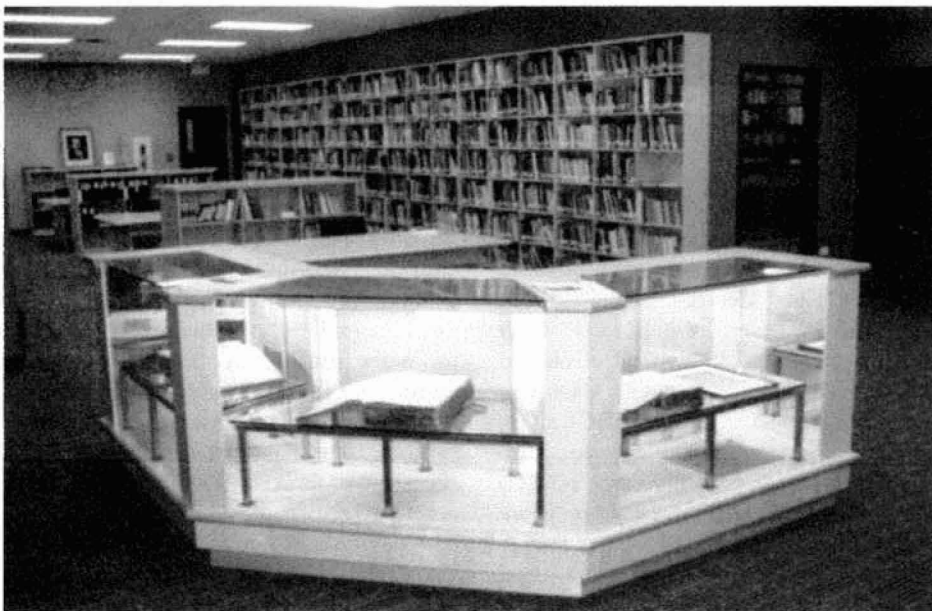


# Mennonite Historian

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



A view at the entrance to the new location of Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 1310 Taylor Avenue, Winnipeg, April 2005. Photo by Conrad Stoesz.

## Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies Gets a New Home

by Conrad Stoesz

The Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies has a new home at 1310 Taylor Ave. On April 25, 2005 the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches national office along with the Manitoba Conference office opened its doors to the public in a brand new two-story building consisting of over 20,000 square feet. The archival component includes a 1,645 square-foot vault, with humidity and temperature controls, and mobile shelving throughout. The 1,241 square-foot public area includes a spacious reading room, library, and plenty of space for researchers. The 388 square-foot office area as well as the public space is an open design concept with good sightlines to see the activity in

the Centre. New furniture and décor make the Centre an inviting and welcoming place to read and do research.

The vault contains over 1,200 boxes of archival material consisting of conference, congregational, institutional and personal papers; 23,000 photographs; 100 architectural drawings; and 700 periodical titles. Maps, audio recordings, a hymn book library and video collection round out what is in the vault. The J.A. Toews historical library, the conference yearbook collection and the Katie Peters genealogical collection, are in the public research area.

The Centre documents the changes in the lives of members of the Mennonite

(cont'd on p. 2)

## Delbert F. Plett Historical Research Foundation Inc.

For a small group of people in Steinbach December 14, 2004 was a memorable day. In the basement of the building once housing the Plett Goossen Law Firm the new board members of the Delbert F. Plett Historical Research Foundation Inc. met to set up the base for this new Foundation. Included in the meeting was a lawyer, Pletts executors, an accountant and a couple of close collaborators to the deceased person.

The goal of this meeting was to officially get the "D. F. Plett Historical Research Foundation Inc." started, although the terms of reference and by-laws for this foundation had been set by Plett himself, long before he passed away on November 4, 2004. Still many details had to be placed in order. Plett started this private foundation in December 1996 but it had not been an active charity.

Before Delbert Plett passed away he asked several people to serve as board members. The list included the following persons: Dr. Royden Loewen of Steinbach (University of Winnipeg), Dr. John J. Friesen of Winnipeg (Canadian Mennonite University), Kennert Giesbrecht of Mitchell (Managing Editor of *Die Mennonitische Post*), Ralph Friesen of Nelson (President of the Flemish Mennonite Historical Society), Abe Rempel of Winkler (Old Colony Minister), Leonard Doell of Aberdeen, (MCC Saskatchewan).

During the all-day meeting lawyers and executors explained to the board members the many facets of this Foundation and what had to be done in the beginning. The five members present (Abe Rempel couldn't attend) elected a chairperson (Royden Loewen), a vice-president (John J. Friesen) and a secretary treasurer (Kennert Giesbrecht). The board decided to make every effort to continue publishing the historical journal *Preservings*. It decided to meet again in April to establish a protocol by which it would support further writing, publication and education on the history of the conservative Dutch-Russian Mennonites.

