave, what are you doing to keep the Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta (MHSA) alive? How are you going to keep it going?" asked my friend and fellow MHSA newsletter regular contributor Henry Dick, a few weeks ago. Hard questions are good. They cause us to pause and reflect, "What are we doing to keep the MHSA vibrant and thriving?" If you are reading this, you have a vested interest. I talk to people, especially younger people, in my sphere of influence about Mennonite history and genealogy. Would they like to contribute an article to the newsletter? They should talk to



Dave Toews

their parents and grandparents before it's too late, write down their stories and donate the family collection of historical letters and documents to the archives. They could also become involved by: serving on the board of directors; volunteering at the archives in Calgary; and, buying a MHSA membership.

Speaking of MHSA memberships, a comment I hear quite often and recently articulated by Albert Fehr, "I don't know if I've renewed my membership or when it is due?" "How can I keep track of this?" The answer to this question is simple: buy a lifetime membership now for \$500 and never worry about an expiry date again!

Good news on the newsletter volunteer staff front! Dan Jack has joined the team as co-editor.

Dan brings with him a wealth of experience, education and an interest in Mennonite his-



Dan Jack

tory. He was born in Toronto and has lived in Brazil, in Edmonton, on a farm at Edgerton, and on the campus of PBI in Three Hills during his school years. His father's family hails from Scotland and his mother's from Sweden. Dan has studied at the Prairie Bible Institute, Winnipeg Bible College and the University of Calgary. He holds a B.A. in philosophy and did graduate work toward an M.A. in the history and philosophy of science. One of his professors was J.B. Toews. He has worked as a university tutor and owns and operates a construction company. Dan and his wife Marguerite (Goerzen) Jack live on an acreage outside of Calgary, where Dan makes hay when the sun shines! In addition to his editorial duties Dan will concentrate on campaigning for articles from southern Alberta to better balance the content of the newsletter.

In this issue we read of the work done by Millie and Ike Glick in Northern Alberta, Fred Enns' German school experience and Dave Hubert's family story. I'm happy to announce that Ted Regehr has consented to write a regular column to promote the MHSA archives and how to best make use of them. Alice Unrau reports on her work as the new GAMEO and MAID representative. Thank you to all the regulars whose articles enrich this addition of the newsletter.

The MHSA welcomes your feedback, emails, letters to the edi-

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- Letters of a Mennonite Couple-Nicolai & Katharina Rempel \$25.00
- On the Zweiback Trail \$30.00
- Kenn Jie Noch Plautdietsch \$18.00
- Through Fire and Water \$25.00

tor and articles. Contact dmtows@gmail.com. The deadline for submissions for the next newsletter is May 1, 2016.

I hope to see you at the Holyrood Mennonite Church, Edmonton, for the annual MHSA Spring Conference on Saturday, April 30, 2016. ❖

Chairman's Corner

by Dave Neufeldt

This being the first newsletter of 2016, I thought it would be worthwhile to highlight the activities of MHSA, our accomplishments in the past year, and anticipated

events in the year ahead. Our achievements are due to the dedicated group of people who regularly volunteer their time and skills doing the work of the society. This work focuses in three key areas: hosting conferences; publishing a newsletter; and, operating a library and archives in Calgary.

As always, the spring and fall conferences are high points for MHSA. Last spring we met at Lendrum Mennonite Brethren Church where we focused on the history of the Youth Orientation Unit. Guest speakers were Peter Rempel, Jake and Irene Baergen and George and Helga Loewen. At the Fall Conference hosted by Trinity Mennonite Church, Esther Epp-Tiessen was the guest speaker. She spoke on the history of the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Canada.

Our gifted editorial team created three newsletters last year. Their quality work is vital to sharing not

only information about the society but also many personal historical accounts from our members.

At the library and archives, there are about six people who show up every Thursday to volunteer. We are continually receiving additional materials and this past year our archives began to approach capacity. In January, we remedied the problem by adding two more mobile shelves. If readers are free on a Thursday, I would highly recommend stopping by for a cup of coffee, a look at some of the interesting material we have there and a visit with our friendly, dedicated and passionate volunteers.

Other activities of the MHSA include sponsoring the family history project at Menno Simons Christian School which was carried out for the third consecutive year. We also have displays at church conferences and at the MCC relief sale.

In January Alice Unrau, Ted Regehr, Peter Dyck and I attended the annual meetings of the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada in Abbotsford, BC. I always enjoy these meetings. They provide a good opportunity to connect with other societies and archives and find out how they are dealing with some of the common issues we face. The meetings also provide an opportunity for the various partners to work together on shared projects such as the Mennonite Archival Image Database (MAID). The MAID project will be a major focus of MHSA in the coming year. We will be working at scanning and describing our photographs and uploading them to the MAID database. This will allow people to access our photo collection via the internet.

One of the things I am particularly looking forward to this year is

our spring conference and AGM at Holyrood Mennonite Church in Edmonton on April 30. The theme of this conference is "Rethinking Mennonite History in Light of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission." Our guest speakers will be Roger Epp, Professor of Political Science at the University of Alberta and author of *We Are All Treaty People*, Chief Calvin Bruneau of the Papaschase First Nation, and Ike and Millie Glick, former voluntary service workers in Calling Lake and other Alberta locations.

The importance of examining our history with our indigenous neighbours was made particularly clear to me after I attended the TRC meetings in Lethbridge a couple of years ago. While I was aware of how destructive the residential schools were, I went to the meeting feeling somewhat distant or disconnected from that history. That feeling of distance quickly disappeared when the very first person to speak reported that she attended a residential school run by the Mennonites. She went on to describe abuse she received from a teacher at the school. Although this school was not in Alberta, the story made me acutely aware of the need to explore the interaction of Mennonite and indigenous people in Alberta. We should not be hiding the darker sides of our history. The spring conference will be an important opportunity to reflect on our relationships with our indigenous neighbours, both those that were healthy and those that were not.

Please join us for this in the Holyrood Mennonite Church for this important upcoming event. ❖



Dave Neufeldt

(continued from page 1)

My father was born in an old order Amish home, June 25, 1900. His European roots are thought to have been Jewish, according to a monograph supplied by sociologist, John A. Hostetler. Ancestral “Peter Glick, not Amish, immigrated to America aboard the ship ‘Judith’ that arrived in Philadelphia on September 15, 1748. During the French and Indian War -1763), as quoted from the ‘Pennsylvania Magazine of History:’ “March 23, 1756 at and near the house of Peter Glick in Windsor Township, 7 killed, one wounded.” Based on a ‘John K. Glick and Martha Hooley Family Record’, the Monograph offers the following details:

One member of Peter Glick’s family survived the 1756 massacre, his small son John. He was discovered the morning following the raid but was too young to supply much information, except his name. When asked how many children there had been in the family he raised both hands and said in German ‘*Viele*’ (many). An Amish family, whose identity is not known, gave him a home.

John grew up in that culture, eventually joined the Amish church, married Magdalena Fisher Mille and settled in “Big Valley” of Mifflin County, PA. The late Dr. Hostetler suggested this may account for the “Glick” name entering the Anabaptist stream. John Glick, of whom I’m a descendant, died about 1850.

Early Life Influences

I am the second oldest of seven surviving children born to Beachy Amish parents, August 30, 1928. Since German was the language used at church, I learned to read German before going to school. Until then, we spoke Pennsylvania German at home. From my mother I learned that swear words I picked up at school, as reported by my older sister, were not required in our family! From my dad, I inherited a sense of humour, and learned early to think about the consequences that arose from my choices. Somewhere I read that, “Life is the only game where the object of the game is to learn the rules!” These words were echoed many years later in my response to a contest inviting entries on, “The Meaning of Life” in twenty-five words or less.

In the cosmic whole, All is one;
In harmony, All is well.
Wellness, Oneness, Wholeness
WOW!
Shalom!
Life’s meaning flows
From embracing Life’s rules.

I grew up on a farm, surrounded by entrepreneurial influences. Our family business was Glick’s Seed Farms, begun by my grandfather and of which my father became manager. Tomatoes were grown under contract with area farmers, primarily for the seed that was sold to growers in the south-east States and the Bahamas. Many childhood hours were spent packaging tomato seed in 1 and 4 ounce packets and 1 pound canisters. In this con-

text, along with farm chores, I learned responsibility, eye-hand coordination and “making the minutes count.”

Emerging from the Great Depression, things were going well by the mid 1930s. The business had expanded to include a cannery to salvage the juice as a by-product which was processed and sold as purée to the Campbell’s Soup Company and to Chef Boyardee. A bumper crop in 1936 signalled a bright future. Then, tragedy struck the Glick family. I was eight years old when my Uncle Dave, at age thirty-seven and father of six, died suddenly during an appendectomy due to an anaesthesia error. I distinctly recall the impact this event had on my dad. It became a moment of redefining values and priorities.

A few years later, World War Two came along with conscription that required all young men to register for a pending call to military service. Leaders of the historic peace churches went to Washington to negotiate exemption from military service for conscientious objectors (COs). This exemption resulted in a broad range of alternate service options that included work in Appalachia, mental hospitals, inner cities, reforestation, building roads and “smoke jumping” wherein fire fighters parachuted into remote areas to control wild fires. Church sponsored “Voluntary Service” (VS) offered by the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and by the Relief and Service arm of the Mennonite Board of Missions were also approved.

All this began prior to my reaching draft age but became an early influence as numerous Civilian

Public Service (CPS) men serving at the mental hospital in Harrisburg, PA or at MCC/Akron came to our home for work on days off or just to visit. For several years, Glick's cannery was adapted to process "Food for Relief" on behalf of MCC during the off season. A portable cannery soon emerged in order to let a broader constituency respond to the need in Europe.

