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# Mennonite Historian

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

**Audrey Voth Petkau (right), TourMagination President, accepts a gift of naan bread on a 2013 tour of Uzbekistan. See story starting on page 2.**

## Contents

# They sang *Through the Desert Goes Our Journey*

*by John E. Sharp, Hesston, Kansas*

*Through the desert goes our journey, to the blessed promised land,*
*Since the slavery of Egypt, and its toil was left behind,*
*Since His people were accepted; purchased through His precious blood,*
*Since we heard His call to follow, and were baptized in the flood.*

Five wagon trains carrying about 900 Mennonites from Ukraine and Samara travelled eastward to Central Asia in the years 1880–1882. Escaping the Russian Empire's military conscription, these pilgrims were also propelled by a millennial vision of Christ's Second Coming somewhere in the East. While awaiting that great apocalyptic event, they would prepare a refuge for the many faithful who would flee from the Antichrist's Tribulation in the democratic West. Having negotiated with kings and queens for generations, they imagined democratic societies to be chaotic, surely the home of the Antichrist.

When they reached Tashkent, the current capital of Uzbekistan, debates about leadership, the apocalypse, and their destination divided them—some going to what is now Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, and the others deeper into Uzbekistan. The latter roamed from Zerebulak to Ebenezer to Lauzan to Ak-Metchet, in the kingdoms of Bukhara and Khiva. The khan, the king or ruler, of Bukhara feared the pork-eating, somberly dressed, German-speaking Mennonites with unveiled women would be a bad influence on his Islamic citizens. And yet, they sang

*Through the desert goes our journey, yet we find dome valleys fair,*
*Where a grove of palms is greeting, what a place for resting there!*
*And where no more palms are growing, where begins the desert sand,*
*At the edge of narrow rivulets, still some willows bears the land.*

At Zerebulak, villagers invited Mennonites in 1881 to share the use of their mosque, known as Kyk-Ota or Blue Grandfather. Here the pilgrims baptized, married, and held funeral services. Such hospitality!

On the last TourMagination excursion through this area in 2013, Mr. Karimov, a local businessman, served us tea, naan, cookies, peanuts, and dried fruit in his house. Then he told us about his ancestor, a caravan merchant, who sent Mennonites on their way with gifts and money.

I asked why?

He said, "It's the teaching of Muhammad and the Koran. We are commanded to care for strangers and pilgrims. Such hospitality is also common among Uzbeks."

Mr. Karimov promised to "kill the fatted calf" and entertain us with traditional games on our next trip, September 21 to October 3, 2019.

Again, such hospitality!

But there was no such kindness shown to the Mennonites at Ebenezer, so named as a remembrance: "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." There, the khan's men destroyed their newly built village, saying that the khan had not given permission to build here. They tossed possessions and reluctant people onto carts and hurried them away. School teacher Martin Klaassen, who had just died, was given a hasty burial.

In 2010, when the TourMagination group visited Ebenezer, Uzbekistan, we were told of a "German" buried there. Imagining it to be Martin's grave, Klaassen descendants—Elizabeth, Irene, and Menno—and our tour group enacted a ritual of memory.

They continued to sing

*Through the desert goes our journey, even in the greatest need,*
*Which not earthly things would sweeten, God with heavenly manna feed.*
*He will save His suffering people, where there seems no other way.*
*Yet through earnest prayer is victory, o'or the strongest enemy.*

Finally, Khan Muhammad Rahim II of Khiva allowed the pilgrims to settle in a remote corner of his kingdom by the Lausan Irrigation Canal. To reach this place, they hired 300 (or 450?) camels for a dramatic crossing of the Kizilkum Desert.

Pilgrim Jacob Klaassen described the setting: "Now we moved into the desolate, awful, silent desert where the eye saw nothing but sand upon sand. Here we could rightly sing *Our Journey Leads Through the Desert*."

But Lausan was an ill-fated settlement. Turkman tribesmen robbed them repeatedly, until the new settlers had hardly a horse or a cow left. A failed attempt to kidnap an attractive Mennonite woman,

*(cont'd on p. 4)*

**Giving thanks for the gift of hospitality in 1881–1882 and in 2008 (l-r): Harlan Unrau, Hushnud Abdurasulov, our host Mr. Karimov, Elizabeth Klaassen Stauffer, and Cleora Warkentin.** Photo credit for the cover image and this image: John E. Sharp.