In his will Delbert F. Plett designated a large part of his estate to this foundation. The following quote makes this clear: "In making this bequest to the D.F.P. Historical Research Foundation Inc., it is my hope that the Foundation will use these funds in order to continue the publication of *Preservings* in the spirit and philosophy / theology it currently

(cont'd on p. 6)

## CMBS gets New Home

(cont'd from p. 1)

Brethren constituency over a lengthy period of time. During this time the Centre has also changed considerably. It was founded in 1969 by the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches. Its mandate continues to be to collect and preserve historical documents relating to the Mennonite Brethren church, focusing on Canada. In 1969 the Conference owned and operated the Mennonite Brethren Bible College (MBBC) and the Centre was given a small room above the library. Herb Giesbrecht, the librarian of MBBC, administered the Centre. Soon the Centre outgrew this space. When the college undertook an expansion in 1979, space was built for the archives in the basement of the building at 169 Riverton Ave. in Winnipeg's Elmwood district. Here a total of 1,500 square feet was allocated to the Centre for all its activities. Ken Reddig was appointed archivist. In the mid 1980s mobile shelving was purchased which almost doubled the storage space. Some environmental controls were installed at this point but they never worked properly. Staff joked about working in the catacombs. The advantage of larger space was offset by the fact that the location

**Mennonite Historian** is published by the Mennonite Heritage Centre of Mennonite Church Canada and the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies of the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches.

Editor: Alf Redekopp (MHC)

Associate Editor: Conrad Stoesz  
(CMBS / MHC)

All correspondence and manuscripts should be sent to the editorial offices at:

600 Shaftesbury Blvd.  
Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4  
P: 204-888-6781

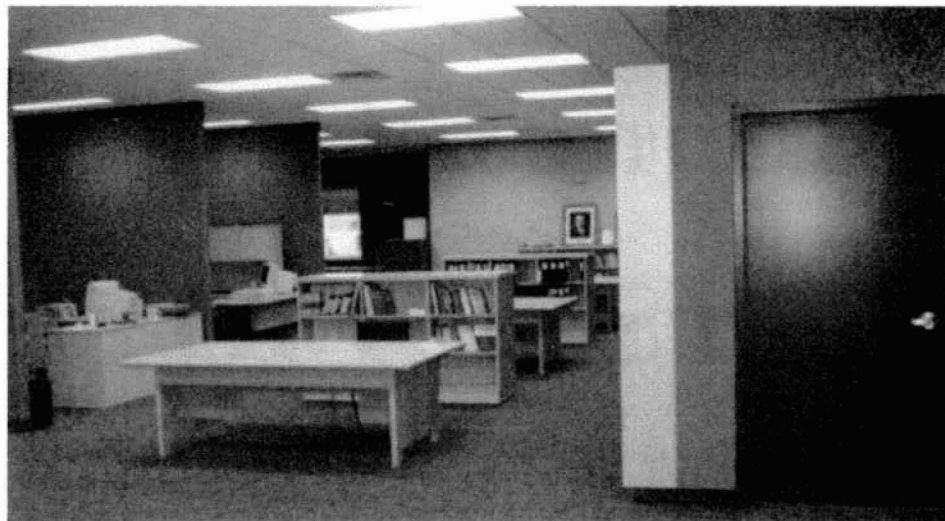
E: aredekopp@mennonitechurch.ca  
W: www.mennonitechurch.ca/programs/archives  
or

1310 Taylor Avenue,  
Winnipeg, MB R3M 3Z6  
P: 204-669-6575

E: cmbs@mbconf.ca  
W: www.mbconf.ca/mbstudies

Subscription rates: \$11.00 per year, \$20.00 for two years, \$28.00 for three years. Individual subscriptions may be ordered from these addresses.

ISSN 07008066



The Centre now has a spacious and welcoming reading room with office space (far left), researcher cubicles, and an environmentally controlled vault (behind door on right). Photo by Conrad Stoesz.

was not the best for researchers -- it was hard to find and was some distance from the offices of the sponsoring body.

In 1991 Abe Dueck was appointed Director. The Centre continued to function in the basement until 2000 when the College (then known as Concord College) amalgamated with Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC) along with Menno Simons College to form Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) on the campus at 600 Shaftesbury Blvd. The Centre then moved to the former administrative area of Concord College, and the vault occupied part of the former Concord College library space. Some of the space had originally been used by the archives several decades earlier.

Other recent changes include library automation which was implemented in

1992. On August 8, 1993, during a heavy rain, the sewer backed up causing serious flooding which resulted in significant damage. Support from the Canadian Council of Archives by way of grants from the mid 1980s to the present allowed for extra staff to be hired to work on electronic finding aids and collection descriptions that increased its usefulness.

The Centre has seen the number of visitors increase. Also the scope of research done has grown. Researchers with varied interests continue to visit the Centre. We are excited about our new facility and hope it can continue to serve the Conference and the wider public.

*Conrad Stoesz is the half-time archivist at the Centre for MB Studies and Mennonite Heritage Centre and gave oversight to the move of the Centre to the new location.*



MBCI high school history students pouring over primary sources from the CMBS. For most this was their first time to an archive. (See story on p. 5) Photo by Lorie Mayer.