Other early influences included visits to our home by MCC personnel, including Edna and J.N. Byler (who were involved in the early days of the cottage industry that would eventually become Ten Thousand Villages); outgoing missionaries for whom dad arranged to ship their belongings in sealed oil drums; and, visits by Peter and Elfrieda Dyck during MCC deputation visits in the States. My dad helped to arrange several public events for MCC workers to tell them about rescuing Mennonite refugees to resettle in Paraguay.

Education

I attended public school for grades one through four. As an Amish lad, I was overcome by culture shock when the bell rang the first morning so I walked home, just a mile away! After four years, I was sent to a Christian day school. I attended Lancaster Mennonite High School (LMHS) from which I dropped out after tenth grade. I had succumbed to the need for approval from my Beachy Amish peers for whom school in the 1940s beyond grade eight was not valued and was seen by the church leadership as dangerous. Dropping out may also have been teen-age push-back against pressure from dad to finish high school in three years so I could help in the office

as bookkeeper.

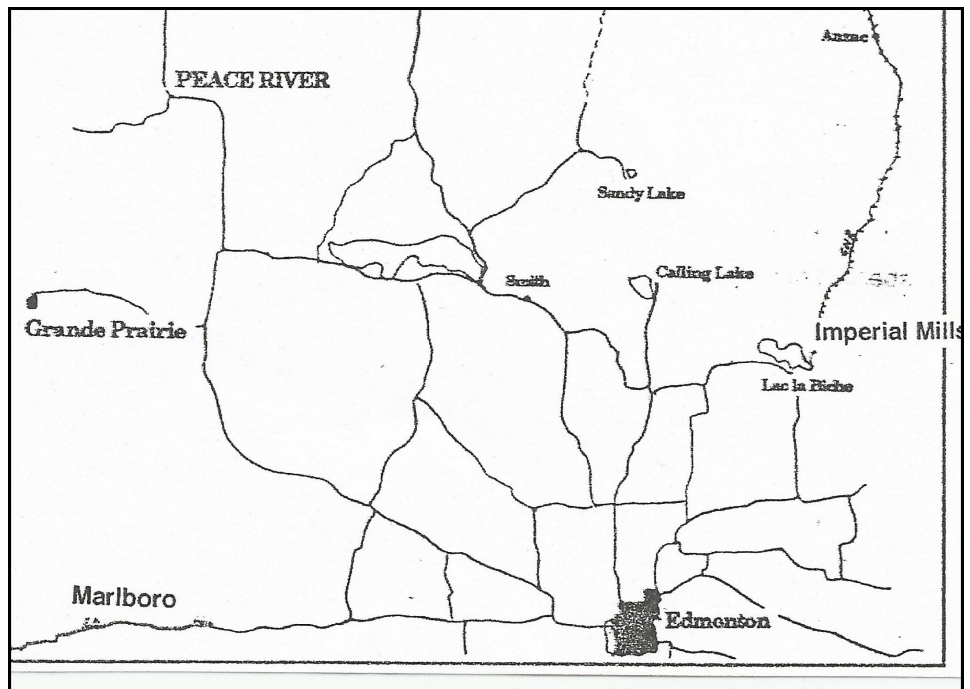
I came to my senses four years later and gained a High School Diploma by passing the Pennsylvania State tests. I then entered Eastern Mennonite College (now EMU) in September, 1948, earning a B.A. in 1953 and a Th.B in 1955. Intensive cross-cultural 'education' followed in northern Alberta, supplemented by intermittent graduate studies between 1970 and 1983 at the University of Alberta. These studies led to a Community Development M.A. in 1972 and a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology in 1983.

Marriage and "Voluntary Service" (VS)

When I proposed to Mildred Alger of Broadway, VA, my question was, "Would you be willing to celebrate your 50th wedding anniversary with me?" She agreed! Our wedding was July 16, 1952. (The 'arrangement' was renewed at our 50th anniversary with Millie agreeing to 25 more years!) Upon graduation from EMC, we registered for a two-year term in VS that landed us at Calling Lake, AB where, in 1955, the road to NE Alberta ended. We were being sponsored by the Relief and Service arm of the Mennonite Board of Missions.

I had registered as a CO at age eighteen but was granted draft deferment while in school. Upon graduation, the war had ended and it was unlikely that I would be drafted but we decided that a two-year VS experience might provide some clarity for our future. (Apparently it did!) We applied for a northern Alberta placement that had just been advertised. We travelled to our destination in a retired '41 Buick ambulance arriving in August, 1955.

Our service assignment among Cree Aborigines at Calling Lake was, "... to see what could be done to help people help themselves." This helped to define a career in socio-economic community development in northern Alberta for the next twenty-eight years under a succession of four different employers.



Map of Northern Alberta area where Millie & Ike worked

Career

1. Area Director for VS in Northern Alberta

The employer was the Relief and Service arm of the Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Indiana. The responsibilities included:

- a) co-ordination of over one hundred rotating VSrs in seven locations;
- b) becoming a bush pilot to connect with roadless settlements beyond our base at Calling Lake; an undertaking which became possible through the use of Linford Hackman's plane after his health failed;
- c) forming a community nursing service association for which a VS nurse was provided;
- d) negotiating with Alberta Education for schools in several isolated communities such as Sandy and Chipewyan Lakes that refused to send their children to residential schools a move that led to the formation of the Northland School Division (NSD);
- e) becoming a seasonal fur trader for eighteen months at Chipewyan Lakes to determine whether families would move back if a school were provided. The families had been evicted nine years earlier in an attempt to force residential school attendance;
- f) assisting NSD to develop a school opportunity in Anzac for children from isolated communities along the Northern Alberta Railroad (NAR) between Lac La Biche and Fort McMurray;
- g) organizing Team Products to facilitate markets and better prices for Aboriginal crafts. This included marketing support for Meensa Products, an initiative at Anzac under the leadership Ted and Arlene Walter together with Elaine Wideman who processed jams and jellies from wild berries, mint and rose hips hence the meaning of meensa . . . berries; and, finally,
- h) dialoguing with a Catholic bishop and several priests who took aggressive action against what they perceived, in the 1950s and 60s as a Protestant invasion of their turf.

2. Managing Director of Team Products

The employer was a Board set up to handle funds provided by the Federal and Provincial governments. In all the communities where VS personnel became involved, an unorganized "cottage industry" of Aboriginal leather crafts was apparent but there was a huge disconnect between producers and markets. For immediate cash, whenever they went to town, the producer ladies were at the mercy of random buyers in bars or on the street. Spur of the moment transactions did not usually favour the producer. While this was being addressed in a small way while I was Area Director for VS, it attracted the attention of the Federal Indian Affairs Department



Above: Julian Cardinal stretching beaver pelts while drying and smoking moose meat at Chipewyan Lakes.

Below: Bombardier in front of the vacated Hudson's Bay Store at Chipewyan Lakes



such that they offered me a job and funds to expand this initiative throughout Alberta and the Mackenzie District. I could not accept this attractive offer because we were working with both Metis and Treaty populations. I was not about to tell Metis producers that they could no longer participate.

I declined the offer with a counter proposal. If the Federal government and Alberta (which had responsibility for Metis people) would provide joint funding, then I would reconsider. Over the next eighteen months, the counter-offer



Above: Wild berry jams processed at Anzac and marketed by Team Products .

Below: Granny Hilliard making beaded moosehide moccasins at Anzac



was fulfilled, along with the appointment of a board to administer the funds. Upon obtaining release from my Area Director role, I became Managing Director but said that I would step aside when an Aboriginal person became available to fill the role. Such an appointment occurred a few years later. I was then offered a role with Alberta's Human Resources Development Authority (HRDA).

and research to military use? The possibility seemed to me a likely possibility. I was assured that as long as Reagan was president, the company would not be interested. I took the job; but, in a few years things changed unexpectedly. The enterprise became a public company; cash flow was tight; and, the Alberta government became a majority shareholder. These factors together set the stage for shifting the focus of control and subsequently pursuing lucrative military contracts.

What to do? In a strange way, the answer was the easy part. Clearly, I needed to remove myself from hiring people for an enterprise I could not support. I had to resign. Coming to terms with resigning and its implications for the family was more difficult; numbness, initially, and deep disappointment. Hadn't I been assured before taking the job? I won't detail the process here except to highlight the support of Millie and our children despite major implications financially and to say that, after delivering my resignation letter, I once again slept soundly.

There's a postscript. The company didn't land any military contracts.

3. Assistant Manager, Indian-Metis Liaison Group (HDRA)

This included work to assess social impacts of industrial developments in the Fort McMurray and Slave Lake regions and at Grand Cache in 1970 when a coal mine was being developed along with a new town. At risk of being displaced again were the grandchildren of the population that had been evicted and moved to Grand Cache when Jasper Park was developed. My role became one of assisting with land tenure negotiations, along with developing leadership skills for engaging with the town council as needed.

4. Co-West Associates

Because HRDA was phased out after the progressive conservatives came into power in 1971, several of us became self-employed, along with our spouses. Co-west, a non-profit company, specialized in social planning, research and training. Our work, now under private contracts, continued to relate to Aboriginal populations.

A Fork-in-the-Road Opportunity

After completing graduate study in psychology in 1983, a personal friend and CEO of a laser technology company of 100 employees, offered me a position as Director of Human Resources. It was at the time of Prime Minister Mulroney's and President Reagan's "Shamrock Summit" and his star wars fantasies. Before accepting the job, I asked what the company's response would be if tapped on the shoulder to apply its leading-edge laser know-how

The cold war began to wane; the Berlin wall came down (without violence); and, the imagined need for this firm to devote its resources to the military, vanished. As it turned out, I could have stayed, but, when I resigned, the rapid changes internationally were not foreseen. I could have kept my job, but without the life affirming experience of declaring myself: "this is who I am." In any case, I would have lost my job a short time later when the government ended its support, causing the firm to go under.

I was inspired, at the time, by Amman Hennacy, a practising Catholic pacifist, who, while marching as a solitary demonstrator against nuclear testing, was asked by a reporter, "Do you really think you can change the world by doing that?" "Oh, no!" he said, "I don't do this to change the world. I do this to keep the world from changing me!"

