

# Mennonite Historian

A PUBLICATION OF THE MENNONITE HERITAGE CENTRE and THE CENTRE FOR MB STUDIES IN CANADA



Dalmeny Mennonite Brethren Church before 1945, originally called Ebenezer Mennonite Brethren Church and located about 5 miles northwest of Dalmeny. In 1952 it was moved to the village of Dalmeny. A new church building was erected in 1968. (Photo: Centre for MB Studies, NP29-1-6)

## Conference of Mennonites Bible Schools in Manitoba

By Anna Ens

*In 1999 the Mennonite Historian began a series of articles on Mennonite educational institutions in various provinces. The first two issues focused on institutions in British Columbia and another issue featured Institut Biblique Laval in Quebec. In the meantime a number of institutional articles have been written and posted on the Canadian Mennonite Encyclopedia OnLine site: <http://www.mhsc.ca/>. The institutions described in the following article by Anna Ens have also already been posted on the web and readers are encouraged to examine other resources that are available there. The sources on which these articles are based are not included here but are posted on the web site. AD.*

In 1936 the Conference of Mennonites in Canada recommended that every province establish a four-year Bible school and every larger *Gemeinde* (congregation) establish a two-year Bible school program. The first General Conference initiated Bible school program in Manitoba was begun by the Berghthaler and Blumenortor Gemeinden in conjunction with the Mennonite Collegiate Institute in Gretna in 1929. This later became the Elim Bible School in Altona. Other *Gemeinde* Bible schools were the Mennonitische Religionschule

(Mennonite school of religion) in Winnipeg (1932-47), the Lichtenauer Bible School at St Elizabeth (1937-41), the Whitewater Bible School near Boissevain (1937 and 1943-44), and the Elim Bible School at Grunthal 1950.

### Die Mennonitische Religionschule

The Conference Mennonite Bible School in Winnipeg, initiated by the Schoenwieser Gemeinde and officially known as *Die Mennonitische Religionschule* (MR), began in the fall of 1932

(con't on p. 4)

## A Short History of the Dalmeny Community Church (Mennonite Brethren)

by Waldo Lepp

In September 2001, the Dalmeny Community Church was 100 years old. It was organized as the Ebenezer Mennonite Brethren Church in September 1901, shortly after the first settlers arrived during the summer. There were 42 charter members.

The original congregation consisted of immigrants from Nebraska and Minnesota, U.S.A. The Nebraska group arrived in May of 1901, settling near the Mennon area of the North West Territories. Prominent among them was Johann Baerg with his five sons. Several of their descendants still live in the community. The group from Minnesota came in July and September of the same year. Coming in July were the John Buhler family, the Peter K. Janzens, the Dirk Thiessens, the Henry A. Thiessens and Rev. Abraham Buhler. These settled northwest of Dalmeny, North West Territories. In September, Mrs. Johann Lepp and family, the Peter Mandtlers and the Bernhard B. Fasts arrived. These settled a little further west. An obvious core of their descendants is still in the community and church. Soon other families came to join the original group. Among them was the Henry A. Bartsch family, settling farther east.

Worship services were first conducted in the various homes, including the hayloft on the Jacob Lepp farm. With the formal organization in September 1901, Rev. Abraham Buhler was elected as the first leader. This did not mean that he was salaried, but that besides supporting himself from farm income, he had the spiritual responsibilities of the church. This pattern of leadership continued until the 1950s.

The first church building was erected in the summer of 1902. In 1907 the building was expanded and in 1945 it was further improved by the construction of a full basement, adding a choir loft and more entrance space. The west wing of the 1907 building was the original sanctuary. It was located at the site of our cemetery in the country about five miles northwest of Dalmeny.

(cont'd on p. 2)

## Dalmeny Community Church

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With increased settlement in the village of Dalmeny, the church was moved to its present location in 1952. Since that time, salaried pastors have led the church and new opportunities for witness and service have challenged the believers. Because of the age of the old building, the present sanctuary was constructed and dedicated in June of 1968.

We thank God for the clear gospel message and the continued Bible teaching that has rung out from this church through the years. God provided dedicated ministers of the Word and devoted helpers in the church. Teachers and preachers from outside of the church were invited to supplement the local ministry. Many converts were added as a result of the influence of the Christian church and home. Hundreds have been baptized and have become active members. A number have gone to distant shores as missionaries. Many have communicated their spiritual heritage to other communities and provinces.

Our present church banner fittingly portrays the old and new in our church name. At first it was called "Ebenezer

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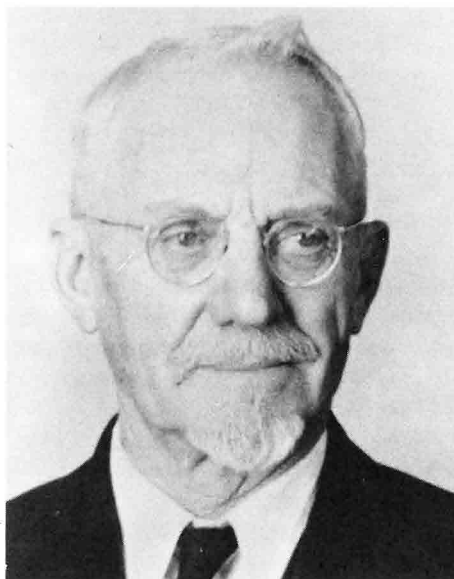


Tabor Bible School, 1947. Photo: CMBS Collection.

Mennonite Brethren Church", meaning "Thus far the Lord has helped us". The "E" in "Ebenezer" led to some confusion with the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren (EMB) church, also in Dalmeny, and with Ebenezer, Saskatchewan. The name was therefore changed to Dalmeny Mennonite Brethren Church for a number of years. Since 1986, our name has been Dalmeny Community Church, indicating our desire to be more open to the needs of the local community.

Ours is a rich heritage in the Mennonite Brethren background and history. With a sense of unworthiness, but with praise to God and joy in the Lord, we celebrate 100 years of God's grace and faithfulness to us as a church.

*Waldo Lepp lives in Dalmeny, SK.*



Jacob Lepp the second and longest serving leader of the Dalmeny Church (1907-41)

## Tabor Bible School, Dalmeny Saskatchewan

Dalmeny, Saskatchewan was also the general location of several other Mennonite congregations and a Bible school, named Tabor Bible School. This school was established in 1928 and was closed in 1954. It was technically an interdenominational Bible school, but was mainly supported by the Mennonite Brethren constituency and therefore competed for students and support with the Bethany Bible Institute in Hepburn, Saskatchewan, which began two years earlier in 1927. Jacob H. Quiring, who later became President of the Mennonite Brethren Bible College in Winnipeg (1963-66), was a student and later (1941-44) principal of the Tabor Bible School. Other congregations in the area at the time included the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Church in Dalmeny (Dalmeny Bible), the Emmanuel Mennonite Brethren Church in Langham, the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Church in Langham (Langham Evangelical Bible), the Zoar Mennonite, the Bethesda Mennonite, and the Neuhoftnung Mennonite Brethren Church (Langham, Dalmeny), which closed in 1944.