# Genealogy and Family History

By Alf Redekopp

## Queries

**Unger** – I am looking into the line of Peter Unger b. 21 Apr. 1753 d. 27 Dec. 1818 in Insel Chortitza, Chortitza, South Russia. Second wife was Helena ? and he had 4 children: Jacob (abt. 1798), Abraham (1801), Helena (abt. 1803) and Johann (abt. 1805). Jacob Unger (b. abt. 1798) had 2 sons – Abram (b. 1823) and Peter (b. 1829). Abram Unger (b. 1823) married Maria Thiessen and had at least 3 children – Abram (b. 8 Mar. 1859), Jacob (b. 1857) and Maria (b. 1849). Jacob Unger (b. 1857) married Anna Epp (b. 25 Apr. 1859) (daughter of Dietrich Epp and Katharina Siemens). They had 12 children – Jacob Unger (b. 23. Feb. 1894) was my grandfather. Any information would be helpful. Contact: Linda Fast, 101 Elma St., St. Catharines, ON L2N 6Z8; (P) 905-934-4534, (F) 905-934-8727 or e-mail: fast-5@sympatico.ca.

**Bergen** – I am looking for descendants of Peter Bergen (1890-1965) who married Elizabeth Fleming (1890-1965). Their children were: Katherine (1911), Elisabeth (1914), Peter (1916), Abram (1920), Heinrich (1923) and Anton (1926). Also, I am looking for descendants of Heinrich Bergen (1898-1936) who married Anna Harder (1902-1986). Their children were: Katherine (1926), Heinrich (1931), Anna (1934), Maria (1936) and Sara. Contact: Francis A. Dyck, 17-200 Ronald St., Winnipeg, MB R3J 3J3 or phone 897-1031.

## Recent Books

Ella Neufeldt. *Ella's Story: The Journey of a Mennonite Girl from Poland to Canada* (Coaldale, AB: Private Publication, 2003) 135 pp., plus additional pages of photographs and genealogical charts.

The author of this autobiography was born in the village of Deutsch Wymyschle, Poland on New Year's Day 1938, as Ella Ratzlaff, daughter of Peter Ratzlaff (1914-2002) and Frieda Pauls (1915-1998). Her father entered the military when she was 2 years old, while

her mother continued to manage the family hardware store and raise the family. The book deals with the author's experiences in the village and in the Wymyschle Mennonite Brethren Church, prior to and during World War II, her family's flight from Poland to Germany at the end of the war, her life as a refugee in Germany in the late 1940s, and the family's immigration to Canada in 1948, where they settled in the Coaldale, Alberta area.

The autobiography is a hard-cover book which includes photographs, maps and genealogical charts.

For further information, contact the author's son, Colin Neufeldt, #2500, 10123-99 Street, Edmonton, AB T5J 3H1, phone 780-426-4133 or e-mail cneufeldt@snyder.ca.

Anne Konrad. *And in Their Silent Beauty Speak : A Mennonite Family in Russia and Canada, 1790-1990* (Toronto, ON: Private Publication, 2005) 507 pp.

This family history publication has been organized into four parts plus appendixes, genealogical charts and an index. In Part I, the author addresses the question, "Where do we Konrads come from?" – a section which includes details of life on the southern steppes of Imperial Russia during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In Part II, entitled "Konrads meet Brauns," the family history is continued into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. In addition to the marriage of the author's mother and father, Luise Braun (1892-1983) to Peter J. Konrad (1890-1989) this section includes a relocation of the family from Crimea to the Ural foothills, revolution and civil war and decisions to emigrate or stay in the newly established U.S.S.R. Part III picks up the family story in Alberta, Canada during the 1930s and 1940s, and Part IV, entitled "B.C. Land of Milk and Honey" is where the family history presentation ends. The appendixes and genealogical charts, consisting of over 230 pages, present the "wider net of relatives", as the siblings of the author's parents and grandparents are listed.

Contact: Anne Konrad, Unit E, 187 Sherwood Avenue, Toronto, ON M4P 2A9 or e-mail ahdyck@idirect.com.

Harold Penner. *The Helen Klierer and Peter Unger Story* (Victoria, BC: Private Publication, n.d.) 148 pp.

This book contains the family history of Helena Klierer (1864-1941) and her husband Peter Unger (1862-1913) who arrived in Canada in 1875 as children. Peter Unger was the son of Peter Unger (1812-1888) and Helena Klierer was the daughter of Gerhard Klierer (1836-1896), one time reeve of the R.M. of Hanover. Their families lived in the village of Schanzenberg in the Mennonite East Reserve. Peter and Helena Unger moved to the Edenthal school district in the Mennonite West Reserve in 1890. Peter and Helena are both buried in Altona, Manitoba. In addition to the many photographs and stories providing the biographical information of the descendants, the book also contains the genealogical tables for tracing all them.

Contact: Harold Penner, 29-4300 Stoneywood Lane, Victoria, BC V8X 5A5 or e-mail hupenner@shaw.ca.

F.A. Dyck. *The Genealogy of Cornelius Unger (1860-1933), Gerhard Unger (1862-1942) and Helena Unger (1869-1923)* (Winnipeg, MB: Private Publication, 2005)

This compilation of data from church registers and family records contains the descendants of three of the children of Peter Unger (1812-1888) and his wife Katarina Klassen (1832- ). Cornelius Unger married Elisabeth Wiebe. Gerhard Unger married Katherine Neufeld. Helena Unger married Heinrich P. Wieler (1868-1953). These families lived in the Manitoba Mennonite East Reserve. Cornelius and Gerhard Unger lived in Felsenton, Manitoba. For further information contact: Francis A. Dyck, 17-200 Ronald St., Winnipeg, MB R3J 3J3 or phone 897-1031.