Sometimes one sees clearly; sometimes one hesitates or stumbles; but, still drawn forward by one's aspirations.

There's a kind of quest for knowing,
Probes for clues beneath what's showing,
Dares to risk the pain of growing,
Flash of intermittent seeing,
Glimpse of wholeness; life that's freeing.
Elusive quality of being.

Church-Related Opportunities

Besides serving as lay pastor at Calling Lake from 1955-59, and for the scattered VSrs, we were pressed by the then Alberta-Saskatchewan Conference to serve as interim pastor couple at Holyrood in Edmonton from 1960-62. It was a reluctant move for us, feeling torn away from our northern engagements. The Holyrood congregation was just two years old. When the Conference decided not to reappoint the original pastor couple, tension and unhappiness were left in that decision's wake, both within the congregation and between the congregation and the Conference. After two years, we returned to Calling Lake for another five-year assignment. The Holyrood experience inspired the following reflective lines:

Pitting fraction of truth against fraction
Just generates unholy friction
That divides a group into factions,
And chars the truth into fiction.

Dogmatic defence of opinion,
Mine as better than theirs;
Even if, reveals little else, than
The sparring of two 'polar' bears!

After returning to Edmonton again in 1967 at the request of Team Products, and, in the decades since, Millie and I have had opportunities to serve the church in a number of ways, including multiple terms as Elders, Sunday School teaching, planning Community Life events, and worship leading. Inter-Mennonite engagements have included Board opportunities with The Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (EMCN), Canadian Peacemakers International (CPI), MCC's Aboriginal Neighbours Committee and The Welcome Home Community which carried a Calling Lake connec-

tion.

The Welcome Home Community

In August, 1995, when Mike Cardinal was Alberta's Minister of Family and Social Services, he invited Leo Jantzi and me to his office for lunch. He was concerned about many dysfunctional families in Edmonton who were at risk of having their children placed in foster care. "Surely," he said, "there must be a better way." He said that current practice wasn't working and that, "Government makes a very poor parent. Would the Mennonite churches in Edmonton be willing to help find a better way?" He said that money was not an issue but finding people who can work with parents and his department to keep families together was what he was seeking. Obviously, Leo and I could not answer the question immediately but we agreed to explore the matter with the leaders and get back to him.

During the meeting, Mike had recalled a turning point in his own life while growing up at Calling Lake. He generously acknowledged the Mennonite VS presence during his youth through his involvement in the Boys' and Youth Clubs.

Exploration began with the Ministerium, followed by a brainstorming meeting with thirteen lay people who were professionally employed in a variety of human services. Minister Cardinal met with the Ministerium himself on January 30, 1996. Meanwhile, Dave Hubert prepared a concept paper for critique and refinement. A task force was assigned to develop a vision and proposal for what became The Welcome Home Community (WHC) which was designed to provide, in a community context, men-

toring support for families at risk. Beginning on January 1, 1997, WHC operated successfully for five years (confirmed by two independent evaluations) under Vic and Kathy Thiessen's leadership. Sadly, WHC suffered the same fate as the Youth Orientation Unit (YOU) for similar political reasons after Mr. Cardinal was transferred to a different Ministry.

Concluding Reflections

The arc of one's life and the influences that shape it only become clear in retrospect. If "variety is the spice of life," mine has been a life of spice, rich in opportunity, risk, and adventure shared with my life partner, Millie Alger Glick, five children and eight grandchildren.

Editor's Note: Ike and Millie Glick are now enjoying an active retirement from The Vanier, a seniors' complex in Edmonton. Millie continues to serve as the Holyrood congregation's news reporter for the Alberta Conference newsletter and arranges Holyrood's Sunday Greeters' schedule. Ike serves as occasional worship leader and participates in a Mennonite/Catholic dialogue group, the Edmonton Ecumenical Peace Network and an interfaith study group. ❖

(continued from page 1)

in Canada. Love for God and God's people underlies the work that Thiessen, the associate director of MCC Alberta, helps the relief organization to accomplish. In an update on current projects, Thiessen showed how the organization has become well known for helping refugees. "It's been a really, really busy fall. The more (Calgary)



Esther Epp-Tiessen and Kim Thiessen

mayor, Naheed Nenshi, mentions MCC and the work we do, the more calls we get!" Thiessen commented. She went on to say that there are over 1.8 million refugees in camps in Lebanon, with many families having been there for two to four years trying to live on \$13.00 per month. MCC AB is currently working hard to help Mennonite churches and community groups rise to the challenge of sponsoring some of the most desperate and vulnerable refugees. "This endeavour won't be ending any time soon. It is gratifying to be part of a community welcoming these people." Thiessen said.

After Thiessen's report of MCC's present reality, keynote speaker, Esther Epp-Tiessen, plunged the crowd back in time to the beginnings of MCC leading off with a story she learned from Dr. Terry Leblanc, Indigenous Studies Program Director at Tyndale University College. In the story, a young indigenous boy is terrified about getting lost. While walking with his grandfather, the boy noticed the old man regularly stopping to look back down the path. When the boy asked why he did this, the grandfather said he was looking back to see where they had come from so they would not lose their way. Thiessen views the knowledge and study of history in a similar way.

In 2013, Epp-Tiessen's book, *Mennonite Central Committee in Canada: A History*, was published. A self-described MCC 'insider,' Epp-Tiessen grew up discussing MCC projects around the dinner table, studying its history while in University, serving in the Philippines for four years with her husband and working for both MCC Ontario and MCC Canada. The book was written at the request of the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada. In the preface, Epp-Tiessen states, "Someone with greater detachment from the organization would undoubtedly bring a greater level of objectivity to the story than I. However, I have tried to use my experience as an "insider" to tell the story of some of the internal workings of MCC Canada including the struggle for identity and purpose, the oftentimes turbulent relationship with constituents, the power struggles within the organization and the contradictions

and complexities of compassionate service to a hurting world.” As an insider, Epp-Tiessen’s passion for the work of MCC infuses her presentation with both love and, at times, angst. In describing her writing experience, she said, “(It was an) agony and a joy to do this. The people we love are also the ones that drive us crazy; that’s also the story of this project!” Epp-Tiessen struggled with the sheer volume of information through which she had to sort as well as trying to make sense of the blurry boundaries between what was bi-national, shared with MCC USA and what was uniquely Canadian. Even within the Canadian context, provincial and national interests and organizations, perspectives and social locations proved complicated to explain. *Mennonite Central Committee in Canada* is helpfully divided into two sections. Chapters 1-3, “Gestation and Birth,” concern the prehistory, the period from 1920-1963. Chapters 3-8, “Growth and Maturation,” deal with forging identity, defining ministry and adapting to changing realities.

The roots of MCC Canada began growing in the 1920s with the concern of Canadian Mennonites who wished to aid those suffering in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution and the creation of the Soviet Union. The inter-Mennonite organization, however, only became formalized in 1963, at a meeting held on December 12 in the Portage Avenue Mennonite Brethren Church in Winnipeg. Back then, Epp-Tiessen noted, “Inter-Mennonite cooperation was not the case at all. Coming together to work was radical at the time. The urgency of matters in Russia demanded a united effort.”

Most of Epp-Tiessen’s address to the MHSA conference attendees focused on part 2 of her book, the development of an MCC identity, an ongoing and constantly evolving process. From its very beginnings, the urgency of relief work was paired with development so that the needy would be equipped/re-equipped to help themselves. Immigration support concerns were always a reality that accompanied relief work. As MCC assigned volunteers in other countries, the each placement became a “... place of profound learning and Christian formation,” said Epp-Tiessen. “MCC became a window on the world interpreting the world to the people back home.”

Questions from the floor after the presentation expressed appreciation for the forthright way Epp-Tiessen approached both her writing and the presentation, highlighting MCC’s victories and yet, never hiding its problems and failures. “The book contained warts but, publicly, we don’t see those,” Dave Toews said.

An ongoing discussion for MCC has always been how to best present the gospel message, to determine what combination of word and deed was appropriate in various countries. Marvin Baergen commented; “MCC tried not to plant churches or evangelize, it seems we lost an opportunity. MCC’s work to “provide a cup of cold water” was a decision made by mission boards, however, churches have emerged.” It was clear in the rest of the discussion, that MCC is still working with the question of identity as it moves forward to continue providing relief to those who are hurting. It was noted that more non-Mennonite churches are now among MCC’s constituents. Epp-Tiessen addressed the identity issue by referring to the ‘new wineskins’ discussions from 2007-2008. “It is interesting that MCC is more strongly tied to denominational churches than before...(and there are) new voices, this is wonderful but presents tensions too.” She said.

The work of MCC has often gone well beyond simple provision of mate-

rial and food relief. Victim services and restorative justice programs, handicap concerns, indigenous relations, recycling programs, education initiatives and peace and justice initiatives to work at the root of injustice to alleviate the causes of suffering. Epp-Tiessen’s book and the stories she shares are to be celebrated. “(MCC is) God’s miracle among us. Praise be to God,” she said.

This article appeared in the February 15, 2016 issue of the *Canadian Mennonite*. ♦

How to Use Your MHSA Archives

by Ted Regehr

I have been asked to provide information which will inform readers of one or more of the collections stored in the archives of the Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta. In this issue, I will focus on a unique collection: the minutes, correspondence and other documents of the *Vertreterversammlungen* or, in English, the “Representative Assemblies of Mennonite Settlers in Alberta.”

This was an inter-Mennonite organization which sought to organize and co-ordinate efforts in areas of relief (local and international), immigrant travel-debt re-



Ted Regehr

payments, census taking, burial assistance, fire insurance, hospital and medical care and communications with governments. Representatives from various Mennonite communities in Alberta met annually, received reports from various settlements, discussed programs and set levies or taxes to support shared programs.