AD

Editor's note:

The early records of the Dalmeny congregation are on deposit at the Centre for MB Studies. The Centre also has a copy of a booklet entitled, *Jacob Lepp: Man of Strength and Courage* edited by Waldo Lepp (2001).

# Genealogy and Family History

By Alf Redekopp

## Recent Books

Helmut A. Epp. *Genealogical Listing of Gerhard Giesbrecht (b. ca. 1770) and his Descendants* (Fonthill, ON: by the author, 2001) 20, 5 pp.

This compilation essentially contains the descendants of a Margaretha Giesbrecht (1831-1867) who married Jacob Gerhard Peters (b. ca. 1828-d.1864) who lived in the Molotschna Colony. She was the daughter of Wilhelm G. Giesbrecht (1803) and a granddaughter of Gerhard Giesbrecht (b. c. 1770). The listing was taken almost entirely from GRANDMA with the exception of a few details about William W. Giesbrecht, brother of Margaretha. For the descendants of Maria Giesbrecht (1828-1912), a sister of Margaretha, who married Peter W. Loewen, the compiler refers the researcher to his compilation of the descendants of Elias Elias Loewen (noted below).

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Helmut A. Epp. *Genealogical Listing Elias Elias Loewen (b. ca. 1764), Helena Fast (b. ca. 1773), and their Descendants* (Fonthill, ON: by the author, 2002) 45, 9 pp.

In this compilation Helmut Epp begins by discussing the history of the Loewen family beginning with a General Michael von Loewen (1601-1705) of Elbing, Prussia who died at the age of 104. Epp clearly outlines what the existing records show and what the conjectures on his part are, before beginning to list the descendants of Elias Elias Loewen (1764) who migrated from Koldau, Prussia to Muensterberg, Molotschna in 1803. Throughout the listing one can find additional biographical data about the type of work people did.

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Helmut A. Epp. *Genealogical Listing Jacob Jacob Braun (1756-1833), his wife Anna Driedger (b. ca. 1767), and their Descendants* (Fonthill, ON: by the author, 2002) 44, 8 pp. (plus *Genealogical Listing of Johann Jacob Braun (b. 1787), his wife Elisabeth Koop (b. 1792) and their descendants* copied by Helmut A.

Epp from the GRANDMA database, 115 pp.)

This compilation essentially contains the descendants of a Jacob Jacob Braun (1825-1917), son of Jacob Jacob Braun (1889-1854), who lived in Tiegengagen, Molotschna. Throughout the listing one can find additional biographical data about the type of work people did. In addition to this listing, the compiler has also created a 115-page listing of the descendants of Johann Jacob Braun (1787) as found in the GRANDMA database.

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Helmut A. Epp. *Genealogical Listing Gerhard Heinrich Epp (1829-1911) and his Descendants* (Fonthill, ON: by the author, 2001) 20, 4 pp.

This compilation consists of the descendants of the youngest brother of Heinrich H. Epp (1811-1863) the main subject of *The House of Heinrich* compiled and published by Anna Epp Ens in 1980. Gerhard H. Epp (1829-1911) lived in the village of Rueckenau, Molotschna.

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Helmut A. Epp. *Genealogical Listing Jacob Heinrich Epp (1850-1919), his wife Katharina Boese (1853-1937), and their Descendants* (Fonthill, ON: by the author, 2001) 22, 5, 9 pp.

This compilation consists of the genealogy and family history of the descendants of Jacob H. Epp (1850-1919) and this wife Katharina Boese (1853-1937). This family originally lived in Rosenort, Molotschna. Most of the children came to Canada with their mother in 1924 but there were exceptions such as the one married daughter that migrated to Brazil via Germany in 1930 and those that remained in the Soviet Union. Significant sections of the descendants are now in southern Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia, as well as many other parts of the world.

For the genealogical listings above, contact Helmut A. Epp, 7 Concord St., Box 1016, Fonthill, Ontario L0S 1E0, phone 905-892-4534 or e-mail helm.epp@sympatico.ca.

Margaret Froese. *Call to Remembrance, Abraham C. Neufeldt & Elisabeth Heinrichs: A Family History* (Winnipeg, MB: by the author, 2001) 62 pp.

This item traces the ancestry and the family history of Abraham C. Neufeldt (1871-1934), born in Schoenthal, Bergthal Colony, migrated to Canada in 1875, and settled in Didsbury, Alberta around the turn of the century. The book also traces the ancestry of his wife Elisabeth Heinrich (1872-1953). The author covers the migration of the family from Prussia to Russia, the establishment in Russia and the reason for further migrations. Charts, maps and photographs are well used to illustrate the story. Contact: Margaret Froese, 922 Merriam Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3T 0V3.

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## Queries

**Letkeman/Peters** - searching for information on Sara Peters (January 2, 1858 - March 5, 1920). Sara Peters was the wife of Gerhard Letkeman and the daughter of Johann Peters and Susanna Hildebrand. I'd appreciate exchanging information with anyone who knows more about this family. Thank you. Contact: Grant Sommerfeld, 28 Homestead Crescent, Edmonton, Alberta, T5A 2Y3, gsommerfeld@shaw.ca.

**Lemke** -- Searching for information about Lemke families. I have three Lemke/Lemki/Lempke girls in my Braun descendants lineage. My great great great grandfather was Peter Braun (June 9 1847), married to Anna Ginther (Oct 16 1850). Peter's parents were Abraham Braun (1816 ) and Maria Lemke (Feb 2 1816). Anna Ginther's parents were Jacob Ginther and Eleanora Lemke (April 25 1825). Peter Braun's (June 9 1847) son Peter married a Maria Thiessen whose grandmother was Anna Lemki. Anna Lemki was the daughter of Jacob Leamke and Katharina Hooze. I am also trying to find out who the parents of Abraham Braun and Jacob Ginther were? Peter Braun had three siblings that I know of -- Abram Braun born in 1841 died in Russia was married to a Katharina Braun; Jacob Braun born in 1843, died also in Russia

(cont'd on p. 8)



## Conference Bible Schools

(cont'd from p. 1)

with a two-month evening class of 30 students. The following year the number increased to 40. Initially students were mostly rural women who worked largely as domestic help in the city in order to help improve their families' economic situation and pay their immigration travel debt. In the 1935-36 school year women came from the Blumenorter, Elim, Bergthaler, Whitewater, Kleine Gemeinde, and Brudertaler congregations.