Johann Epp. *Die Volkszählung im Molotschnaer Mennonitengebiet von 1835* (Lage, Germany: Logos Verlag GmbH, 2004) 287 pp.

With this publication, there are now four independent translations of the  
(cont'd on p. 6)

Send inquiries to Alf Redekopp, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4 or e-mail: aredekopp@mennonitechurch.ca





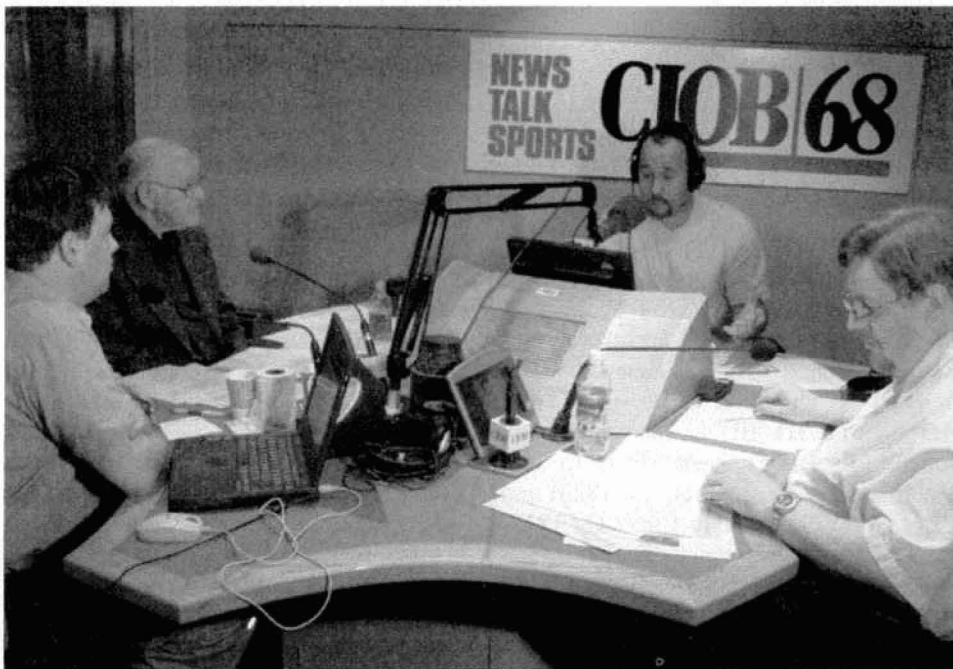
## Congregational Record Keeping

A valuable resource for your congregation is now available on-line. *Heritage Preservations: A Resource Book for Congregations*, written by David A. Haury and sponsored by the Historical Committee of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Historical Commission of the General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Church (Newton & Fresno, 1993) is now available on-line at [www.mbhhistory.org/preservation.en.html](http://www.mbhhistory.org/preservation.en.html). This volume provides as a means to further enhance the preservation and ultimate celebration of our rich heritage.

Collecting and preserving the records which chronicle the life of your congregation are complex tasks, and these responsibilities are occasionally disregarded. Most congregations understand the need for record keeping — either for administrative purposes or for historical purposes. The records will especially be consulted when celebrating anniversaries. Heritage celebrations will be enhanced when the “right” resources have been collected and preserved. This volume attempts to give congregations guidance toward the complex task of preserving their heritage. Thoroughly and systematically, the book outlines the process. It recommends that some records of congregations be placed in an archives either for safekeeping or for research purposes. Both the appropriateness of what might be housed in an archives and which particular archives might be used will depend upon the size of the congregation, the particular denomination, and perhaps even the location of the congregation. It also includes a checklist for “records to keep” and “records to discard.”

If the 30-page booklet originally published and distributed to your congregation can no longer be found, then this on-line edition will be the place to seek guidance for congregational record-keeping.

A.R.



**Conscientious Objection on GodTalk (l-r):** Conrad Stoesz, Dr. David Schroeder, Dave Balzer, and Gerry Bowler invited listeners to call in and talk about alternatives to military service, peace, and conscientious objection on the Winnipeg open line radio show, GodTalk. The show aired on May 8, 2005, coinciding with Mother's Day and the anniversary of VE Day (Victory in Europe), celebrated across the country. Co-host David Balzer said there is a pop culture notion that Mother's Day was initiated as a call to peace. He chose the topic on this Sunday, partly in response to therecognition that the Manitoba Library Association had given the [www.alternativeservice.ca](http://www.alternativeservice.ca) website by naming and awarding it “Website of the year.” Photo by Dan Dyck, Mennonite Church Canada.



**On April 25, 2005** Alf Redekopp (left), Director of the Mennonite Heritage Centre, Winnipeg, honoured Helene Friesen of Winnipeg for her work on the *Bote* index, volumes 3, 4 and 5. Present were members of Der Bote Editorial Committee, Der Bote and other staff of Mennonite Church Canada as well as other interested persons. Volume 5 of the index (1992-2000) has now been published and is available for sale through the Mennonite Heritage Centre. Earlier volumes are available as well. Photo by Dan Dyck, Mennonite Church Canada.