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# Genealogy and Family History

## The Spelling of Mennonite Surnames: The Importance of Signatures

*by Glenn H. Penner <gpenner@uoguelph.ca>*

One of the most contentious issues in Mennonite genealogy is that of the spelling of family names. Sometimes people assume that the spelling of their surname has remained the same over many generations. This is then followed by another assumption: that a family with a differently spelled variation of their surname simply cannot be related. In both cases, the evidence does not backup these assumptions. So, the question is: how does one determine, with reasonable certainty, how one's surname was spelled in the past?

Several important points that a Mennonite genealogist must realize are that a) consistent spelling of surnames simply did not exist until the late 1800s, b) most of the resources used by genealogists such as census lists, church registers, and immigration lists were not written by their ancestors, but by people who were uninterested in how a person's surname was spelled, and c) the only way to really see how your ancestor spelled their name is to find a signature, or exact copy of a signature.

We live in a society where the spelling of a person's name is fixed and is supposed to be recorded exactly in official documentation. We also live in a society where there are those who are incredibly fussy about how their name is recorded, even in routine and unimportant situations. If we go back about 150 years or earlier, neither of these situations existed among our ancestors in Russia.

Prior to the 1870s, births, baptisms, marriages, and deaths were recorded in German by the Mennonite church. The Guardianship Committee for Foreign Settlers in South Russia also kept German and Russian language lists of births, marriages, and deaths.[1] These, and most other records from this time period, are *not* reliable sources for determining the spelling of a surname.

One can often see that an individual's name is spelled differently in these different "official" documents—mainly because the office clerk recording the name was not primarily concerned about the spelling of the name. Many individuals themselves did not seem to care how their name appeared on documents. Indeed, even when looking at the actual signatures, one can see that individuals signed *their own names* differently on different documents. See photo #1.

So, where does one go in order to find signatures from more than 150 years ago? Going back to Prussia during the time period before the 1820s (the last big emigration to Russia) there is one major source—land and property records. These records, known as *Grundakten* and *Grundbücher*, were started by the Prussian government in 1783. Although less than 50% of these records have survived, they take up well over a linear kilometer of shelf space in the various Polish archives.

Between 2012 and 2015, I was able to copy over 20,000 images of Mennonite property records.[3] See photo #2. One must keep a few things in mind while looking for signatures in these documents. First, they cover only landowners, and during this time about one-quarter of Mennonite families did not own land.[5] Second, many of the documents are copies of older documents, or of documents that were sent elsewhere. Compare the signature with the handwriting in the rest of the document. If the handwriting is the same as the signature, it is likely a copy. This means that you do not have an original signature, but you do have the spelling of the signer's name. Third, many Mennonite ancestors apparently could not sign their own name.

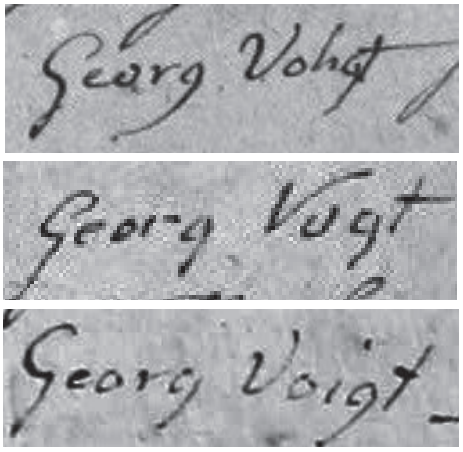


**Photo 1: Georg Vogt (1775–1825) signed his name differently in three separate documents: a) 1817, b) 1822, and c) 1823.[2]**

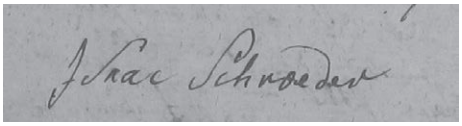


**Photo 2: The 1783 signature of Isaac Schroeder (1738–1789) in the property records of Klein Lubin, West Prussia.[4]**

These last two points apply to each of the documents I have mentioned here, not just Prussian property records.

With respect to emigration and immigration records, there is only one source—the Prussian Mennonite emigration requests for 1803–1805. These are in the Berlin archives and are the copies sent to Berlin from the various administrative centers in West Prussia.[6] Even though the originals are lost, these handwritten copies include the copied (not original) signatures of the heads of the households who wished to emigrate.