The first class met in the Schoenwieser church basement at 394 Alexander Avenue on Thursday evenings. Already in 1933, in addition to the evening classes, the offerings were expanded to comprise a two-year diploma course with daytime classes meeting for four winter months, November through February. In 1937-38 the number of day students was 15, nine men and six women. Evening classes that year registered an enrollment of 25 female students. The highest day school attendance was probably in 1940-42, when 11 students were registered for the first two classes, and eight in the third and fourth classes. Four of the latter graduated that year and five women completed the evening program. Classroom space included the church library and other spaces as needed.

The three-year evening curriculum consisted of biblical studies, church and Mennonite history, German studies including German choral singing, literature and orthography. The day curriculum included ethics, doctrine, exegesis, missions, biblical archaeology, and English language. The first two years of day classes focussed on the basics, and

the third and fourth year were more in-depth.

The school's first and regular teacher was Ältester Johann H. Enns (1889-1974), who had pioneered the Bible School for the Blumenorter and Bergthaler Gemeinden in Gretna, Manitoba in 1929-31 and was now the leading minister of the Schoenwieser Mennonitengemeinde. Other ministers of the church, Ältester Daniel Loewen (1872-1951), Jacob J. Schulz (1891-1958), and Peter H. Dirks (1891-1970), participated in the Bible school teaching at different times.

The MR was more than a local school since students and support came from other congregations in Manitoba. The Manitoba ministers' conference gave moral support. Numerous times J.H. Enns urged the conference to envision this school to become a provincial institution and to expand accordingly.

Financial help came specifically through collections from individual Manitoba congregations, projects of the *Mädchenheim* (Girls' home) women's organization known as *Edelweisskränzchen*, as well as a broader support organization known as the *Unterstützungsverein*, initiated by alumni in 1941. In 1937 the recommendation was made to increase the tuition fees, although initially there had been none. However, early on students were asked to pay 25 cents a month towards heating expenses. The Winnipeg Schoenwieser collection for 1936-37 totalled \$149.71 of which \$43.75 went towards books for the school that year.

Enrollment dwindled with the onset of World War II but the school remained open until 1946-47. Some saw the MR as the forerunner of Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC) which opened in Winnipeg in the fall of 1947.

### Whitewater Bible School

The decision to open a local Bible school for youth ages 14 and up was made by the Whitewater Gemeinde Bruderschaft 11 December 1935. The first board members were H. Lohrenz, P.A. Neufeld and C. Sawatzky. A local minister, Peter Janzen (1890-1945), was recruited as teacher. The first class met in an empty farmhouse designated for this purpose, presumably in January and February of 1936. High hopes were to continue in the winter of 1936-37. However, no teaching staff could be found and no school was in operation during the winters of 1937-41.

Support for a local Bible school increased again in the early 1940s. In December of 1941 G.G. Neufeld, by then leading minister, Gerhard J. Dyck and Heinrich M. Derksen were asked to make new efforts to get the school going again. There was, however, also an invitation for the Gemeinde to join the increasing provincial support for the school at Altona, by now known as Elim Bible School. While willing to give some support to the latter, the Whitewater Gemeinde declined the invitation because it hoped still to operate its own Bible school.

The board recruited minister and former teacher in the Ukraine, C.C. Matthies (1878-1968) from Rabbit Lake Saskatchewan as teacher for the 1943-44 winter on a contract of \$80.00 monthly (or \$60.00 plus room and board). The church supplied heating fuel.

The class of 13 students met in the church beginning 1 October and continued through February of 1944. Heinrich Dueck, Peter Dyck and Peter Harms comprised the school board at this time.

But 1944-46 found the struggling school without a teacher again. In spite of that, congregational interest and optimism continued. The importance of education and mission was evident in the congregation's 1946 thanksgiving and missions offering of \$615.00. It was designated as follows: Altona Bible School \$60, local Bible School \$60, Rosthern Bible School \$45, Gretna school \$100, Bethania \$40, Girls' Home \$40, foreign missions \$40, home missions \$40,



Mennonitische Religionsschule 1945-46. Standing (l-r): Peter Friesen, Sara Janzen, Margarete Penner, Helen Letkeman, Maria Neufeld, Margarete Wiens, Gerhard Penner. Sitting: Louise Letkeman, teachers J.J. Schulz and J.H. Enns, Louise Epp. Photo credit: *Jubilate*.

North American mission \$35, Deloraine hospital \$75, and mutual aid \$80.

Matthies declined an invitation to return to teach; other prospects also did not work out and the school remained closed. After that attention and support turned to the Elim Bible School in Altona.

### St. Elizabeth Bible School

The *Gemeinde* Bible School at St. Elizabeth had its modest classroom in the home of its teacher, Aeltester Peter H. Enns (1885-1942). In 1938, its second year, nine female and five male students were enrolled. They met daily, Monday to Friday, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. from November 15 until March 1.

In a weekly 30-hour schedule, five hours were devoted to *Heilsgeschichte* (salvation history), five hours to Bible instruction, 4-6 hours to singing (including one hour of hymnology), 2-3 hours to church history (including one week on Mennonites in Russia), two hours to catechism and doctrinal instruction, 10 hours to German instruction (this included reading, orthography, grammar, literature and composition). Besides the Bible, texts required were a *Bibelkunde* (Biblical knowledge/study--90 cents), *Bilder aus der Kirchengeschichte* (church history--50c), the new *Katechismus* (catechism--50c), *Deutsches Lesebuch 2. Teil* (German reader--65c), *Choralbuch* (hymnbook--\$1.00) for a total of \$3.55 per student.

Every winter the school year ended with a closing program for the *Gemeinde*. Its purpose was to demonstrate through choir singing and recitation of German poetry (e.g., F. Schiller's *Das Lied von*



### Fire destroys Heritage Building in Neuberghthal

On Saturday evening March 2, 2002 a fire destroyed the former hog and chicken barn on the Ray and Marilyn Hamm yard in the village of Neuberghthal, Manitoba. The Altona fire department attended the fire and were able to keep the fire, believed to have started by faulty wire, from spreading to other buildings.

Neuberghthal has been declared a national historic site by Parks Canada and

this building was one of two such remaining in the village. It is unknown when the building was built, but was one of the earlier buildings in this village founded in the late 1870s. This building may well have been first used as a house, having double walls on 3 sides (north, south, and west) leaving the east wall to be attached to a barn. Windows were a combination of residential and barn style windows.