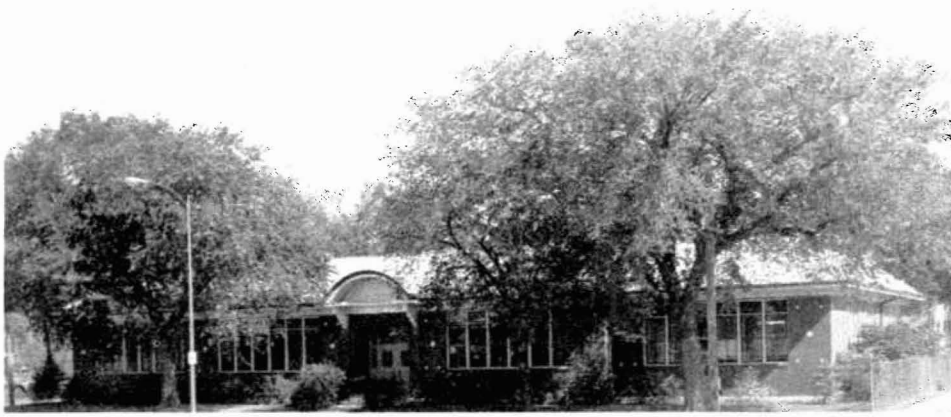
## RMAU Microfilming Project (Moscow)

Last December Paul Toews of Fresno reported to us following his return from a trip to Moscow of the existence of two significant archival collections in the State Archive of the Russian Federation. With this news, he also sent a copy of the inventory file list of one of these, namely the records of the “All-Russian Mennonite Agricultural Union” (RMAU), 1920-1928. The other collection is the “American Mennonite Relief” (AMR) collection. After some consultation in North America, it was clear that he should seek to have these collections microfilmed. The MHC has agreed to be a partner in the microfilming of the RMAU collection.

The entire RMAU collection consists of 33,668 pages plus reverse sides, organized into 355 files. The heart of the collection is in the first 311 files. Files 312-355 are all bookkeeping files. The number of pages that are being microfilmed will be 26,488 plus reverse sides.

Mennonites in Russia after the Bolshevik Revolution faced enormous challenges for their economic survival. A study of these records should give new understanding about that experience.

A.R.



## Historic Anna Gibson School / A.H. Unruh Building Slated For Destruction

(Photo: CMBS Collection, NP149-01-4883)

People who have attended classes at Mennonite Brethren Bible College (MBBC) in Winnipeg or its successor, Concord College will immediately recognize this building as the MBBC Administration Building (later known as the A.H. Unruh Teaching Centre) located at 77 Henderson Hwy (earlier 77 Kelvin St.). The building, first used as a public school, was named the Anna Gibson School and today is owned by the Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute (MBCI). It is slated for demolition this summer to make way for more green space as MBCI enlarges to prepare for the addition of a middle school, new library, and renovated office space. While the building is impressive from the exterior, it was quickly realized that the cost of renovations would be too high to bring the building up to code. Plans are in the works to include a plaque in the green space for people to remember the building and its significance.

The building was first known as the Anna Gibson School. Anna was the daughter of T. Gibson, a lumber merchant in Winnipeg, who taught at La Verendrye school in Winnipeg. In 1918 she volunteered in the King George Hospital during the Spanish flu epidemic. Unfortunately, she herself became ill with the flu and died on November 23, 1918 at the age of 21. There was a private funeral and burial in the Elmwood Cemetery in Winnipeg.

The 1918–1919 Spanish Flu also known as “The Spanish Lady” was spread by soldiers returning home from the war in Europe. It began in Spain and quickly spread to other countries in Europe. In September 1918 it appeared in Boston. By the beginning of October the flu was raging through Manitoba. Many families were hit hard, often with more than one

family member dying. Hospitals were overcrowded; with medical staff in short supply. Volunteers were sought to help. Anna Gibson was one of the first who responded and entered this dangerous situation and eventually died from the illness she was treating in others.

Canada’s population grew significantly after the Great War, increasing the need for more or larger schools. The two-storey Martin School built in 1904, named after Joseph Martin, former Attorney General of Manitoba, on the corner of Talbot and Kelvin, was moved to make way for a new, larger, solid brick building in 1919. The cost of the new building was \$39,000. It opened in 1920 and was named in honour of Anna Gibson and other teachers “who volunteered as nurses during the epidemic of influenza in 1918”.

This building, used as a public school till about 1934, and to house soldiers during WWII, was bought in 1944 by the Northern District Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Conference of North America (now known as the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches), to begin a college to train church workers and missionaries who also placed high value on volunteerism. When the main college administration offices were moved across the street to 169 Riverton in 1985, the building was again renamed – this time, in honor of A.H. Unruh, founding president of the college.

Buildings are given names for good reasons. While buildings may not stand the test of time, the names they have been given can help us recall and appreciate important values. Anna Gibson’s example points to the value of volunteering even at personal cost, a value supported and taught by the College, and a value we still cherish and encourage today. CDS



CENTRE FOR

**Mennonite  
Brethren  
Studies** IN CANADA

1310 Taylor Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3M 3Z6

## Young People Encounter An Old Story

by Donovan Giesbrecht

Teenagers – probably not the usual demographic you’d expect at the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies -- and for good reason. The large majority of our visitors are on the other end of the age spectrum. Their love and enthusiasm for our past is rarely matched. Nonetheless, they often raise a heartfelt concern: “Where are the young people?”