The records from 1931 to 1944 deal mainly with difficulties in repayments of travel debts and co-operative programs to deal with depression and wartime economic, social and cultural problems. After World War II, the organization was restructured to provide assistance for victims of war, refugees and Mennonite immigrants coming to Canada. Anyone interested in initiatives undertaken on an inter-Mennonite basis, to deal with practical issues and problems not dealt with by individual churches and conferences will find this collection very interesting. For further information, visit the website of the Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta, scroll down and click on *Vertreterversammlungen fonds*. ❖

GAMEO Report

by Alice Unrau

The Mennonite Historical Society of Canada (MHSC) meetings were held at the new Mennonite Heritage Centre in Abbotsford, BC, from January 14 to 16, 2016.



Alice Unrau

I had just been appointed to the position of GAMEO editor for the MHSA and was not sure what to expect.

The editorial group members is responsible for getting information from their areas, have it recorded and put onto the *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online* (GAMEO) website. This task includes keeping the Alberta churches' information up to date as well as processing additional historical information about the churches.

The website has increased its usership which demonstrates how useful it is in doing research. In 2015, two hundred new articles were added to GAMEO; this total does not include the updates that were entered. Richard Thiessen (BC) reported that the hits on the GAMEO website have increased steadily from 895 per day in 2006 when they first began monitoring to 1,219 per day in 2015. User countries included were Canada, US, Germany, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Australia, Brazil, France, Poland and Switzerland. ❖

MAID Report

by Alice Unrau

A very exciting happening is the *Mennonite Archival Image Database* (MAID). Some of the provinces have a considerable number of photos on the site already. A representative from Western Canada was required so I agreed to join the management team.

Photos are uploaded with the names of the people and a description of the photo which is then linked to whatever other information there is in GAMEO. When people are doing research, they will have easy access to photos of people or topics they are researching. The people in charge of this project are archivists and have done an excellent job of making the website user friendly. One of MAID's partners, the Plett Foundation, has allocated funds to provide training for volunteers on this project. In Alberta, we will receive the training in March, 2016.

Our challenge now is to get photos with full descriptions. If readers or anyone you know has historical photographs, I would appreciate being contacted at the MHSA office (403-250-1121), my cell (403-275-7121) or by e-mail (alice.unrau@gmail.com) so new photographs can be added to the MAID website. ❖

MHSA Members in Transition

Wesley Berg: After serving as the MHSA representative on the GAMEO Editorial Group for six years, Wes decided to retire from this position.

Alice Unrau: Alice has agreed to assume the position vacated by Wesley Berg on the GAMEO Editorial Group and she is also serving on the Mennonite Archival Image Database (MAID) as its Western Canada Representative.

Dan Jack: Dan is joining the newsletter editorial team as Co-Editor.

These MHSA members are to be commended for their commitment to the challenging work of MHSA.

German School in the 1930s in Rosemary, Alberta

by Fred Enns

Since it is now about 75 years ago that I attended German language school on Saturdays in Rosemary, my recollection is somewhat hazy. I do recall that for those of us who were in our teens during the 1930s, attendance was a requirement imposed upon us by our parents. At that time, I was too immature to understand the reason for instruction in German but now, the rationale is more or less clear to me. I know only of Rosemary's practice but I do believe German language school was province-wide and probably country-wide.



Fred Enns

One must remember that this was a time when the majority of the Western Canadian Mennonites had come recently to Canada from Russia and what is now Ukraine. They brought with them the language from the home country, Low German, spoken in most homes and used for communication with friends and neighbours; High German was the language used in church and worship. What little English the Mennonite newcomers learned was from English speaking neighbours and employers. Since the Bible used was the Luther translation in German, that was an important language.

That left a language gap for most teenagers and, to fill this gap, local churches organized oral and written High German classes. Instruction was by senior members of the congregation who were usually ministers who had some experience in classroom work. Classes proceeded from about 9:00 AM until mid-afternoon. The number of students was about 20 - 25, depending on the size of the congregation. Boys and girls studied together. The text books were the Bible (in German of course) and an elementary German reader called Die Fibel. We learned the alphabet in German in print and Gothic script. The Bible was difficult enough but the written script depended entirely on the writer's handwriting. We also memorized

the books of the Bible in order. Gradually, we learned to read the Bible and so could follow along in Church and Sunday School.

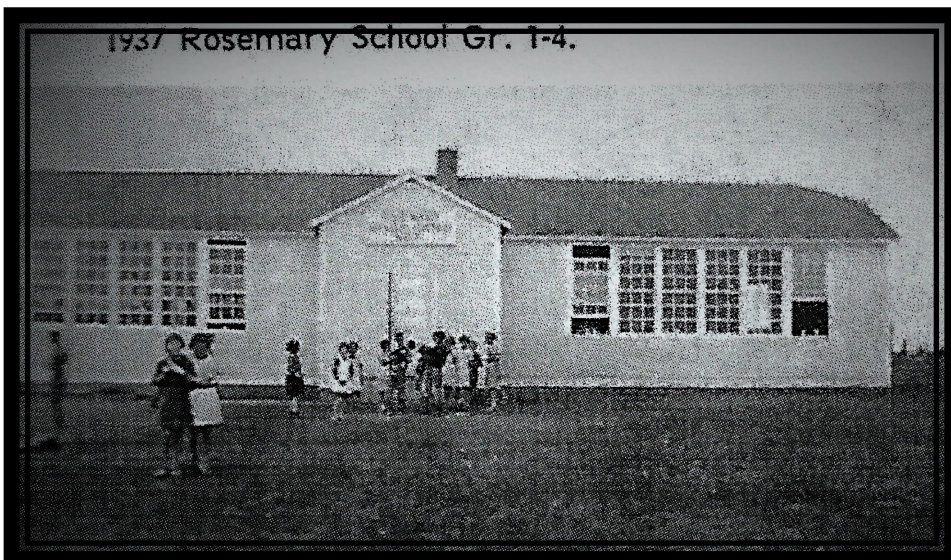
Our learning chiefly consisted of reading, speaking and understanding High German.

As an aside, I must comment that because the Mennonite way of speaking was strongly influenced by Germany, we learned to speak German as German people spoke it. Indeed, I remember an occasion when, in my "best" German, I asked direction from the airport to the city centre. The reply was in perfect English, as much as to say that my German was not very good!

Saturday was not a preferred day for "extra" classes. Five days of public school seemed adequate so Saturday was an unacceptable addition to studies to which some students took exception. Two of my brothers belonged to this group. On their way to school, they found a bottle and hatched a plan for its use. At school, they put a little water in the bottle, screwed the cap on and tossed it into the pot-bellied heater. In due course, naturally, the bottle exploded and blew the lid off the stove. The class, in on the prank, laughed merrily, but the teacher's comment was, "Where are those Enns boys?" The prank still gets laughter when re-told.

As the children gradually learned to read, speak and write in English, the pressure grew to change over to English in Sunday School and Church. Over time, the pressure for German relaxed until now there is hardly any German being used except in stances where recent immigrants require it.

Editor's Note: Ninety-year-old Fred Enns lives in Calgary, Alberta.



Rosemary English Elementary School where Fred Enns attended. Photo credit: *Village of Rosemary History Book*

Fred obtained post-graduate degrees from the University of Alberta and was employed as an educator. His working roles included roles as teaching, administration and professorships. He attends Trinity Mennonite Church, Calgary and has held a number of Mennonite Church Canada Conference positions in the past. ❖

A Family Reunion Going Back 200 Years

by
Dave Hubert

From July 9 to July 12, 2015, there was a Hubert family reunion in Clearbrook, BC after which we all got on a bus and continued the reunion in



Dave Hubert

Coaldale, Alberta until July 16. This reunion brought together the families of Jacob F. Hubert from Brazil, Franz F. Hubert from Canada and Henry F. Hubert from Germany. Most of the Henry F. Hubert family had come to Germany from Russia in the recent past.

Franz Franz Hubert settled in Coaldale where his sons Jacob, Henry, Peter and David and their families farmed and became deeply involved in the affairs of the community. John Allan Hubert, the eldest son of David, has been a prominent leader in the Coaldale MB Church and MCC Alberta.

I was asked to do a brief retrospective summary of the Hubert/Huebert family history from when David Johann Huebert arrived in

Muntau, in the Molotschna (present-day Ukraine) in 1803, to the present time. Following is an abridged version of the retrospective history.

I do this with reference to a photo, taken in 1898 in Southern Russia about halfway through the two hundred year period which corresponds with the title of this article. The photo was taken between a dividing point of sorts. For villagers in Russia, and in Europe more generally, the 19th century was fairly stable compared to the chaotic century that was to follow. Village life in 1810 would have been easily recognized by a time traveller to the same village in 1890. Not so of the villages between 1910 and 1990. The children of David Johann would have had little difficulty recognizing their own community when the photo was taken in 1898.



Franz Jakob Huebert Family in Margenau, Ukraine in 1898

The photo, taken in Margenau, Ukraine, in 1898, and the following data from B.H. Unruh will serve as a basis for comments on the first of the two centuries under discussion. The photo gives us much concrete information. I would like the reader to key in on four brothers and one sister who appear in the photo. The descendants of three of these brothers are in Abbotsford. The four brothers are Franz Franz, Jakob Franz, Heinrich Franz and David Franz who had one sister, Anna.

In the photo, we see David Johann Huebert's grandson, Franz Jakob, (b. 1850) surrounded by his sons and daughters. Although Franz Jakob had not inherited the family farm and so, by implication, was not a major landowner, the photo indicates that this was nevertheless a family of some means. Franz Jakob, seated fourth from the right, is dressed in peasant garb but his sons are all fashionably dressed and their mustaches would have been acceptable in the court of the Tsar. On the table, covered with a crocheted table cloth, is a Bible and a flute, with potted flowers in front of the table. Franz Franz sports a sterling silver pocket watch which is attached to a clearly visible silver chain. Obviously, the family appreciated music and

beauty and attached enough importance to the Bible to make it part of the centerpiece of the photo. They were of sufficient means to have a photographer take the family photo. There was a desire on the part of the family, paterfamilias Franz Jakob obviously included, to have the family pictorially immortalized in this way. Compared to others in the Mennonite Colonies of Southern Russia, this photograph demonstrated that the Hueberts were among the more progressive members of the larger community.