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*der Glocke*) and other ways what had been learned throughout the months. In the 1939 program students answered up to 66 questions from the Bible, church history, and Mennonite history. Women students put on a one-act play "*Im Frauenverein*" (in the women's auxiliary) written by Ontario minister J.H. Janzen.

The school had good local support and about half of the 1938 fall Thanksgiving collection/offering of \$150, went towards

this venture. (Other designations were for foreign missions, Bible Society, itinerant ministry, and poverty/relief, i.e. *Armenkasse*). The following year the same amount was designated for the development of the Bible school in Winnipeg (cf. *Die Mennonitische Religionsschule*).

Peter H Enns died in 1942. There were no classes that winter because there was no other teacher. In 1943 an invitation to join *Die Mennonitische Religionsschule* in Winnipeg was declined because the St. Elizabeth *Gemeinde* was intent on fostering its own Bible school. In early October of 1943 the brotherhood asked the chair of the congregation to bring the school back to life and it waited to see the student registrations. A teacher could not be found locally or elsewhere in spite of the fact that a special commission (Jacob Janzen, Jacob Braun, H. Janzen, N. Unruh and W. Kaethler) was mandated to find a way to buy or build a house as residence for a Bible school teacher. There was no teacher, no registered students, and no local Bible school anymore.



The Lichtenauer Gemeinde Bible School with teacher Peter H. Enns (centre). Photo: *Of Days Gone By*.

Anna Ens lives in Winnipeg, Manitoba.



**Mennonite Heritage Centre**

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## Recent Accessions

1. 36 photos of Bethania in Russia and other items. -- ca. 1910-1928
2. Russian and Prussian research materials of the late Arnold Schroeder of St. Catherines were deposited at MHC
3. Jacob Wiens Collection from Krons-thal Russia, later Hoffnungsfeld, Manitoba, covering 1800-1960.
4. Four reels of microfilm containing the A. A. Friesen fonds covering 1919-1958.
5. Ground Conductivity Studies at Fort Dufferin, Manitoba / K. D. McLeod and P. M. Badertscher, 1991.
6. Eleven films in VHS format by Otto Klassen covering Prussian, Russian, Canadian, and Mexican Mennonites history.
7. A 1941 map of the Krasnoje No. 3 Arkadak region by Alfred Rempel.
8. A short history of the beginnings of the EMMC church by minister Isaac P.F. Friesen in 1979.
9. Report of the brotherhood meetings in Sommerfeld, Rudnerweide, and Grossweide, Manitoba in 1907 by Abraham Doerksen.
10. Translation of the Johann Wall dairy by Ed Enns.
11. Index on CD ROM to the 209 volumes of the *Deutscher Geschlechterbuch* series, a German genealogy publication.
12. Rhineland Municipality cemetery headstones transcriptions.
13. A 1975 autobiography by Peter Ewert covering the Machno bandits, famine, collectivization, repression, war, labour camps and eventually emigration to Germany in 1963.
14. Diary, sermons, and translations of Sommerfeld minister Jacob W. Friesen 1937-1945.
15. Church membership register (1927-1953) which was maintained by Aeltester J.D. Nickel for the Mennonite settlers in the Peace River District of Alberta.
16. Diary of Justina (Willms) Martens of Halbstadt, Russia covering 1810-21.



Dietrich Bartel, Associate Professor of Music at Canadian Mennonite University, viewing the medieval chant book housed at the Heritage Centre with the Assistant Professor of Practical Theology, Irma Fast Dueck and students taking the a course on worship. (Photo: Courtesy of Conrad Stoesz)

17. Klaas Kroeker (1828-1914) family photos as collected by the late Nick J. Kroeker of Vancouver.
18. Translations of the 1816 and 1858 revisions list for Schoenwiese, Chortiza.
19. Two photos of the former Old Colony Church of Hamburg, Manitoba when it was being used by Henry J. Banmann as a store.
20. Native ministries field reports and minutes and resource library covering 1953-1991.
21. Two microfilm reels containing records of the Deutsches Ausland

-Institut of Stuttgart (DAI) which are part of the Foreign Seized Records Collection of National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) of College Park, MD (USA). These reels contain information on Mennonites in Russia and Prussia collected by Karl Stumpp and cover the period from 1781-1943.

22. Microfilm reels containing records of Board of Guardians, Fonds 6, of the Odessa State Archives. Also, a "new" filming of the 1835 Molotschna census



The *Volkszeitung* was the first newspaper published in Canada by Mennonites who had come from Russia. It was printed in Winkler by Henry H. Neufeld from about 1902-1907 and its first editor was P.P. Kroeker. Its constituency was the Russian Mennonite population in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Russia.

The *Volkszeitung* was joined by other publications. The *Reisendiener* was published by A.A. Wolfe in Gnadenthal for a part of 1904. Der Rheinländer was published in Gretna by Godfrey Coblentz.

A total of 13 issues was the life of *Der Rheinländer* which began and ended in 1908. The saddest portion of the history of these publications is that virtually no copies are known to exist today. The exception is an incomplete copy of the October 14, 1903 issue of the *Volkszeitung*. The original is at the Mennonite Library and Archives in North Newton, Kansas with a photocopy at the Mennonite Heritage Centre in Winnipeg. If anyone has copies or knows where copies of these papers may be, please contact the Heritage Centre at (204) 888-6781.





Children, teenagers and adults enthusiastically look at the photo album depicting the life of their church, Richmond Park Mennonite Brethren in Brandon. It is a *Creative Memory* style scrapbook with pictures and journaling done by historians Nola Schellenberg and Shirley Bergen. Shirley says "This is the most worthwhile thing I have done during all my years as church historian." (Photo: Courtesy of Shirley Bergen, Brandon)

## Recent CMBS Accessions

1. 13 films by Otto Klassen in VHS format dealing with the Mennonite experience in Prussia, Russia, Canada, and Mexico. Donated by Otto Klassen.
2. Poet Heinrich D. Friesen materials which came in after the publication of the article about him in the September 2001 issue of the *Mennonite Historian*. Donated by Ed Friesen of Red Deer, Alberta.
3. Translation of the auditing committee's report of the All-Russian Mennonite Ag-Society, found in the Odessa State Archives fond 359, inventory 1, file 4, pages 5-8.
4. Emma Lepp Baerg slides of missionary work in India along with travel and family photographs. The collection is estimated to include 3,400 slides.
5. Odessa State Archives microfilms. Fond 6, Inventory 1 which contains the Board of Guardians committee records, Fond 89 which contains a better copy of the 1835 Molotschna census, and Fond 6 Inventory 3.
6. 28 photos from the Buhr family of Winkler, Manitoba taken in Russia and Canada and donated by Margaret Cormie of Winnipeg.
7. Nicholai Fehderau materials which include diaries of Nicholai and his father Jacob, cloth signs in Russian to "Chauffer" Nicholai Fehderau, Ukrainian style hand embroidery, and a chart of the distances to and from the various villages in the Molotschna colony in 1846. Donated by the family.
8. Elmwood Mennonite Brethren Church Ladies Group minutes from 1938-1966 and minutes from a 1937 Sunday School convention held at the North End MB Church. Donated by Dr. Bernie Fast of Winnipeg.