On March 16 and 17, “the young people” were at CMBS (see photo on p. 2). The visit grew out of renewed talks between the Centre staff and a group of MBCI history and religion teachers. These archivists and teachers shared several common goals – they wanted young people to engage our faith tradition, to encounter new ways of thinking, and to uncover their spiritual and cultural heritage. The field trip to the archives was a small step in that direction.

After a brief tour of the Centre’s archival holdings, the grade 11 students had 30 minutes to browse through a selection of primary sources. Some read diaries written during the Russian Revolution, others listened to recorded interviews of conscientious objectors, while still others scanned through photographs of pioneering missionaries, or flipped through the first issues of the *MB Herald*. As some scribbled down notes, the teacher reminded students, ‘a report on your findings is due next class.’

It was a brief encounter. Nonetheless, it gave students a sense for what a primary source is, and, hopefully, made future trips to the CMBS seem a little less intimidating. MBCI teachers Mike Neufeld, Paul Doerksen and Mick Friesen have strongly encouraged students to use archival sources for their next term paper.

Where are all the young people? Truth be told, they’re not flocking to the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies. But in small ways, bridges between young people and an old story continue to be built.

## Ebenezar Mennonite Brethren Church (Rush Lake, SK)

The Ebenezar Mennonite Brethren Church (Rush Lake, SK) was located between Waldeck and Rush Lake in Saskatchewan. According to Bernice Rode the property belongs to the church and the title is still in the names of three of the original Trustees. She is looking for descendents of this church because of her interest in restoring the cemetery and the whole church property. Some of the church members were Isaac J. Wall, John G. Wall, David Froese, Henry Bergen, David Toews, Jake Bergen, Frank Janzen, David Froese, Dan Schindel, Johan J. Kroeker, Gerhard D. Rempel and Henry Janzen.

Together with her brother and sister-in-law, Bernice Rode has begun to do some of the work. From the the headstones, a list of some of the people buried there has been started. About 17 or 18 graves have been located, but she is still wondering about the number and identity of children that were buried in the cemetery and are not documented.

If anyone remembers family that went to the church, the desire is to record the history of each one of them if possible. What was their role in the community and what else can they remember about the family. Information about weddings, baptisms, births, and other special events that took place would be most interesting.

This congregation was founded in the early 1900s and worshipped together into the early 1940s.

Please contact Bernice Rode, 71 Hesford Place, Swift Current, SK S9H 4C6. Her phone number is 306-773-3877 and e-mail brode@sasktel.net.



**D.F. Plett Historical Research Foundation Inc. board of directors (l-r): Kennert Giesbrecht, John J. Friesen, Abe Rempel, Roy Loewen, Ralph Friesen and Leonard Doell, April 2005.**

### DF Plett Foundation

*(cont'd from p. 1)*

represents; further, that the funds also be used to support projects which foster, promote and nurture literacy and knowledge of the history and culture of the conservative and traditionalist Mennonites of Flemish Russian background, irrespective of location in both South and North America."

It is a major challenge to the board members now to envision and pursue the many obstacles and opportunities that lie ahead.

*D. F. Plett Historical Research Society Inc.*



**Abraham Dahlke (1853-1937) and his wife Margaret (1859-1928) who donated the 2.87 acres of land for the Ebenezar MB Church at Rush Lake, SK.**

### Recent books

*(cont'd from p. 3)*

Russian language 1835 Molotschna Census, a document first microfilmed by Harvey Dyck at the Odessa Regional State Archives in 1990-1991.

Henry Fast created the first very rough translation of the 1,200-page document in 1993. In 1995, the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society's Genealogy Committee co-ordinated a group of volunteers with Russia language skills, which led to a much improved translation, as they sought to translate and reproduce the data and the structure of the original document. In 1997 Arnold Schroeder produced a condensed and typewritten form of the 1835 Molotschna Census. It also included the transcriptions of some Molotschna school registrations from the years 1857-1884. A copy of this work was sent to the Mennonite Heritage Centre. Now in 2004, we have the first translation from Russian into German produced by Russian speaking Johann Epp, now living in Bielefeld, Germany.

It should also be noted that in 2001 a 2<sup>nd</sup> microfilming was done of the original document, brought about by the efforts of Tim Janzen of Portland, Oregon. This 2<sup>nd</sup> microfilming project used a superior camera and the film is said to be of superior quality and clarity to the first. Johann Epp had access to this newer version, but it will still remain to be seen, to what extent it was used. Hopefully, someone in the future will use all of these existing efforts to produce an entirely accurate translation and annotated revised edition of the MMHS translation. *A.R.*

### Book Notes

*(cont'd from p. 8)*

and tables of information, and other graphics. The ten lessons begin with Anabaptist origins in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and Mennonite movements from Holland to Prussia, Russia, Canada and Paraguay (1-5). Lessons 6 to 9 deal with five colonies



**Ebenesar Mennonite Brethren Church (Rush Lake, SK) Choir, 1916.**



## Searching links to village of Kronsfeld (Manitoba) Settlers and Descendants

by Alan Warkentin

Information is requested from anyone who may be acquainted with or has ties to the former residents of the village of Kronsfeld in southern Manitoba.