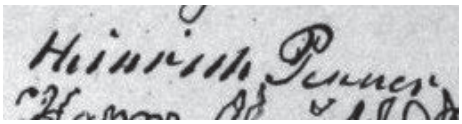


**Photo 3: My ancestor, Heinrich Penner (1778–1870) of Kronsthal, Chortitza colony, signed a village agreement (*Gemeinde Spruch*) in 1840.[7]**

The Guardianship committee mentioned above was started around 1800 and was dissolved around 1870. There are hundreds of thousands of pages of Guardianship committee records still in Ukrainian archives (Odessa and Dnipro). Most of the Mennonite records from Odessa have been microfilmed or digitally copied. These documents contain thousands of signatures. The images can be viewed at many North American Mennonite archives (they are not online). See photo #3.

To Summarize:

1) Spelling variations of the same surname should not be confused with surnames which are very similar.

2) Spellings of both first names and surnames were "fluid" in that they not only could change from one generation to the next, but individuals could change the spelling of their names during their lives.

3) If one really wants to know how one's ancestor spelled his or her surname, one needs to see an original signature or exact copy.

4) These signatures are available on many hundreds of documents going back to the late 1700s.

*(cont'd on p. 8)*

## Mennonite Journey to Central Asia

*(cont'd from p. 2)*

whose husband was killed in the attack, was the last straw for 20 families, who in 1884 migrated to Kansas and Nebraska.

Jacob Klaassen wrote about the crisis: "It soon became clear to our fathers that not only was our existence in question in these circumstances, but a basic principle of our faith, non-violence, if we did not all want to be killed, and that therefore we could not stay here. Consequently, the thought of an emigration to America, where many of our fellow believers had found full religious freedom, came more and more to the fore."

Hearing about the devastating attacks, a now-sympathetic Khan Rahim II, invited the remaining 40 families to settle in a 13-acre garden, eight miles from the ancient Silk Road city of Khiva. He sent 100 high-wheeled donkey carts to carry their belongings to the place the locals would call Ak-Metchet or White Mosque. Confidently, the people sang

*Through the desert goes our journey. Trust Him still, He will provide!*
*When our lusts He crucifieth, when He takes away our pride.*
*Even in the greatest trials, praise Him, for He goes before*
*And prepares a place in heaven, there on Canaan's happy shore.*

Having now a more permanent place, the Mennonites built the village in a square with the church building and the school in the center. The whitewashed church building inspired the village name.

Ever industrious, the new settlers got to work, sewing, producing milk, butter and cheese, growing new fruits and vegetables, and importing better breeds of cows. The khan was pleased to discover skilled craftsmen and hired them to build windows and doors, paint colorful ceilings, build Dutch ovens, and lay a lovely parquet floor in his summer palace. They also built a hospital and a post office—both still standing.

The group lived peacefully with their Muslim villagers and contributed to the local economy. For 50 years they were undisturbed, hardly noticing World War I and the change of government when the Soviets took over. When the local Soviet government in 1925 was about to streamline the cultural, economic, and religious life of the Mennonites according to the Marxian doctrines, the Ak-Mechet group simply sent a delegation to Moscow and received from Soviet President Kalinin a document guaranteeing that they could continue their way of life unmolested, which turned out to be temporary. Their Asiatic neighbours, however, were forced to join the collectives.

Ten years later in 1935, the Soviets again ordered the Mennonite community to collectivize. When they refused, ten leaders were arrested and publicly tried as counterrevolutionaries. They gave a vigorous testimony, lasting far into the night. As could be expected, the ten men were sentenced to be shot, but the deportation of the ten families caught them by surprise.

On the day after the trial, Soviet trucks appeared to take the families into exile. All the Mennonite women of the village streamed out, clustered on and around the trucks, piled inside, and lay down in front of the wheels, chanting, "All or none. You take all of us or none of us." The Soviet agents walked away, leaving the trucks behind and returning to Khiva. A few days later, more trucks came to take the entire village. Thus, the Mennonites of Ak-Mechet were forced to leave the place that had been their refuge for more than half a century.

They were taken to the city of Samarkand by truck, ship, and train, where they were then transported unceremoniously in trucks 100 miles southeast into a desert. Here, in what was called Village 7, they were forced to pioneer with the few tools that they could bring. By day, they hitched themselves to plows, and at night, they had to build their own housing. A Soviet mayor made sure there would be no praying, preaching, or singing.

Wondering if people in Khiva and Ak-Metchet remembered the Mennonites, Jim Juhnke and Sharon Eicher from Bethel College, Kansas, planned a tour in 2007. They were surprised to discover that not only were the Mennonites remembered, the city of Khiva was working on a museum exhibit to feature them.