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A group of Manitoba delegates, some with spouses, getting ready to leave Hillsboro by bus after the General Conference of Mennonite Brethren convention in October 1933. A list of the Manitoba delegates is given in the 1933 Yearbook. The group includes C. N. Hiebert (6<sup>th</sup> from right) and John P. Braun from Morden (center, back). (Credit: Mennonite Historical Society of BC Archives)



CENTRE FOR  
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## Letter to the Editor

Re. Galveston Hurricane, *Mennonite Historian*, Vol. XXVII, No. 3, pages 1-2.

I enjoyed the report about "Mennonites and the Galveston Hurricane" by Dora Dueck.

I would like to draw attention to another first-hand contemporary account of the hurricane, namely, that of Peter P. Isaac (1846-1924), a Holdeman writer whose family experienced the full fury of the hurricane. Peter P. Isaac was an excellent writer and his account of these events was widely circulated among his kin and then in 1916, as part of Isaac's excellent *Stammbuch meiner Voreltern vom Jahre 1694 bis auf die Gegenwart* (Stern, Alberta, 1916), pages 38-46. This work was translated and published in English by Victor Goossen, Rosenort, Manitoba, in 1980. It was again published in 1990 in Volume 5 of the *Kleine Gemeinde Historical Series*, pages 197-200.

Hopefully this information will be of interest to those who are interested in the role of Mennonites in one of America's worst tragedies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Yours truly,

Delbert Plett, Steinbach, Manitoba

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## Queries

(cont'd from p. 3)

and was married to a Margaretha Wiebe; and, Maria Braun who was married to a Michael Hamm and a Johann Goertzen. Maria and Peter both died in Canada. If anyone can direct me to descendants of these families contact Suzane Braun P.O. Box 906 La Crete, Ab. T0H 2H0 or e-mail [suzanebraun@hotmail.com](mailto:suzanebraun@hotmail.com).

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**Plum Coulee area** - Descendants of Elizabeth Mayer and Jacob Dinges, who arrived with their daughter Pauline Dinges in the Plum Coulee area at around the turn of the century, 1900, would like to find some information about their ancestors. The daughter, Pauline, worked as a hired girl with Mennonites in the Plum Coulee and Altona area. If anyone knows of these Russian Germans, arriving with other Russian Mennonite immigrants and settling in the West Reserve around this time, please contact Annete Krayetski, 1253 Gillmor Crescent, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan S6V 6A8

## The Winkler Heritage Society

The Winkler Heritage Society was organized in 1999 in order to promote and encourage public interest in the community history of Winkler and its immediate surroundings.

Some of their goals and objectives include raising public awareness of the pioneers and history of Winkler, identifying heritage sites, establishing a bursary fund and establishing a museum or heritage house for the preservation of artifacts.

Their recent newsletter entitled *The Winkler Heritage Society Legacy Links* Vol. 1 No.1 (Jan. 15, 2002), edited by Sally Harms, reviews all of the projects that this society has already completed. The projects include place mats which feature scenes like "the first school", "first hospital" and other "firsts", the production of a family history booklet distributed to Grade 5 students in Winkler Elementary School, awards presented to two students from Garden Valley Collegiate for history projects, and several displays set up in the Southland Mall.

One of the displays created by Sally Harms entitled "The Mennonite Parlour 1875-1930", featured an aspect of everyday life in a typical Mennonite home during the first half of the last century.

From June till December 2001 the Winkler Heritage Society displayed this

typical Mennonite Parlour (*Grote Shtove*). The traditional upright bedstead (*Rushi Prosch*), the vault (*Akjschaup*), the Kroege clock, the varnished chairs and the shiny yellow floor. The room was not a living room but a parlour, and it was a privilege to sit in this room. Children were not to run or play in this room. In some homes the cracking of *Knack Sot* (sunflower seeds) was allowed, but not in all.

A book has been published to about the artifacts used in this display to preserve their history. For further information, interested people may contact S. Harms, (204) 325-4698 or e-mail: [harms681@mb.sympatico.ca](mailto:harms681@mb.sympatico.ca).

A.R

## Noteworthy Article

"Street Smart" by Monique Roy-Sole with Photography by Robert Tinker, in *Canadian Geographic* (Nov./Dec.2001, pp. 82-88) featured the village of Neuberghthal, Manitoba, including photographs from the Peter G. Hamm Glass Negative Photograph Collection deposited at the Mennonite Heritage Centre.

A.R.

## Correction

The name of the author of the feature article entitled, "The Bergthal Colony Revisited: Some new sources for Community and Family Research" (*Mennonite Historian* Vol. XXVII No. 4 (Dec. 2001) was Lawrence Klippenstein of Winnipeg. Our apologies for this omission.

The editors



"The Mennonite Parlour" (*Grote Shtove*) display as it appeared in the Southland Mall in Winkler from June to December 2001. Photo: Courtesy of Sally Harms.



## Book Reviews

(cont'd from p. 12)

The letters naturally contain very personal and deeply emotional parts since they were written for much-loved and greatly missed family members and friends. As testimonials to intense struggle and yearning, one can discern more clearly the feelings of intense suffering and pain, but also the hope and faith which helped many of the authors of the letters to survive their ordeal and join Mennonite communities again.

A glossary explaining Low German and Russian expressions completes the book. There also are some notes, maps and a list of prison locations, which give one a better picture of the gulag structure as a whole. Some sketches of prison quarters as well as photos of persons and prison documents were added.

This is also a well-edited volume, with very readable print which as in the case of the memoirs, will make it user-friendly for older readers. Both of these works help to insure that the difficult experiences of many will not be forgotten. As such they can inspire readers who encounter hard and seemingly insurmountable experiences today.

Much credit goes to the Society for the Study and Preservation of the Russian Mennonite Cultural Legacy, headed by Dr. Gerhard Hildebrandt in Goettingen, Germany, for publishing this letter anthology. Mennonite bookstores may not carry these books regularly, so it behooves our libraries to secure them for their reading public.