This branch of the family had not been the heirs of the *Wirtschaft* (farm) in an agrarian society but, they had, nevertheless, been capable of making reasonably comfortable lives for themselves in this farming society. The fact that the whole family relocated to Siberia to become landowners around the turn of the century indicated the importance they continued to attach, not only to land ownership but, also, to farming.

In his book, *The Dutch and Lower-German Background of the Mennonite Movement to the East in the 16th, 17th, and 18th Centuries*, B.H. Unruh (1) provides, on page 308, the following information about David Johann Huebert:

‘From the 27 October, 1808 Census Lists of the Mennonite Settlers of the Following Colonies of the Molotschna:

Arrived in Kolonie Muntau on June 21, 1804. Family 21, Davit Huebert, 40 years old, from (the village) Einlage, County Einlage, farmer, wife Maria 37, daughters: Anganetha 7, Anna 3. Farm inventory—1 wagon, half a plow, 1 harrow, 3 horses, 7 cattle, 90 sheaves of unthreshed grain and 12 loads of hay.”

Then, on page 332:

“Kolonie Muntau: Family 21, David Huebert; Son Jacob born on February 2, 1812.”

And, lastly, on page 341:

“Molotschna 1803: Hübert, David, Einlage, 35 years, worker to Lindenau [Odessa. Ztg. 1804], married, Giesbrecht Agnetha, Einlage 35 years old to Lindenau, children, Catharina 4 ½, Agathe 1 ½. becomes a teacher (preacher) in 1804.” (Translation—David E. Hubert)

The information garnered from these source documents leads to a number of conclusions. In 1803, David Huebert was a thirty-five-year-old worker from Danzig married to Agnetha Giesbrecht. They had two daughters at the time. In 1804, David becomes a teacher (preacher). A son, Jakob, was born in 1812. David was of typical Mennonite means when he arrived in Muntau. In 1808, he was a farmer whose farm inventory consisted of a wagon, a half plow, a harrow, three horses, seven cattle, ninety sheaves of unthreshed grain and twelve loads of hay.

From an examination of the records of the other twenty families who settled in Muntau in 1803/4, Huebert was of ordinary means. There were families with more farm animals, equipment and produce but there were also families with less.

David’s son, Jakob, born in 1812, would have become the sole heir of the *Wirtschaft* (farm) when David died. This Jakob became the father of Jakob Franz in 1850 and he, in turn, fathered the five children referenced above.

Of the five siblings in the 1898 photo, I will deal first with Anna and David. I recall no mention of Anna in my growing-up years. David Franz is another matter. On first seeing the photo, I asked Uncle Peter about this David but Uncle Peter didn’t want to talk. I got the impression that David Franz had gone over to the other side i.e. he had become a Communist. This would have been considered a terrible betrayal of everything Mennonites considered proper.(2)

Then, at the first *Hueberttreffen* (Hubert reunion) in 2011 in Germany, my brother, Henry Allan Hubert, raised this question and Erwin, grandson of Henry Franz, reported that Mica, daughter of Henry Franz had recently arrived in Germany from the former USSR. Her humorous response to Henry Allan’s question was, “*Na ja, das war ein bunter Vogel*” (He was a colorful bird, i.e. he chased skirts). For MBs in the 1920s, this would have been a scandal at least as troublesome as going over to the other side. In any case, the family seems to have become estranged from this branch of the family tree.

Having no access to land in the Molotschna, the family of Franz Franz moved to the Omsk region of Siberia in 1906 where they joined the rest of the Jacob Franz Huebert family. Henry, son of Franz Franz, was born in Molotschna in 1905 and Catherine (Tina), the next sibling, was born in Tiegerweide, Omsk, in 1907.

The families of Jakob Franz and Heinrich Franz settled in Margenau and the family of Franz Franz settled in Tiegerweide. All were farmers, but in addition, Jakob Franz was ordained the *Aeltester* (elder) of the Mennonite Brethren Church in this part of Siberia in 1913 (3) and had a heavy workload as a result of

this responsibility. In addition to farming, Henry Franz was a teacher in the local village school. Franz Franz was elected as *Schultze* (mayor) in Tiegerweide, but was informed by a Russian official that he was ineligible for this post because he was not yet old enough according to Russian law.(4)

Heinrich Franz died of typhus during the civil war and his family remained in Russia until the 1990s when they relocated to Germany.

Jakob Franz, as already stated, was an MB, but while his children all became MBs, Franz Franz remained a member of the Grosse Gemeinde (Big Church which was, literally, the main church) all his life. However, most of his in-laws, with whom he settled in Tiegerweide, were MBs, and therein lies a story.

The story was related to me by Tina Kroeker, the eldest daughter of Franz Franz and Helena Barg. Grandfather Hubert (Franz Franz) was a shrewd and aggressive businessman and an able manager. By the time of the Russian Revolution and the Civil War which followed, he had built up a large and successful farming operation. He ran a strict household and brooked no nonsense. When his eldest son, Franz, by his first wife, Helena Wiebe, was about eleven or twelve, acted up Franz Franz ordered him to leave the family home. The young boy, deeply distressed, asked his sisters, Mary and Elizabeth, what he should do. They suggested that he apologize to his father and promise never to act up again. This Franz did, and his father relented and permitted him to stay. He stayed until he was nineteen when, during the Civil War, the White Army requisitioned a load of wheat from Franz Franz. The wheat was loaded onto a wagon, the team of

horses hitched to the wagon and Franz delivered the wheat. His family never again saw or heard from him.(5)

The Civil War was difficult for my father (Jacob Frank) as well. One day, officers from the White Army appeared in Tiegerweide, pointed their guns at young men and ordered them to come with them. Though pacifist, they thought better than to refuse. They were ordered to drag a cannon through the forest until they neared a railroad track. There, on a Sunday morning, they set it up and waited until an armoured locomotive pulling several cars came into range. The armoured locomotive, which I thought of when I saw the movie, *Dr. Zhivago*, was part of the effort of the Red Army to gain control of the countryside. The officers of the White Army fired a fusillade at the locomotive and disabled it. Dad reported that when the villagers in the church heard that the train had been wrecked, they came out of the church singing songs of thanksgiving. The peasantry, at least in this part of Russia, disliked the Reds.

Sometime later, the White Army and the Red Army got into a battle and the Whites were routed. Dad, with three other young men from his village, escaped. Later in the day, being hungry, they approached a peasant family and immediately experienced the hospitality for which Russian peasants were famous. They were invited to share a meal and then they made an almost fatal mistake! While the peasants all crossed themselves before partaking of the food, these Mennonite boys just bowed their heads and offered a silent grace. On seeing that they didn't cross themselves, their hosts concluded that they were atheists and therefore communists. Before the meal was over, White Army soldiers appeared at the door and marched the four unfortunate young Mennonites to the edge of the village to a makeshift firing range. Fortunately, as the firing squad was preparing the execution, the White officer recognized them as his men and called the execution off.(6) Had the execution proceeded, none of the descendants of the Jakob Frank Hubert family would be here today and perhaps the *Huebert Treffen* would not have taken place. That's another way of saying thanks to my brother Henry for all the work he has done in organizing the event. There were seventeen descendants of Jacob Frank Hubert at this reunion; this indicated that minor, some would say insignificant, events can radically change the fortunes or even the existence of a family.

Back to Aunt Tina's story. As early as 1923, Mennonites in both Southern Russia and Siberia began exploring ways of leaving "*dies Land der Schrecken*" (this land of terror).(7) However, Franz Franz thought that communism didn't have staying power and would collapse under its own weight. He decided to wait Communism out. However, by 1926, this hadn't happened and that very year, a village Soviet in Tiegerweide began enacting communist ideology "from each according to his ability, to each according to his need." Franz Franz had the ability. One of his brothers-in-law, not nearly as ambitious or hardworking, had a large family but a small landholding. The brother-in-law and his family had the need Ergo, give half of Franz Franz's farm to this brother-in-law. This was done, but this so angered Franz Franz that he decided to emigrate. Not surprisingly, this also caused a serious family rift, not to mention a church quandary. How could the brother-in-law, an MB no less, be so unreasonable as to accept the land.

Franz Franz's brother, Elder Jakob Franz was called from Margenau to help try restore harmony to the family and to the church. Nevertheless, the

decision to emigrate stood. Franz Franz converted all his holdings into gold and, in 1927, the family left for Canada. The gold (8) was sewn into the women's underwear and the entire family managed to get through the Red Gate safely. They settled in Coaldale on two quarter sections of land just north and west of the town. This land now is home to the "Birds of Prey" sanctuary and a large subdivision of houses.

Two questions immediately emerge from these events. What would have happened to Franz Franz and the family had the gold been discovered? An overactive imagination is not needed to come to a realistic conclusion. The second was, what would have happened to Franz Franz had he stayed in Russia? The first of the Russian Five-Year Plans was introduced by Stalin in 1929. It forced massive collectivization with its attendant attacks on those who had "exploited" their fellow man. Exploitation was defined as anyone who had hired someone else to do certain work—that is, lived by exploiting the work of another. Such persons were designated as *kulaks*, and they, as a class, were now the enemies of the state. Hundreds of thousands were sent to the Gulag; there is no doubt that Franz F. would have ended his days in northern Siberia's "White Wilderness" — the Gulag (9) — as an enemy of the state. Aunt Tina ascribed the confiscation of her father's land to the providence of God for it saved him from the Gulag.