Why?

"Because Mennonites taught us to farm and contributed to the local economy."

The Kauffman Museum, North Newton, Kansas, partnered with the Khiva Ichan Kala (inner city) museum, contributing photos and captions and raising money. My tour group intended to be present for the 2010 grand opening, but fearing religious extremism, the government interfered and shut down the exhibit.

Now, with a new government in place, the museum exhibit opened in April of this year. At long last, the TourMagination group will see what Uzbeks remember about the Mennonite community of Ak-Metchet—and their long journey through the desert.

*John E. Sharp is a retired history and Bible professor from Heston (KS) College and a tour leader for TourMagination with tours to Western Europe (Switzerland, Netherlands, Germany, France, Austria), Poland, and Uzbekistan. See https://www.tourmagination.com/.*

## The Mill on the Tock

*by Andreas Tissen, Germany, and translated by Elfrieda Neufeld Schroeder, Winnipeg*

After the Soviet Union dissolved or resettled most of the German colonies following the Russian Revolution and civil war, the memory of many of the successful Mennonite business undertakings faded. A few of the colonists who lived farther to the east in the Soviet Union were able to keep their houses. However, their colony status was removed, and well-to-do entrepreneurs had their property expropriated and they were sent to "special" work settlements. Neu Samara shared this devastating fate with many other colonies. The Communists not only changed the village structure, but eventually the Mennonite factories were also taken over by the state and new ones were established.

Neu Samara experienced another huge change in the 1990s, when, following the collapse of Soviet communism, most of the remaining descendants of the early Mennonite settlers emigrated from the former Soviet Union. Today, there is very little in the former Neu Samara colony that reminds one of its Mennonite identity and its economic success.

I would like to review the memory of the Mennonite past of this colony by introducing one of the best-known business undertakings of Neu Samara.

Pleschanowo was the central village of the newly established Neu Samara settlement, a daughter colony of the Molotschna colony. Around 1890, Johann Wall[3,8,9] (1852–1915)[21] from Kleefeld, Molotschna, moved to the Neu Samara settlement. He constructed a water mill right beside Pleschanowo on the Tock River.[1,2] The existence of the "Mill on the

Tock" most certainly contributed to the success of the colony. The flour mill was known far beyond Neu Samara and people were happy to use it to process their grain.

When other colonists came to this daughter colony in the 1890s, they first found accommodation in the mill structure. They lived and held their worship services there until they had built their own homes.[2] The mill was their first shelter for both social and spiritual life, especially at the beginning of the settlement.

The first mill was still driven by paddlewheel. However, owner Johann Wall soon had it rebuilt so that it was driven by turbine. For the water to be directed to the turbines of the mill, the river had to be held back by a dam. Every year, when the snow began to melt, the dam had to be pierced in order to release the excess water and avoid a dam breakage. After that, the river was dammed again and the work in the mill could resume. At that time, the annual dam maintenance was done with horses, shovels, and manpower. Each of the villages of the settlement was assigned certain work- and horse-days.[2]

When the mill could no longer satisfy the increasing need to process grain, Johann Wall built a second mill (around 1906) on the opposite side of the river.[4,5] It was an impressive, five-storey building and its facilities could well be compared to any first-class steam-powered mill of that time period.[2] The mill employees lived and worked on the farmyard (*Chutor*).

Some idea of the value of the mill can be determined from government documents. In order to finance the Mennonite Forest Service as an alternative service during World War I, a list of Mennonite businesses was commissioned, and their values calculated. In Neu Samara, there were five such businesses. The "Mill on the Tock" was evaluated at 20,000 Rubel, the business of highest value.[6]

That same year, two notices were published in the *Friedensstimme* newspaper advertising that the mill was for sale, because Johann Wall wished to leave the business life. The sale took place a year later and Johann Wall moved to Davlekanovo, Ufa.[1] One can assume that the mill was sold for approximately 20,000 Rubel.

The new owner of the "Mill on the Tock," consisting of two water mills with living accommodations and several farm buildings,[7] was Johann Tessmann[10] (1848–1922)[21] from Marienthal, Molotschna. In total, five reports from him or his wife[11,12,13,14,15] appeared in the *Mennonitische Rundschau* (MR) newspaper. Thanks to these reports, a description of the Tessmann family enterprise is possible. Mrs. Tessmann reports that they had so much to do that they worked day and night.