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Calvin W. Redekop. *The Pax Story: Service in the Name of Christ 1951-1976* (Telford, Pennsylvania: Pandora Press U.S., 2001) 160 pp.

*Reviewed by J. M. Klassen, former MCC worker in Korea, Akron and Winnipeg, now retired.*

In this book the author reviews the Genesis and the twenty-year history of the Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC's) Pax program. (Pax is the latin word for peace). He traces its roots back to the World War I (1917) Builder Units of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). In the period between 1951 when Pax was initiated, and 1976 when it was integrated into the

regular MCC voluntary service program, close to 1,200 young men, of whom 110 were Canadians, gave about 2,360 years of service in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and South America. Not only did the men volunteer their time, they also paid for their travel and maintenance costs. For most of the US participants this program provided an acceptable alternative to the country's obligatory military service.

The Pax program had a profound effect on the young men themselves, on the persons who benefitted from their work, and on the churches and communities from whence they came. A life-changing educational experience in itself, it also gave many the incentive to pursue further studies and aided in their choice of vocations. It was a bridge-building experience and a testimony for peace and against war. It energized and motivated home congregations to greater involvement in mission and outreach. It fulfilled the participants' desire to travel and see a bit of the larger world. "Pax expressed [in the Mennonite community] the awakening to be worthy members of the human community" (p. 113).

The author, himself involved in the development and administration of the Pax program, has produced an interesting account of the Pax story which will be of interest to readers beyond the circle of participants. It is a well-researched work with extensive endnotes, a bibliography and index, as well as several charts and photographs.

"Pax is one of those 'creative eruptions' -- a short one-act play whose actors appeared on the stage at a critical turning point in human history and, with considerable drama at some point in the plot, acted out a practical and symbolic message of peace and reconciliation in 'the Name of Christ', a drama which had occasionally been experienced earlier in other forms by a minority group - the Anabaptists."

Perhaps more than anything else, this book gives just a hint that there is a story, a very compelling life-changing story, of each participant's personal experience of choosing the way of "Pax". Today, our world needs men and women who choose the way of peace. May this book inspire us all to do so.

*Jacob's Journey: From Zagradowka Towards Zion: The autobiography of J.M. Klassen* (Winnipeg, Man.: J.M. Klassen, 2001) xii, 444 pp.

*Reviewed by Larry Kehler*

J.M. Klassen of Winnipeg, who is well known across Canada and in many parts the world for his leadership role with the Mennonite Central Committee, recently gave each member of his extended family and several former colleagues and the churches and church-related agencies with which he has worked copies of his autobiography. The 494-page collection of stories and pictures of his life is entitled, *Jacob's Journey: From Zagradowka toward Zion*.

In an overview at the start of the book Al Wieler, a friend and former colleague of Klassen, writes: "Five years ago, JM embarked upon developing his autobiography to provide his family with an account of his personnel odyssey -- detailing his family history, his professional involvement and his faith journey.... (The) meticulously researched account represents more than a personal history, but also provides a unique insight into the Anabaptist vision and how it manifests itself in the development of non-partisan relief agencies."

"JM," as he is known to his fiends and colleagues, was born in Zagradowka, Ukraine, in February 1929. Shortly after his birth his family emigrated to Canada. They settled in Manitoba, and returned to that province after a brief interlude in Saskatchewan. JM's family is very important to him, and he shares noteworthy details about his parents and siblings, and about his wife, children and grandchildren. He married Katherine Thiessen in July, 1950. JM shares in a very moving way about her 16-year struggle with cancer and her death in 1996. Their two daughters, Martha and Loma, are both married and live in Winnipeg.

The church has always been an important part of JM's life. He has been very active in the various congregations to which he has belonged. He and his second wife, Betty, participate in both of the churches to which they belonged prior to their marriage in May 1998. These are the River East Mennonite Brethren Church and the Home Street Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

Besides his family and church, MCC has been the love of JM's life. After

several years of teaching and hospital administration in the Steinbach area as a young man, JM and Katherine applied for service with MCC in 1958. He served as MCC's country director in South Korea for three years, and that began a series of MCC-related leadership roles in Akron, PA, and Winnipeg, MB. He was MCC Canada's first executive director (1964-70). After a six-year interlude, during which he was a teacher in a Winnipeg high school, he was invited to return as MCCC's executive director. He accepted the call, and served until 1984, when a heart attack led him to resign. Soon thereafter he served in various volunteer roles for MCC, including the administration of MCC's work in the USSR. He represented MCC at various celebrations and reunions in such places as South Korea, Japan and Paraguay.

JM and Betty are now living in retirement in Winnipeg, but they are still busy with family and church-related things. All 75 copies of the first printing of JM's autobiography have been given to family members, friends and church-related libraries. Persons who are interested in seeing a copy should check with one of the following agencies or libraries: the provincial, Canadian or Akron, PA, MCC offices; Columbia Bible College, Abbotsford, BC; Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, ON; Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg; the Center for MB Studies and the Mennonite Heritage Centre, Winnipeg; the Mennonite Historical Library, Goshen, IN; AMBS, Elkhart, IN; and the River East Mennonite Brethren Church and Home Street Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.

JM has indicated that if individuals or institutions would be interested in getting copies, he would be ready to provide them at cost. The price for printing and shipping would be approximately \$50.

Persons desiring copies of *Jacob's Journey: From Zagradowka toward Zion* may call J.M. Klassen at 204-339-6198 or write to him at 11 Reichert St. Winnipeg, MB R2G 3C7.

### Franz Choral Buch Sought

Harold E. Franz is searching for a copy of an early edition of the *Choralbuch* by Heinrich Franz. Please contact the Centre for MB Studies or Harold E. Franz, 11812 W. O'Neil St., Wichita KS 67212-5172. Ph. (316) 721-9680



Mennonite Church Canada denominational minister Henry Paetkau presenting a globe to general secretary Dan Nighswander symbolizing the missional goal of reaching out around the world. Photo: Courtesy of Conrad Stoesz.

### MC Canada flying solo

Winnipeg, Man.— "We've been flying solo for twelve hours now," said Mennonite Church Canada general secretary Dan Nighswander, opening a lunch-hour event that marked February 1, 2002, as the end of the bi-national Mennonite Church in North America, and the official beginning of new responsibilities for Mennonite Church Canada.

Denominational minister Henry Paetkau presented Nighswander with two symbols. A globe represented MC Canada's missional goal of reaching out from across the street to around the world, while a guest book symbolized the goal of striving to do together what we cannot do

alone. Paetkau's hope was that in the future MC Canada will receive many visitors from around the world, and that we will be able to reach out to them with hospitality by recording their visits in the guest book.