Fast forward to 1978 and the Mennonite World Conference in Wichita, Kansas. At this conference, I was told that a Johannes Dyck was looking for a Huebert from Canada. Eventually we connected. A member of the Jakob Franz family from Brazil met with a member of the Franz Franz family from Canada. Johannes reported that another member of the Jakob Franz family was also at the conference and we agreed to meet the next day. At

the appointed time and place, Johannes and Henrique and Helene Enns joined me. Helene, a first cousin to my father, had such a strong physical resemblance to my father that there could be no mistaking her for a Huebert. In the conversation that followed, I learned that the Jakob Franz family had hoped to come to Canada in 1930 and that Franz Franz had already bought a quarter section of land for his brother. This quarter section was just west of Coaldale on land now farmed by John Allan Hubert. However, as Howard Palmer explains in his book: *Patterns of Prejudice: a History of Nativism in Alberta*, in 1930, the Premiers of Alberta and Saskatchewan prevailed on the Prime Minister to prohibit any further immigration of Mennonites, Hutterites and Doukhobors, three groups that had refused the call to arms in WW1. Despite the herculean efforts of Franz Franz, the doors of immigration to Canada remained firmly closed. Because the family of Jacob Franz found no refuge in Canada, they moved to Brazil instead.

On July 14, the Brazilian descendants of Jacob Franz Hubert visited the homestead of Franz Franz Hubert and the quarter section of land that had been purchased for their grandfather by my grandfather in Coaldale. John and Dorothy Hubert now farm this land. John is the grandson of Franz Franz Hubert. John, Dorothy and their Coaldale relatives put on a magnificent feast of roast pig for the family reunion at the "Birds of Prey Sanctuary," another part of the former Huebert farm. The feast brought together not only the visitors from Brazil, but also their cousins from

Descendants of Johann David Hubert

Johann David Huebert (b. 1768, Einlage, Danzig)

|

Jacob Huebert (b. 1812, Margenau, Ukraine)

|

(Family photo) Franz Jacob Huebert (b. 1850, Margenau, Ukraine)

|

Heinrich Franz Hubert (b. 1888, Margenau, Ukraine; d. 1922, Margenau, Omsk, Siberia)

Jacob Franz Huebert (b. 1878, Margenau, Ukraine; d. 1960, Curitiba, Parana, Brazil)

Franz Franz Huebert (b. 1875 Margenau, Ukraine; d. 1960, Coaldale, Alberta, Canada)

|

Jacob Frank Hubert (b. 1904, Margenau, Ukraine; d. 1972, Coaldale, Alberta, Canada)

|

(Author) David Ernest Hubert (b. 1942, Coaldale, Alberta, Canada; d. not yet)

Germany and Canada. Eighty-five years after the two brothers intended a reunion, the reunion actually took place! I'm sure they would have been pleased!

References

1. B.H. Unruh, *Die niederländisch-niederdeutschen Hintergründe der Mennonitischen Ostwanderungen im 16., 18. und 19. Jahrhundert.*
2. Colin Neufeldt examined archival records in Chortiza from the 1930's and when he reported that Mennonites had condemned other Mennonites to the Gulag, his documented conclusions were met with incredulity and denial. For some, this destroyed the idealized image that had developed of the Mennonites in the Soviet Union.
3. Apparently the last *Aeltester* (elder) ordained among the MBs.
4. Told to David E. Hubert by Franz Franz himself. Presumably when he turned 35 he became eligible.
5. Reported to me by my mother, who lived with the Franz Franz family for more than two years after her marriage to Jacob F. Hubert on November 25, 1934.
6. Reported to me by my father, Jacob F. Hubert.
7. Quoted from a family history of J.B. Janz. Up and Away to Canada.
8. In Coaldale, Franz Franz became an informal banker for some in the Mennonite community. Two of the businesses he bankrolled were Neufeldt Industries, now Haul-All Industries, and Del Monte Stores, which became Marten's IGA and Marten's Hardware.
9. *In Wologdas weissen Wälder* translated to English under the title, *No Strangers in Exile*, is a fictionalized account by Johannes

Harder of Mennonites who were sentenced to the Gulag (*Verbannung*) in the northern forests of Russia.

About the Author

Born in Coaldale, Dave Hubert and his wife Martha live in Edmonton, Alberta. He has been a teacher, college administrator, has served with the Edmonton Mennonite Center for Newcomers and MCC Canada. He was the founding Board Chair of both the Edmonton Recycling Society and the Edmonton Affiliate of Habitat for Humanity. Dave enjoys reading, grand parenting, volunteering and currently works as the Executive Director of Canadian Peacemakers International. ❖

Kathy's Korner: Tips for the Amateur Genealogist

by Kathy Ma

Hidden Gem: Using the Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization Card as a Genealogical Resource

I was once asked, "I have my grandparent's Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization card, but how do I use it?" The Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization created a register for all those immigrating to Canada. *Note:* The first group of immigrants was from 1923-1930 and the second group was from 1947-1964. This article will reference only those papers that were issued from 1923-1930.

This register provided the Board with an organizational tool for keeping track of those individuals who required credit for their travel expenses and for ensuring that the *Reiseschuld* (travel debt) was paid in full. Finding your family's card can be done in person at the Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta or by visiting their website under their Archives heading.

The front of the colonization card has the full name of the traveler(s), birth date(s), and location. Often, there are handwritten notes to the left side as to whom the individual(s) married or what happened to the person(s) after the immigration process. Originally, these notes were to assist the Board in tracking what happened to the family. However, from a genealogical perspective, those notes provide valuable information regarding family links.

The back (or, the right side for some cards) carries all the pertinent travel information which includes the last village occupied, the route of travel, names and dates of ships sailed on which the card holder(s) travelled, port of arrival in Canada and destination in Canada. Some cards even include the sponsor or names of relatives in Canada. If there were any family members detained or deceased on the trip, such information would be listed on this part of the card.

Disclaimer: The following is a Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization card chosen for the interesting facts provided by the card and is used



Kathy Ma

Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization
Western, Sask.

Familienverzeichnis, N/See Kassen-, Kredit- oder Halbkreditpassagier ex. *Montrose*

gestorben 31. 3. 41

5326

44/156613

Verzeichnis der zurueckgebliebenen Familienglieder.

Adresse, Prov., Datum.

ganz Sohn
Cornelius H.
Klassen
Jureca

109-4
Mar 8 30 a

Card #5326 Hermann & Katherina (Braun) Klassen & Family

to illustrate how such cards can be used as a genealogical resource. All research regarding the card has been completed using publicly provided resources available online or at the MHSA office.

Let us go on a genealogical search for the family of card #5326 for Hermann Cornelius and Katherina (nee Braun) Klassen. This card is interesting because it is one of the few cards that has a picture attached to it. It also provides information on the left hand side showing that the father was deceased 31-3-1941 and that two of the daughters married. The daughters' spouses' names are included as well.

The travel information is translated as follows: The last place of residence in Russia: Khoroschoye, Slavgorod. Departed from Khoroschoye, Slavgorod, Russia, on March 12, 1929. Arrived in Moscow on March 18, 1929 and departed on August 8, 1929 via Leningrad [St. Petersburg]. Arrived in Hamburg [Germany] August 17, 1929 and departed August 28, 1929, on the steamship, *Montrose*. Arrived at Southampton, England, on September 1, 1929 and departed September 1, 1929. Landed at Quebec,

Canada, on September 6, 1929. First stay in Canada: Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Taking the provided information on another perspective, let's look at the time gap from arriving in and departing from Moscow. The family arrived in March, 1929 and did not leave until August 1929 which translates into a five month gap of time. Questions that naturally arise from this information. What were the circumstances that caused this delay? Was it because passports were difficult to obtain? Were exit papers difficult to obtain? Where did the family live during this time period? How did the family afford the accommodation if all of their possessions had been sold before they traveled to Moscow? Did a family illness cause the delay for several months? Note, also, that the family travelled (likely by rail) across the continent to Germany rather than by the usual exit route via Riga, Latvia. Considering the context of the world in 1929, were the borders beginning to close thus making leaving Russia more difficult and consequently causing the need for a different exit route? All of these are examples of questions that might be raised as avenues for further research. The information gathered adds interest and depth of understanding to the story of one's family.

Now that we have gathered questions and looked at the finer details of the card, the reader might ask: What would be the next step in researching the family's footprints from Russia to Canada?

Join me in the next issue as we look at how to use the Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization card by comparing it with the Canadian immigration records. ♦

Index to Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization Registration Forms (1923-1930)

5326 (Front, Back)	Klassen, Herman Corn. b. 1861
4867 (Front, Back)	Klassen, Herman Herman b. 1888
2569 (Front, Back)	Klassen, Hermann b. 1907
4020 (Front, Back)	Klassen, Hermann b. 1900

http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/programs/archives/holdings/organizations/CMBoc_Forms/

175/389

Index to CMBoc cards can be found at: http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/programs/archives/holdings/organizations/CMBoc_Forms/

MHSA letters to the Editor

Hello Dave, Dec 13, 2015

I am still appreciating the Siberia portion of the last Newsletter. At the end of his article, Colin invites responses, but I have lost or else have never had his email address.

My parents emigrated from Siberia in 1929, and I am currently in correspondence with a second cousin in Germany who grew up in the Gljaden colony near Slavgorod. He has shared photos and information, and I have invited him to read the articles from the Omsk Conference that Colin mentions. Unfortunately his knowledge of English is not up to this, so I suggested he look online for the Andrey Savin and Petr R. Wiebe papers, thinking they might be available to him in Russian or German. He has had no luck with this, so I'm asking Colin for a suggestion as to how my relatives in Germany might access this material.

Would you be so kind as to forward my request to Colin?