**The remains of the flour mill in the former Neu Samara Mennonite settlement as photographed in July 2018.** Photo credit for both of the images used in this article: Andreas Tissen.

It is not known how long Johann Tessmann managed the work at the mill. According to the MR, the mill still belonged to him in 1914. Beginning in 1920,[21] the next owner appeared in Neu Samara. The sale occurred sometime in those years. Johann Tessmann died several years later in nearby Bogomasowo.[17]

The third and last owner was Jakob Hübert[16,18] (1875–?).[21] He originally came from Wernersdorf, Molotschna, and before he came to the "Mill on the Tock," he owned a machine factory in Totschki, a Russian village near the colony of Orenburg.[22] With the rise of communism and the following collectivization, he experienced a difficult time on the *Chutor* at Tock. Everything he owned became public property in 1929.

Jakob Hübert was able to flee and, at first, found refuge with his brother, Kornelius, in Dolinsk, a neighbouring village. Apparently, he attempted to immigrate to Canada. Former residents of the colony think that the flight to Canada was successful.[2] However, it seems that this was not the case. According to the "commemorative book of the region of Samara," he was arrested in 1938.[23] In 1941, he and his family were "resettled" in the region of Karaganda.[23] The date of his death is unknown.

Thanks to the report in the MR, we learn something about the key to the success of these three owners of "The Mill on the Tock." It was their faith in God that gave them the strength and the courage to begin and to carry on with the milling enterprise. Here, in the newly established daughter colony, they were again pioneers who counted on God. The success is measured by the result.

Neu Samara had just started to prosper when the Russian Revolution began, bringing new difficulties. The Communists took over and did away with private ownership. With the loss of ownership through the Red government (1929),[2] there was a decline in the management of the mill. In 1928 and 1931, the mill was still referred to as *Chutor am Tock*. Admittedly, of course, no owner was mentioned.[19,20]

As a child, Abram Warkentin spent some time in the mill because his father was a bookkeeper there. In his book, *Träume und Alltagsleben*,[24] he describes the situation in the mill after the loss of ownership as follows: "They put the worker Wanjakin from Sorotschinsk in charge, but

*(cont'd on p. 8)*

Mennonite Heritage Archives

## Ed Enns: Twenty-two Years of Volunteering

*by Dan Dyck, MHA volunteer writer*

Ed Enns gets teary eyed when he talks about the journals of Adina Epp, a young Russian Mennonite woman teaching and studying in Germany. She was innocently caught up in the chaos of Germany in the midst of World War II.

Enns, 93, a volunteer at the Mennonite Heritage Archives (MHA) since the mid-1990s, has translated 78 pages of Epp's diaries from handwritten Gothic German to English. Though his day-to-day memory fails him now, he concedes, his detailed memories of Epp's story do not.

With a breaking voice, he describes her gifted story telling—her covert and daring nighttime escape from Berlin via the *SS Volendam* to South America, tales of men flirting with her on board, of love and loss. Her journal entries were special, said Enns, highly descriptive, spirited, and open—not the usual bland weather and crop reports common to many Mennonite diarists.

The multi-gifted Enns has been a pastor, a director of Camp Assiniboia in Manitoba, a chair and member of many committees of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, and from 1975–1983, its Executive Secretary. His life of service has spanned Canada (Manitoba, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario) including a stint in Germany.

But what he really loves talking about these days is his volunteer translation work at MHA in Winnipeg. The list of his projects is long and would include thousands of pages of translations.

It began in the mid-1990s while Enns was still pastoring and teaching. The archives were then under the direction of Lawrence Klippenstein, a friend and fellow graduate of Canadian Mennonite Bible College. Enns was asked to organize a rapidly growing book, newspaper, and magazine collection.

While still working, Enns began volunteering casually. He was soon caught up in the compelling stories captured in the fragile and curling pages of family collections in the archive vault. His work intensified upon retirement. "I found myself very interested in all that stuff. I enjoyed it. It drove me to tears from time to time," he said.

When he discovered and compiled about 80 letters his grandfather, Abraham Ens, had written in the German language newspaper, *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, Enns was hooked. He began researching his father's family history, which eventually led him to publish the history and stories of his family's male lineage dating back to his great-great grandfather, also Abraham Ens, born in 1795.

**Ed Enns being interviewed about his volunteer work at MHA.** Photo credit: Dan Dyck.

Enns is a bridge between computer technology and old, handwritten Gothic German script. His first computer was a Tandy model. One of very few MHA volunteers still able to read Gothic German script in both handwritten and typeset forms, he would painstakingly translate the German into handwritten English, then enter it into his word processor.