About seventy staff from Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church Manitoba, volunteers and guests gathered for a brief worship service, thanking God for 140 years of Christian service through the bi-national church, and seeking fresh guidance as Canadian and American churches continue to relate to one another and work together in new ways. The event took place at the Mennonite Heritage Centre Art Gallery.

MC Canada News Release

### Religious Archives Meeting

A Special Interest group of Manitoba archives will meet Apr. 15, 7:00 p.m. at the Centre for M.B. Studies. Kim Arnold, Archivist, Presbyterian Church of Canada will speak on the theme "Developing Archival Facilities." All are welcome.

### New Book For Sale

Gerald C. Ediger, *Crossing the Divide: Language Transition Among Canadian Mennonite Brethren 1940-1970*. (Winnipeg: Centre for MB Studies, 2001) pb., 236 pp. \$19.95 plus GST, postage and handling (\$24.50 total). Order from: Centre for MB Studies, 169 Riverton Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2L 2E5

### Now Available

Esther Epp-Tiessen, *J.J. Thiessen: A Leader for His Time*. (Winnipeg: CMBC Publications, 2001) pb., 344 pp. \$23.95 plus GST, postage & handling. Order from Mennonite Heritage Centre, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3M 0P4 (204-888-6781) or e-mail [cwiebe@mennonitechurch.ca](mailto:cwiebe@mennonitechurch.ca).

### Coming Soon!

Helmut Harder, *David Toews was Here 1870 to 1947* (Winnipeg: CMBC Publications, 2002) Release date and price to be announced later!

## Book Notes

by Adolf Ens & Lawrence Klippenstein

Let us think that 1000-page local histories have gone out of style after the "centennial binge" in Canada during the 70s and 80s, John Landis Ruth has produced 1390 pages in *The Earth is the Lord's: A Narrative History of the Lancaster Mennonite Conference* (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 2001). The narrative approach, and the fact that Ruth can begin with 1683 as the date for the first "Mennists" in Pennsylvania, make such a huge volume possible without 900 pages of "amateur" family histories contributed by descendants of original homesteaders, as in the Medford volume above. Ruth is a gifted story teller with a good sense of historical context and an ability to become analytical. His approach (if not the sheer volume of the product) provides valuable insights to local historians.

Another book not directly related to Mennonites in Canada but nevertheless of interest to readers of the *Historian* is the product of a collaboration between James C. Juhnke and Carol M. Hunter, Mennonite and Quaker. *The Missing Peace: The Search for Nonviolent Alternatives in United States History* (Waterloo and Scottsdale: Herald and Pandora, 2001) was written before the current "war on terror," but the authors' attempt to challenge "the myth of redemptive violence in U.S. history" is even more relevant today.

The Essex-Kent Mennonite Historical Association is systematically working to preserve the stories of Mennonites in its region. Volume 4 in its Mennonite Historical Series is *Memories of Reesor: The Mennonite Settlement of Northern Ontario, 1925-1948*, by Hedy Lepp Dennis (179 pages, 8½ x 11, pb., \$30). Good maps, a highly readable and informative text, plenty of photographs, and interesting sidebars make this book of interest to many Mennonites well beyond the descendants of the small group of settlers who pioneered this community.

The Town Council of Altona, Manitoba, produced a unique gift for its citizens to usher in the new millennium, a *Town of Altona Millennium Diary* (1999, 149 pages, hdc). Prepared by a committee of seven, the "diary" has entries for each day of the year of historic events, mostly local ones, which happened on that day.

Facing pages of the date book contain historic photographs.

Another volume (#10) in the *Classics of the Radical Reformation* is now available. *Sources of South German/Austrian Anabaptism* (Kitchener: Pandora Press, 2001; 430 pages; \$50 pb.) consists of 34 translated documents by 26 writers spanning the years 1524-1590. This series has become an invaluable source for understanding 16th century Anabaptist developments. We owe a debt of gratitude to translators Walter Klaassen, Frank Friesen, and Werner Packull, and editor C. Arnold Snyder.

*Zuflucht und Koexistenz: 400 Jahre Mennoniten in Hamburg und Altona* (Bolanden-Weierhof, 2001, 142 pages, hdc) is a new history of one of the oldest Mennonite congregations in Germany. Michael D. Driedger made thorough use of the rich archival material available to write the story from 1601 to the end of World War I. A concluding chapter, from 1945 onward, was written by the current pastor, Peter J. Foth.

In Canada no Mennonite congregation has a 400-year history, but smaller anniversaries also stimulate the publication of historical accounts. Ruth Friesen's *Glory Throughout All Generations* (2001; 86 pages, 8½ x 11, coil bound, pb) celebrates fifty years of the North Battleford Mennonite Church, now Hope Mennonite Fellowship. Numerous photographs, stories about and reflections of most pastors who served the congregation, and good documentation of the voluntary service unit connected to the congregation, give this book relevance beyond the local community.

*Fond Recollections: Rabbit Lake, Meeting Lake, Mullingar* (1976, 221 pages, 8½ x 11, hdc) consists largely of family stories and photographs. The book is of some interest to Mennonites, since they began settling in this area of Saskatchewan about 1926. Their stories are scattered throughout the book.

D. Frederick Dyck, *Jacob J. Dyck: Am Trakt to America. A History and Genealogy For The Descendants of Jacob J. Dyck and Marie G. Harder* (218 pages); Alice Sitler Dyck, *Sixty Years of Silence: The Dyck Family in Soviet Russia* (36 pages); and *The Memoirs of Gustav Dyck*, translated by Herbert C. Dyck, edited by Alice Sitler Dyck (79 pages) have been bound as one book (389 pages, 8½ x 11, pb) and published by Alice Sitler Dyck, 231 West Third Street,

Washington, KS, 66968. The titles identify the contents of this very attractive volume. The Dyck clan is well known in Canada and the USA, especially to those who have read the monograph on *Am Trakt*, published by the MMHS in its Echo historical series. This book is much more history than genealogy, richly illustrated with maps, photographs (historic and contemporary), and full colour reproductions of many sketches and paintings of artist and naturalist, Abraham Claassen (1825-1910). Glossy paper and sharp photographs make this an unusually attractive volume.

*Gifts from God* (Winnipeg, MB: Clara K. Dyck, 2001, 199 pages, hdc) is a collection mainly of poetry written by Clara K. Dyck which consist of reflections, insights and responses to her life's experiences as a nurse, graduate student in English and German, as a college instructor and as a hospital chaplain. This is her first published book and can be ordered by contacting C.K. Dyck, 604-790 Wellington Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3E 3K9

Three books in the Russian language recently donated to the Heritage Centre by Edward Gerk of Kelowna, BC include the following:

I.B. Erofeeva and Iu. Romanov, eds. *Istoria Nemtzev Zentralnoi Azij* (The German Russians of Central Asia) (Almaty, Kazakhstan, Komplex, 1998), pb. 298 pp. It is a collection of essays published as proceedings of a conference held at Almaty in October, 1997. Among the contributors are Dr. Peter Wiebe, director of the State Historical Museum in Omsk and Dr. Alfred Eisfeld of Goettingen, Germany.