Yours truly,
Al Klassen (Coaldale)

Hi Alfred, Dec 17, 2015

Dave Toews forwarded your email to me regarding Siberian articles. Many of the articles written by the Russian authors were published in Russian in Omsk in 2010-11, but it was a limited printing and so it would be difficult to obtain a copy of them. It is possible that either Royden Loewen (University of Winnipeg) or Paul Toews (retired from Fresno Pacific College)* may have Russian copies of the articles. Royden's email address is: r.loewen@uwinnipeg.ca

Some of the books written by the Russian authors include the following:

Вибе, П.П. *Немецкие колонии в Сибири: социально-экономический аспект*. Омск: Издательский дом "Наука", 2007. 368 с.

Savin, A. I. *Etnokonfessiiia v sovetskom gosudarstve. Mennonity Sibiri v 1920-1930-e gg. Emigratsiia i repressii. Dokumenty i materialy*. (Novosibirsk: 2009).

Savin, A. I. *Etnokonfessiiia v sovetskom gosudarstve. Mennonity Sibiri v 1920-1980-e gg. Emigratsiia i repressii. Dokumenty i materialy*. (Novosibirsk: 2006).

I wish you every success in locating these Russian resources.

Regards,
Colin Neufeldt

* Paul Toews passed away in late November 2015.

Hello Dave,

Jan 11, 2016

Perhaps someone with contacts or information on the Gljaden area will read it and respond. By the way, the German media did a five-part series on you tube some time ago. Although I was born in Coaldale, when I want a reminder of where my parents' hearts stayed, I Google Sibirien in 5 Teilen, and Sibirien opp Platt. Eventually you will find one of the parts, and when that happens you will find the others. I find it charming and revealing. I guess that it was filmed within a few hundred miles of Gljaden, The Mennonite villages are named and I will check that some day.

I did get a response from Colin.
Thanks for asking.

Al Klassen, Coaldale ❖

Esther Epp Tiessen, *Mennonite Central Committee in Canada: A History* CMU Press, Winnipeg, 2013

A Personal Reflection by Henry M. Dick



Henry M. Dick

It was fortunate that when the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution engulfed the Russian Mennonites in crises the "Old" Mennonites in the US had already during WW1 established the Mennonite Relief Commission for War Sufferers (MRCWS) and had placed workers in Western Europe for the purpose of providing relief and aid. The MRCWS was well placed to provide the initiative in organizing North American Mennonites into the "Emergency Relief Committee of the Mennonites in North America" in response to the crisis. This Relief Committee was the preliminary Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), for when, in

July, 1920, it was determined that a more coordinated effort, including all branches of Mennonites and affiliates, was needed to address the growing need of their Russian co-religionists, MCC was born. Its mission was defined as providing relief to the "family of faith" suffering in Russia and facilitating emigration and resettlement as needed.

First and second generation Mennonites in North America, remembering their family's emigration history, quickly developed a sense of connectedness with, and indebtedness to, the mission of MCC and responded generously with financial support, material aid and giving of themselves in voluntary service. Certainly, it was this sense of indebtedness that prompted Frieda and me to accept the invitation to voluntary service in Congo in 1963. We were under MCC sponsorship but funded by the Congo Protestant Relief Association (CPRA), an MCC affiliate. We were sent to Lubondai, a Presbyterian mission station in central Congo, where I was to serve as a dentist.

Esther Epp Tiessen describes in some detail the tensions internal to MCC and the way they affected personnel serving within the administrative structures and also those carrying out its mission as volunteers. The source of these tensions included Board membership, Canada/USA relationships, roles of constituent voices in decision making, program emphasis (evangelism vs. service) and administrative/management style. Some of these issues impacted our own MCC experience. The Presbyterian Mission, where we were placed, was relatively isolated because the roads and railroads had been destroyed during the war of independence, preventing all but the local Congolese from accessing the dental service. I was 'unemployed' and needed to find meaningful work.

Our Mission Station comprised a hospital, a dental office, a government operated elementary school for Congolese children, a school for missionary children with about sixty students in grades 1 through 9, a nursing school, industrial arts and home economics schools and eight missionary family homes.

I organized an English-as-a-second-language program for students in the nursing and industrial arts/home economics programs, assisted with some maintenance work and provided sporadic dental service as needed. I recommended that the dental service be relocated to the city some one hundred km distant, where the Mission's administrative offices were located and where adequate space was available. This was rejected on the grounds that political unrest created an uncertain future for the Mission. At a retreat in Kikwit, an MB mission station also in central Congo, I learned that MCC intended to bring Dr. Peters, a recent American dental graduate there to do his alternative military service. I advised MCC against it and offered to divide my time between Lubondai and Kikwit. It was said that shortly after Peters arrived he found himself 'unemployed' and was relocated to the capital city.

When the school year started in late July, the principal of the missionary school on our station found that two expected US teachers were unable to obtain visas. Frieda (a Alberta certified teacher) and I volunteered to fill in. Frieda was assigned the grade four class and I was asked to teach science and math to the eighth and ninth grade students. We were busy and very much enjoyed the staff, the students and the contact this provided with their parents. When MCC became aware of this, I was advised that, as my financial support was being provided by CPRA and specifically designated for medical

services programs, the funding would be withdrawn if I continued to teach. A compromise was reached with the decision that I would reduce my teaching to half days, CPRA would cut their support by half and the Presbyterians would reimburse MCC for my teaching time. Additionally, our term would be reduced from two years to one. I was disappointed that these decisions had been primarily funding based rather than situation based and that I, not being a participant in these decisions, had become a pawn in someone else's game. Paternalism at its best!

MCC Canada (MCCC) was founded in 1963 with offices in Winnipeg and proceeded to sort out its identity asking the question "what exactly is MCCC?" The result was a consolidated attempt to give practical expression to a gospel of compassion, service, justice and peace and addressing social needs at home and internationally. The entrenched colonialist/paternalistic administrative style became a process of engaging and partnering with its provincial partners and constituent churches and establishing programs based on the expressed needs of the people it served. Gender equality issues were addressed. Issues related to revenue sharing (domestic vs. international, MCC vs MCCC vs provincial MCC's), program emphasis (evangelism vs. service orientation), government funding and its impact on programming, authority and management styles have continued to evolve to accommodate the demands of a transformative social/geopolitical world. The focus has shifted from "how much are we accomplishing?" to "how are we making a

difference?”

Despite these necessary changes occasional volunteer reports suggest that the disappointments Frieda and I experienced in 1963 continue to have a familiar ring. This simply underscores the fact that not everything can be predicted or controlled when MCCC extends its services into regions that are in economic, social and/or political chaos. Confronting these problems is certainly one of MCCC's many strengths. Nevertheless, ensuring that volunteers are made to feel that they are partners (rather than pawns) in these ventures would avoid the sense of failure with which volunteers are, at times, left. ❖

Hugo Friesen and Ted Regehr Receive MHSC Awards of Excellence

By Richard Thiessen

Mennonite Historical Society of
Canada release Jan. 29, 2016

Meeting at the new Mennonite Heritage Museum in Abbotsford, B.C., gave the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada (MHSC) the opportunity to see this new facility that tells the faith story of Mennonites in the Fraser Valley and is also the new home of the Mennonite Historical Society of B.C. Representatives from Mennonite historical societies and organizations from across Canada met on Jan. 13-16, 2016.

Among the many reports was a success story about the first ten months of the Mennonite Archival Image Database (MAID). This collaborative project gives the



Hugo Friesen (left) and Ted Regehr received Awards of Excellence from Lucille Marr, president of the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada, on Jan. 16. In the background is a painting from the “Along the Road to Freedom” exhibit on display at the new Mennonite Heritage Museum in Abbotsford, B.C. Photo by Richard Thiessen.

public greater online access to photos held by Mennonite archives and has brought publicity and interest to these collections with 41,000 unique visitors to the MAID website and 160 images purchased in ten months. A new member of the MAID project is the Mennonite Library and Archives, Fresno, California.

This year the MHSC Award of Excellence was given to Hugo Friesen of Abbotsford, B.C., and Ted Regehr of Calgary, Alta. Friesen, a teacher and principal before his retirement, was involved in the early attempts to organize a Mennonite archive in B.C. and became the first archivist for the Mennonite Historical Society of B.C., serving from 1993 to 2005. He coordinated all the activities of the archives in its early years and has continued to work as a volunteer.

Ted Regehr worked at the Public Archives of Canada from 1960 to 1968 after which he taught history at the University of Saskatchewan. He has contributed much to the preservation of Mennonite history in Canada, serving as president of the MHSC in its early years, writing many books and articles including *Mennonites in Canada Volume 3*, and working with the Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta and its archives and library. Regehr mentioned that it was Frank H. Epp, his pastor when he lived in Ottawa, who got him involved in Mennonite history.

The Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online (GAMEO), which began 20 years ago in 1996, continues to grow. Sam Steiner reported that it is difficult to keep the statistics up to date, especially congregational information that needs to be done at the grassroots level.

Among the discussions about future projects was how to do more digitization of books and periodicals. Accessibility and search ability are enhanced when these things are in digital form, but the task is labour intensive to put them online. The Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies reported that the *Christian Leader* magazine has been digitized and is ready to be released on a USB stick.

MHSC is proposing “A People of Diversity” project and has applied for a grant to help celebrate Canada’s 150th anniversary in 2017. If the grant is approved, there are plans for an oral history project and a conference that would recognize how diverse the Mennonites in Canada have become since 1970.