Translation carries much responsibility, Enns says. "I was always very careful" to translate the writings of others as objectively as possible. He credits his father, who also happened to be his schoolteacher and had very meticulous penmanship, for teaching him Gothic German.

Archivist Conrad Stoesz is beyond grateful for such careful and caring translation skills, which are becoming rare. "Extended families and researchers, those alive now and those yet to be born, owe Ed a great debt of gratitude. Without his work, the secrets and mysteries locked in these old documents and diaries might never come to light," said Stoesz.

Enns muses that while the translation work has been enjoyable, a significant part of his interest has been in publishing the work. Translation is fine and good, he says, but if it's not published and released into the world, the stories will languish on a shelf, unable to share the wealth of history and wisdom of their characters for future generations.

Not everyone recognizes this, he says,

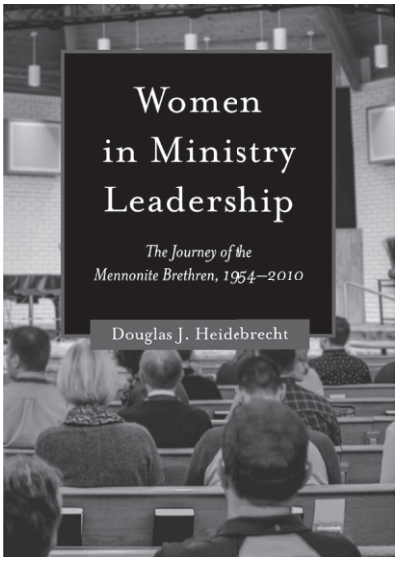
*(cont'd on p. 8)*


**On July 24, 2019, the MHA hosted a talk by Bernhard Thiessen of Berlin, Germany. He is researching the history of the Mennonite church in the former East Germany and spent two weeks in the MHA. His presentation to a full house included stories of the East German secret police (Stasi) trying to infiltrate the Mennonite Church. Bernhard says, "It's amazing to come so far from Berlin, Germany, to Winnipeg, Canada, to find important documents which were written in my home town. Thanks for keeping them in the archives!"** Photo credit: Conrad Stoesz.

## Historical Commission Launches Book and Awards Six Research Grants

*by Jon Isaak*

The Mennonite Brethren Historical Commission met June 7 and 8 for its annual general meeting, this year in Fresno, California, at Fresno Pacific University. On Friday evening, it hosted a reception with Doug Heidebrecht, author of the newly released *Women in Ministry Leadership: The Journey of the Mennonite Brethren, 1954–2010*. This is the latest publication of the Commission.




The book documents the Mennonite Brethren attempt to find consensus around convictions and practice regarding the role of women in church ministry and leadership. Karla Braun summarizes the book on the MB Herald website (mbherald.com/wiml-journey) and copies can be ordered online at Kindred Productions (kindredproductions.com).

At the meeting, the Commission heard reports from its four archives, awarded six research grants, and made plans for ways to continue to serve MB congregations, not only in the US and Canada, but globally.

A Katie Funk Wiebe Research Grant of $1,300 was awarded to Dora Dueck for her memoir-essay project: "On Being a Woman in the MB Church." While Doug Heidebrecht's book, *Women in Ministry Leadership: The Journey of the Mennonite Brethren, 1954–2010*, documents the deliberations at the conference board and executive level, the Commission was intrigued by Dora's proposal to fill out with personal reflections the debates that Doug narrated in his book.

An MB Studies Project Grant of $500 was awarded to Michael VandenEnden for his project that analyzes the "corporate language" used by Mennonite Brethren over time, as revealed in the "conference sermons" published in the Canadian Conference of MB Churches' yearbooks. The Commission felt that such a retrospective longitudinal study on the evolving ecclesiological assumptions may be helpful to better understand contemporary MB church organizational praxis.

An Archival Development Grant of $2,000 was awarded to the Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan for its oral history project: "Mennonites from Under-Represented Backgrounds in Saskatchewan." The Commission noted the significance of documenting Mennonite diversity and was impressed by the project design that includes partnership with the history department at the University of Saskatchewan.

An MB Studies Project Grant of $1,000 was awarded to Injamuri (I.P.) Asheervadam to help fund an anniversary book to celebrate the hundredth birthday in 2020 of the Mennonite Brethren Centenary Bible College in Shamshabad, India. The projected book is themed "Equip to Serve for Effective Witness in India for a Century and Beyond," which is based on the college's motto (Ephesians 4:12). The Commission is pleased to help Principal I.P. Asheervadam and his staff mark this significant occasion for Mennonite Brethren in India.