The legal land description of Kronsfeld is NW 7-1-4 W. It is presently the farm home of John and Anne Peters, and is located near the village of Haskett, near the U.S. border south of Winkler.

The book *1880 Village Census of the West Reserve* lists the following 13 homeowners of Kronsfeld: Peter Martens, Johann Martens, Johann Warkentin, Jacob Warkentin, Peter Warkentin, Jacob Wolf, Heinrich Goertzen, Jacob Peters, Peter Giesbrecht, Jacob Braun, Helena (Peter) Krahn, Wilhelm Siemens, and Bernhard Krahn.

Kronsfeld probably had thirty good years where it maintained its size, or probably even grew, but by 1920 there were only two or three households left, many residents having gone with the Mexican migration or having settled on their own homesteads.

In the course of time, deaths and burials also occurred at Kronsfeld, and records show the following 30 burials occurred there (see chart):

Year died	Age	Name	Year died	Age	Name
1885	20 years	Maria Peters	1901	43 years	Peter Warkentin
1885	?	Sara Goertzen	1901	35 years	Cornelius Warkentin
1887	4 years	Catharina Warkentin	1902	5 days	David Peters
1887	3 years	Elisabeth Krahn	1907	3 days	Isaac Goertzen
1889	6 weeks	Peter Warkentin	1910	12 years	Jacob Peters
1891	6 years	Helenor Braun	1910	3 years	David Peters
1891	4 years	Mary Brown	1910	9 years	Sara Peters
1892	30 years	Aganetha Peters	1911	26 days	John Loewen
1892	at birth	Helena Braun	1913	4 days	Katharina Doerksen
1893	11 years	Cornelius Peters	1916	3 years	Alice Warkentin
1895	2 years	Jacob Warkentin	1916	79 years	Helen Warkentin
1895	?	Helena Warkentin	1916	2 months	Aron Guenther
1899	6 years	Helena Warkentin	1922	1 year	John Warkentin
1899	62 years	Jakob Warkentin	1926	1 year	John Wieler
1899	8 days	Jacob Knelsen	1929	17 years	Helen Fehr

It is quite likely more burials occurred there from residents of the surrounding area. The nearby village of Haskett did not have a cemetery until 1933. The cemetery at Kronsfeld is unmarked at present, and there is interest in marking it in respect for the people buried there.

If anyone has information on the village of Kronsfeld, and its former residents, we would appreciate hearing from you. The intent is to collect information and set up a plaque in the near future. We would appreciate contact

as soon as possible. At present there is nothing marking the site of the cemetery, but in respect of the people who are buried there, it would be good to have the site marked in some way. Thank you.

Contact: Alan Warkentin 204-325-8453, RR2 Box 284, Morden MB R6M 2A1; Art Warkentine 204-325-7260, 104 Poplar Bay, Winkler MB R6W 1Z8; or Ernest Unrau 204-822-9655, 261 Tulip Street, Morden MB R6M 1H9.

\*\*\*\*\*

in some detail (Menno, Fernheim, Friesland, Neuland and Volendam) and conclude with an overview of Mennonites in Paraguay. Lesson 10 provides a good overview of the world-wide Mennonite community. Full colour photographs make this a very attractive text book.

Perhaps Mennonite historical societies in Canada should combine resources to produce something similar for use in our schools. The volume by Harry Loewen and Steve Nolt (*Through Fire and Water*) is geared for high school age and is too long for all but Mennonite parochial high schools to use. The Klippensteins' *Mennonites in Manitoba*, written for a younger group, is no longer in print and was too focused in scope to be usable across Canada.

James Urry's *None but Saints* (1989) is now available in German entitled, *Nur Heilige: Mennoniten in Russland, 1789-1889*, tr. by Elisabeth L. Wiens (Steinbach, Crossway Publication Inc., 2005).

### New Life THE FUNERAL AS A RITE OF PASSAGE IN MENNONITE COMMUNITIES

June 22, 2005 – May 12, 2006

Mennonite Heritage Village  
Steinbach, Manitoba

This exhibit explores the historic funerary rituals of Mennonites as they relate their theology and cultural values of family and community. Artifacts, photographs and replicas provide an intimate view of a "rite of passage" that has changed substantially in the last century.

Official Opening: Wed. June 22, 2005; 7 pm

For additional information call  
Mennonite Heritage Museum  
204-326-5046

## Book Reviews

Helmut Huebert, author and cartographer.  
*Mennonite Estates in Imperial Russia*  
(Winnipeg, MB: Springfield Publishers,  
2005), pb., 415 pp.

Reviewed by Lawrence Klippenstein

In the 1970s Dr. James Urry from Oxford, England, then completing a dissertation on Mennonites in Russia, did some special interviewing in Winnipeg and elsewhere in Canada, of people descended from estate owners in Imperial Russia. Several autobiographies by persons related to the interviewees, such as Helene Goossen and Paul Klassen, included detailed information about estates (Wintergruen and Prigorye respectively) owned by their forebears (see bibliography of *Mennonite Estates*). Photo albums by Walter Quiring, with Helen Bartel, and also two editions of *Heritage Remembered* by Gerhard Lohrenz, had offered extensive photo data on this theme earlier. A topic once known to be highly understudied was being fleshed out significantly.