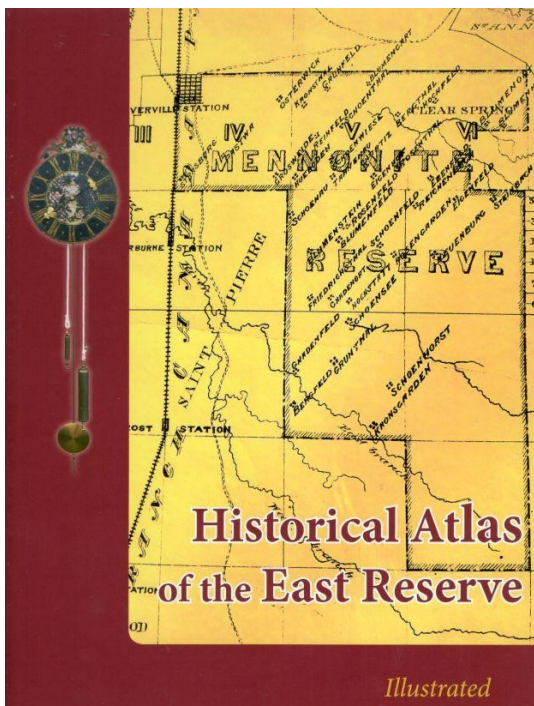
The MHSC executive for 2016 includes Richard Thiessen as president, Royden Loewen as vice president, Alf Redekopp as secretary, Conrad Stoesz as treasurer and Barb Draper as member-at-large. ❖

Historical Atlas of the East Reserve

MMHS RELEASES A NEW PUBLICATION

On Saturday, October 17, 2015, the EastMenn Historical Committee (EHC), a standing committee of MMHS, unveiled its latest publication, the ***Historical Atlas of the East Reserve***, edited by Ernest N. Braun and Glen R. Klassen, before a capacity crowd at the Chortitz Heritage Church in Randolph, Manitoba.

Starting in 2009, the EHC began the research for a historical atlas of the East Reserve. The East Reserve, today coinciding approximately with the eight Townships of the Rural Municipality of Hanover, was originally granted to immigrant Mennonites from Imperial Russia in 1873 and settled in the years 1874-6. The new atlas is a 256 page hard-cover book in full colour beginning with a chapter on geology and indigenous peoples as well as some notes on early European influence. The core of the book consists of early maps of the Reserve itself and then a chapter dedicated to each Township including the Scratching River Settlement in the Morris area. The East Reserve eventually contained about sixty village place names which are positioned on the maps and described in the narrative. The book is profusely illustrated with new maps and applicable photographs. While the format is that of a coffee-table book, the content is such that it will serve as a definitive reference volume on the East Reserve and Scratching River. The sug-



gested retail price is \$50.00 plus shipping and handling.

John J. Friesen, Professor Emeritus of CMU, ends his book review with the following sentence: “This book is a rich resource for doing community, family and genealogical studies. To assist researchers, the book has many detailed and brightly coloured maps, charts, and lists of cemeteries complete with GPS designations.”

Order from Connie Wiebe at the Mennonite Heritage Centre in Winnipeg. Direct any inquiries to Jake Peters at jmepeters@shaw.ca. ❖

Along the Road to Freedom

Mennonite women of courage & faith:
a project of the MHC (Mennonite Heritage Centre) Gallery,
Winnipeg, Manitoba

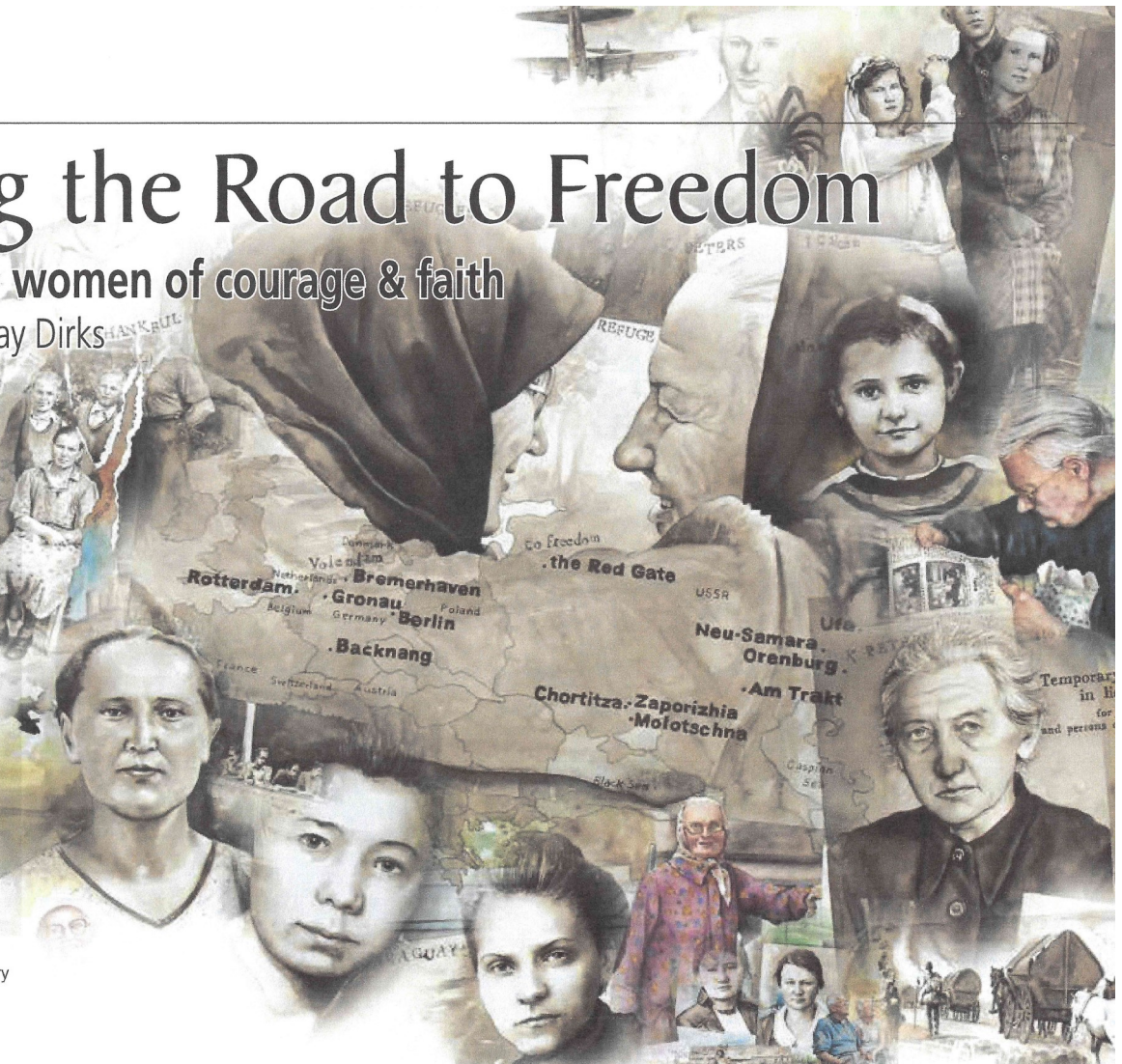
The touring exhibition consist of 26 paintings and 7 didactic panels by
Ray Dirks.

Along the Road to Freedom honours Mennonite women — mothers, sisters, daughters, grandmothers, most without men — from Russia and the USSR who found freedom in Canada in the 1920s, as well as in Paraguay and Canada in the 1940s. Dirks’ paintings and panels include images of people who migrated to Canada prior to the Russian Revolution, those who escaped during the Soviet period, as well as those who found it impossible to flee the USSR. See: <http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/files/gallery/AlongTheRoadToFreedomTourInfo.pdf>.

Along the Road to Freedom is tentatively scheduled to be in Edmonton, Calgary and Coaldale in late 2017 and early 2018. ❖

paintings by Ray Dirks

a project of the MHC Gallery



Information collected above is done within the rules of the *Personal Information and Privacy Act* of Alberta. Name and address is required for the purpose of communicating with members through correspondence or the MHSA newsletter. It will never be shared with others or used for other purposes.

Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - April 30 – 10:30 am &

2016 SPRING CONFERENCE – April 30 – 1:00 pm

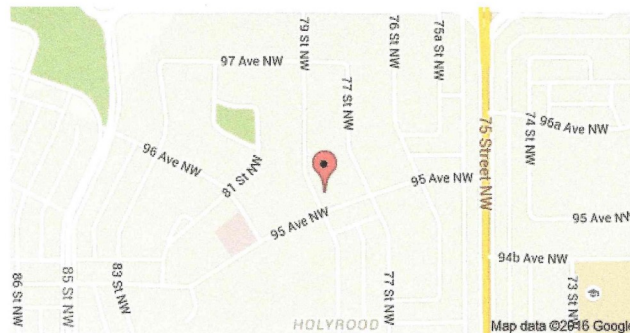
Lunch will be provided for a donation. Faspa to follow

Registration Fee - \$20.00

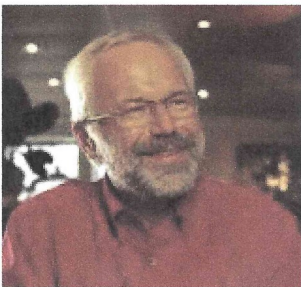
To register, you can call the office at 403-250-1121, send an email to financemhsa@gmail.com, or call Dave Jeffares at 780-318-4186

At Holyrood Mennonite Church
9505- 79 St., Edmonton, AB

For directions to the church, call
Dave Jeffares
780-438-0404
780-318-4186



Speakers are Roger Epp, Millie & Ike Glick & Chief Calvin Bruneau



Roger Epp - Professor of Political Science at the University of Alberta and author of *We Are All Treaty People*, an exploration of what it means to live in the prairie West with a sense of memory, care, and obligation. He was an honorary witness at hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission at Ermineskin First Nation.

Millie Glick - Retired Co-Director of Mennonite Voluntary Service in Northern Alberta; mother of five, grandmother of eight; loves poetry, and is the author of "Bush Tales".

Ike Glick - Retired First Nations Community Development Specialist; he worked with Calling Lake residents to develop a local Health Centre, and with three other communities (Sandy and Chipewyan Lakes and Anzac) to establish schools. He became instrumental in socio-economic initiatives based on local skills and resources.



Calvin Bruneau - Chief of the Papaschase First Nation, he is the elected chief and a direct descendant of Chief Papaschase. He was instrumental in ensuring that the City of Edmonton acknowledge the Traditional Burial Ground and Fort Edmonton Cemetery. He is re-establishing the Papaschase First Nation.