An MB Studies Project Grant of $1,300 was awarded to Christine Longhurst for phase two of her project that explores the rise of contemporary worship patterns in Canadian Mennonite Brethren churches over the past 30–40 years, specifically the shift from traditional, hymn-based congregational song to contemporary worship music. This is a follow-up to Christine's award last year and will help fund travel to collect more first-hand accounts of the process from those who held leadership roles in MB churches and institutions during the transition years.

An MB Studies Project Grant of $1,000 was awarded to Jayaker Yennamalla to help fund his ongoing research in two particular areas: "Mennonite Brethren Mission in India Then and Now: The Need for Ongoing Renewal" and "Violence against Dalit Women in India: Mennonite Response." Professor Jayaker teaches at the Mennonite Brethren Centenary Bible College in Shamshabad, India. With such grants, the Commission aims to encourage scholarship by Mennonite Brethren outside the US and Canada.

Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies

A J.B. Toews $1,000 college scholarship was awarded to Marnie Klassen of Canadian Mennonite University.

Currently, the Commission funds six initiatives: an archival internship, Katie Funk Wiebe research grants, MB studies project grants, J.B. Toews college scholarships, GAMEO stipends, and archival development grants. For details about these initiatives—and photos of this year's recipients and the news releases announcing past recipients—see the Commission's website, which has been newly redesigned (mbhistory.org).

The Commission works with a network of four Mennonite Brethren archival centers: Center for MB Studies (Hillsboro, Kansas), Mennonite Library & Archives (Fresno, California), Mennonite Historical Society of BC (Abbotsford, British Columbia), and Centre for MB Studies (Winnipeg, Manitoba).

Since its formation in 1969, the Commission has helped coordinate the collection, preservation, and interpretation of Mennonite Brethren archival records: congregational meeting minutes, conference proceedings, personal papers, periodicals, and photographs.

More information about the work of the Commission, a funded ministry of both the US Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches and the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, is available on its website (mbhistory.org).

Mennonite Brethren HISTORICAL COMMISSION

## The Mill on the Tock

*(cont'd from p. 5)*

he understood very little about running the mill and was lazy to boot. He was seen less often in the mill than a butterfly is seen in late fall. He felt more comfortable in the city pub with his companions. The business in the mill quickly went downhill. The former employees couldn't abide the resulting disorder and, one after another, they left the business. In spring, no one was there to protect the mill against the flooding. The turbine which stood on the canal was torn away by the river. The main building was also damaged. It no longer functioned."

In 1936, the five-storey mill was reopened, but the old mill on the other side of the river was closed. The five-storey mill functioned into the 21st century but has not operated for about 15 years and is now deteriorating. The solid construction of burnt brick, however, resists decay.

According to unconfirmed information, a few young entrepreneurs have banded together and bought both the mill and the premises (as of July 2018). They plan to set up a resort with a beach along the Tock River. They have already cleared the area between the mill and the river, which had become quite heavily forested over time. The terrain is being freed of boulders and rubble. I saw the cleaned-up riverbank when I visited Neu Samara in the summer of 2018.

The five-storey mill is one of the few remaining buildings that continues to bear witness to the accomplishments of the former Mennonite settlers in Neu Samara.

*Andreas Tissen's ancestors were among the first Mennonite settlers in Neu Samara and he himself was born there. Today, he and his wife live with their three children in Minden, Germany. He works as an electronics engineer and, in his spare time, enjoys Mennonite history research.*