Aleksei Straus. *Dva Perioda v tragicheskoi sudbe sovetskikh Nemtzev* (Two Periods in the Tragic Fate of the Soviet Germans) (Bishkek, Ilim, 2000), pb. 20 pp. It deals with the years just after 1939 which led to the internal deportation of Soviet Germans and their confinement in the Trudarmee of the Soviet Union.

Tlei Kulbaev and Arkadii Khagai *Deportaziia* (Deportation) (Almaty, Daneker, 2000), pb. 272 pp. It deals with the deportation of Soviet Germans into labour camps and other forms of imprisonment under the Soviet regime. Includes many documents, also from secret police archives.

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## Book Reviews

Esther Epp-Tiessen, *J.J. Thiessen: A Leader for His Time* (Winnipeg, Man., CBMC Publications, 2001) x, 345pp.

Reviewed by Dr. John B. Toews of Regent College, Vancouver, BC

In the 1950s and 1960s elder J.J. Thiessen was often jokingly referred to as the Mennonite pope. There was some truth in the statement. Few would disagree with the author Epp-Tiessen when she writes "Very little happened within the organized life of the church which did not have J.J.'s blessing" (pp. 130-31). How do you treat a personality who permeates the records of his local church and the Canadian Mennonite constituency? Will the resulting biography not be larger than life? Fortunately Epp-Tiessen treats her hero judiciously.

This is not a study saturated with sentimentality. The author sifts through the wide-ranging available documentation - letters, diaries, memoirs, minutes, interviews. She then skilfully touches upon every relevant aspect of Thiessen's career. The book is wholistic portraying him from every possible perspective: family background; formative influences; training and education; a young man amid revolution and civil war; J.J. the family man; J.J. the pastor; J.J. and WW II; J.J. and his refugee work..

I felt the author did an excellent job of addressing a key question. What in the case of Thiessen did it mean to be a Russian Mennonite and what did it mean to be a Russian Mennonite in a Canadian setting? As Epp-Tiessen attempts to find answers she demonstrates an excellent understanding of the evolving cultural nuances that shaped his life, of his deeply held religious convictions and of the essence of his "soul". Here was an individual who managed to escape the time-lock of the era that first moulded him and evolved as a trans-generational person possessed of broad sympathies and a generous, encouraging spirit. The composite sketch of the world encompassing J.J. during the various stages of his life is especially commendable. The author does a masterful job at identifying the key forces and circumstances moulding this Mennonite leader.

Yet J.J. Thiessen does not emerge as a saint or superhero. Prominence meant

difficult decisions, controversy and confrontation. Throughout the book the author does not hesitate to list shortcomings and accomplishments, triumphs and failings side by side. She depicts the perils of public ministry and the mistakes of the public servant. Within a pious, deeply Christian soul gifted in leadership, preaching and diplomacy there lurked the inevitable human foibles. Strategically placed in the Canadian Mennonite Conference Thiessen could not hope to escape the entanglements of Mennonite power politics. After all this was a radical democracy in which all, if they wished, had their say. At times the biography rather naturally becomes the forthright story of the Canadian Mennonite Church for more than three decades.

This is a well-balanced study. Epp-Tiessen sustains her objectivity and fair mindedness throughout. Happily she is also captivated by the dynamics of J.J. Her lively narrative style readily sustains reader interest. When I finished the book I felt I had a deep understanding of the person and the era that moulded him, that I had somehow walked alongside. I think that's the measure of any successful biography. Personally speaking it's the best study of a Mennonite leader I've ever read.

George Hildebrandt. *Why are you still alive? A German in the Gulag*. (Fargo, ND: Germans from Russia Heritage Collection, 2001), 266 pp.

Julia Hildebrandt, et. al., eds. *Aber wo sollen wir hin: Briefe von Russland-mennoniten aus den Jahren der Gefangenschaft, Verbannung und Lagerhaft in der Sowjetunion* (Frankenthal: Verlag Hirtenstimme e.V., 1998), 306 pp.

Reviewed by Lawrence Klippenstein, former Historian-Archivist at the Mennonite Heritage Centre, Winnipeg, Man..

These two volumes from the genre of Soviet Union imprisonment memoirs and documents may seem commonplace articles by now. Many have been published and widely read. The English title noted here actually appeared as *Wieso? lebst du noch? Ein Deutscher im Gulag* in 1993, but has been expanded and somewhat revised in the translation.

Each account is still unique and always a tribute to its author, whose story deserves to be told to others.

George's journey of imprisonment began with his first arrest at the age of 16 in Kondratjevka, Ukraine, in March, 1930 (he is still living, now aged 90). A brief period of freedom, after his escape, was followed with nearly twenty years of intermittent incarceration in labour camps, ultimately also including Kolyma. After 1953, at which time he was reunited with his family, he was transferred to parts beyond the Urals where he spent time in prisons in Magadan, Nakhodka, Vladivostok, Sverdlovsk and other sites. After his release he was able to pursue his profession (technical draftsman) from 1961 until his retirement ten years later and emigration to Germany in 1974. The details of his experiences during literally decades in prison cannot be retold here. They comprise the entire volume, and make it readily understandable that a KGB officer should ask him in astonishment many years later: "What? You are still alive?" A great many of George's fellow prisoners of those years, of course, were not.

The book has a number of sketches done by the author and reads easily. A number of maps and several charts of prison camp layouts, as well as family photos, are also included. The Germans from Russia Heritage Society in North Dakota has done well to offer this new edition to the public.

*Aber wo sollen wir hin* is a collection of letters and poems that were actually written in prison and have survived in the files of addressees and elsewhere. The letters were written in the period 1930 to 1970. About two dozen authors are listed in the Table of Contents. Among the writers are Elisabeth Reimer Teichroeb, Anna Rempel Toews, Frieda Mathies Hamm, Elizabeth Martens Plett (whose letter to her daughter included the line which became the title of the book) and Susanne Tiessen. There are also letters from well-known Aeltesters such as Jacob Rempel, Johann Toews and Alexander Ediger, as well as leading ministers (perhaps also elders) from the Karaganda Mennonite Brethren congregation, Heinrich Woelk, Heinrich Klassen and David Klassen.

(cont'd on p.9)