Helmut Huebert has now provided a most useful tool to view the bigger picture of this very important part of the Mennonite story in Russia and Ukraine. He refers to the volume as "an index of Mennonite estates in Imperial Russia" in the period of 1813 to 1920. His Table of Contents quickly reveals that his work is considerably broader than simply an index as the word is normally understood. It is that, to be sure, as its core, and to have listed nearly 1,200 estates with a brief profile for each (pp. 1-235) is to highlight a remarkable new facet of Russian Mennonite research which will be eagerly poured over by many.

Not everyone may be fully rewarded. Huebert readily admits that there may be estates of which he did not see recorded information, hence they are omitted from his study. But those may be dozens rather than the hundreds he did locate. Other "soft spots" in his research are conceded in his introduction. There are indeed additional facets of Mennonite estate history which call for more research. A case in point would be employer-employee relations, especially as it concerned non-Mennonite workers. Sandra Birdsell's novel *The Russlaenders*, brought that theme to the fore several years ago. May someone rise to the

challenge to give us a well-done volume on this theme also.

In the work as it stands, one can also find name lists of Mennonite estate owners, managers and teachers, brief biographies of eight well-known estate owners such as Johann Cornies, David Dick, and Herman Abram Bergman. A Bergthal estate owner, Kornelius Buhr (profiled earlier by William Schroeder in *The Bergthal Colony*), shows up here also. Photos from various estates, and owners connected with them are included on pp. 382-411. A significant amount of bibliographical material included separately, and in part with the biographies, will be helpful to delve into estate studies more deeply.

The amount of data amassed here, and the range of sources searched, are in themselves very impressive. The book is well organized, though some might wish a somewhat more obvious cross-referencing of the estate plans to the general maps of Mennonite settlements to locate a particular estate more quickly. Photo reproduction is somewhat less than excellent in some instances (more so in cases, it would appear, where originals were simply not available). Occasionally dates of publications are omitted (e.g. the Al Reimer article, p. 320). Some researchers will wish to know the location of the oft-cited *Forsteilist* of 1908 (p. x). It is found at least in the Mennonite Heritage Centre Archives, and the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, both in Winnipeg, as well as Mennonite Library and Archives, North Newton, Kansas, where, in fact the list was first discovered by Urry).

The numerous maps of the volume are generally very well-crafted and clearly executed. It is a skill pioneered by William Schroeder, of Winnipeg, and then honed by this author in the publication of several earlier volumes of maps – the *Mennonite Historical Atlas* (done jointly with Schroeder) and then most recently the *Molotschna Historical Atlas* (2003).

Marketing Mennonite historical atlases dealing with the Russian experience has been, a rather happy experience. This volume will likely do well also in this respect once the news is out there that this work is in print. It will be a good buy – a very commendable addition to Mennonite literature on the Russian experience prior to 1917. It is rumoured that another related study (*Mennonites in the Cities of Imperial Russia*) is in the making by this author, and we await it eagerly as well.

## Book Notes

by Adolf Ens

*They Came from Wiesenfeld, Ukraine, to Canada: Family Stories*, was compiled, translated, edited and published (2005, 216 pages) by Katherine Martens, Winnipeg. This remarkable collection of documents (memoirs, recollections, interviews, diary excerpts, photographs) documents the story of the village of Wiesenfeld, founded 1880 near Pavlograd (not far from the Samara River) and destroyed in 1919 by Makhno bandits. A map of the village layout and stories of most of the families who founded and lived in the village helps to visualize the community and its Mennonite Brethren congregation.

Readers who know Dick H. Epp as editor of the *Saskatchewan Mennonite Historian* appreciate his short, pithy articles and clean, artistic photos. Both of these traits show up in the first modest volume of his memoirs, *From Between the Tracks, 1927–1952* (Saskatoon: Eppiside Publications, 2004), 151 pages. Each of the 46 chapters is a story in itself, written over an extended period of time, compiled and edited to chronicle Epp's recollections of the years when his family lived at Glenbush, Saskatchewan. His teaching career took the author to rural districts in the Glenbush area as well as to Yellowknife. Readers will look forward to a second volume.

Mary Guenther's *Searching for Eternal Values: One Man's Pilgrimage* (Warman, Saskatchewan: Mary & Peter Guenther, 2003), is an authorized biography of George Loewen. Loewen grew up in the Hague, Saskatchewan area, worked some 15 years fighting forest fires in the Burns Lake area of northern British Columbia and served as a minister in the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church. Later he became a traveling missionary with the Shanteymen (1972–1979) and Coastal Missions (1980–1991), serving communities along the BC coast. The 176-page book reads easily and is well illustrated.

*Mennonitengeschichte: Paraguay in Bildern*, (Filadelfia: Allgemeine Schulbehörde, 2002) is the second edition of a Mennonite history, used as a text book for grade 6 in Mennonite schools in Paraguay. About 80% of the 70-page book is devoted to photos, maps, charts

(cont'd on p. 6)