**Interior view of the old flour mill on the Tock River as photographed in July 2018.**

## Endnotes

1. *Mennonitische Rundschau* (MR), 1 June 1960, 5.
2. J.H. Brucks and H. Hooge, *Neu Samara am Tock (1890–2003): A Mennonite settlement in Russia, East of the Volga* (Warendorf, 2003), 63, 97, 142.
3. Список населенных мест Самарской Губернии. Составлен в 1900 году Секретарем Самарского Губернского Статистического Комитета И. А. Протопоповым. Самара. 1900.
4. MR, 10 August 1904, 10.
5. MR, 4 July 1906, 5, 10.
6. *Bericht des Bevollmaechtigten der Samarischen Doerfer, Ueber das Vermoegen der Handel- und Gewerbetreibenden* [Report from the spokesperson of the villages of Samara about the belongings of the business and trades people].
7. *Friedensstimme*, 1908, no. 3, 4.
8. Фабрично-заводские предприятия Российской Империи. Составитель Л. К. Езиоранский. С.-Петербург. 1909.
9. Список фабрик и заводов 1910 г. По официальным данным фабричного, податного и горного надзора. Москва, С-Петербург, Варшава.
10. Список населенных мест Самарской Губернии. Самара. Губернская типография. 1910.
11. MR, 11 September 1912, 11.
12. MR, 15 January 1913, 12.
13. MR, 16 April 1913, 9, 14.
14. MR, 27 August 1913, 14.
15. MR, 15 April 1914, 14, 15.
16. MR, 4 March 1959, 1.
17. List of the deceased in Bogomasowo, Neu Samaravon, Johann Funk.
18. General census of 1926, local list of homeowners.
19. Список населенных пунктов Самарской Губернии с алфавитным указателем. Самара. 1928.
20. Списки населенных пунктов Средне-Волжского Края. Издание Средне-Волжского Крайисполкома. Самара. 1931.
21. Genealogical Registry and Database of Mennonite Ancestry (GRANDMA) record no. 98146.
22. MR, 19 December 1906, 11.
23. Книга памяти Самарской обл (Gedenkbuch des Samara Bezirk).
24. Abram Warkentin, *Träume und Alltagsleben: Erinnerungen eines ehemaligen Journalisten in Rußland* (Libri Books on Demand, 2000), 21, 22.

## Signatures

*(cont'd from p. 3)*

5) Document signatures need to be verified to determine if the "signature" is not just a copy made by the person who copied the original document.

6) The possibility that one's ancestor may not have even been able to sign his or her name must be considered. This appears to have been the case for a significant number of people.

7) Since the head of the household was usually the husband/father, it is unlikely that one will find signatures of females in the above-mentioned documents.

## Endnotes

1. See http://www.mennonitegenealogy.com/russia/ for examples.
2. From the civil registers of Kazun Polski, which include the Mennonites of the nearby Deutsch Kazun congregation.
3. See https://mla.bethelks.edu/metadata/VI_53.html.
4. Property records of Klein Lubin, Blatt4. Bydgoszcz Archives, Poland. Fond 1880 File 316: https://mla.bethelks.edu/archives/VI_53/Bydgoszcz/Klein%20Lubin/LubinBlatt4BydgoszczArchivesFond1880File316/.
5. This is based on the 1776 census of Mennonites in West Prussia. See http://www.mennonitegenealogy.com/prussia/1776_West_Prussia_Census.pdf.
6. *Mennonite Historian*, March 2016, 3.
7. Odessa State Archives Fond 6, Inventory 1, File 5730.

## Ed Enns: Twenty-two Years

*(cont'd from p. 6)*

observing that in several cases he's gently poked and prodded and even provoked reluctant family members to publish their forebears' stories. In several cases, his volunteer efforts have extended to finding funding to publish. And it doesn't need to be a fancy hardcover book. In one case, he negotiated a good photocopying deal with a

Staples outlet. These stories need to see the light of day, he insists, so that the children and grandchildren can get a sense of where their ancestors came from, the risks and joys and challenges they experienced.

No longer able to volunteer, he's still hoping to learn the rest of Adina Epp's life story. Her diaries end abruptly in South America. He knows she moved around in South America, eventually settling in Canada, and passed away in British Columbia a few years ago. But what happened to her in between? Did she marry one of the romantic interests she so vividly wrote about? Were there other stops in between? When and why did she end up in Canada?

For his part, Ed hopes that someone from Epp's family will step up and fill him in on the rest of her life adventures. And it won't matter to him if it's in German or English.

## In Memoriam: Horst Gerlach (1929–2018)

*by Peter Letkemann, Winnipeg*

Dr. Horst Gerlach died in Heidelberg on Sunday, September 30, 2018, and was buried on October 6, 2018, in the cemetery of the Weierhof Mennonitengemeinde, where he had been a member since 1967.

Dr. Gerlach was born on the Gerlach family farm in the village of Neuendorf-Höhe near Elbing in East Prussia on February 5, 1929. He was the third of five sons born to Erna (née Meckelburger/ Mekelburger, of Mennonite background) and Paul Gerlach. His father was a wealthy, estate-owner of Lutheran background. His ancestors had come to East Prussia in the 18th century as part of a large group of Protestant families that had been persecuted and evicted from the Catholic Region of Salzburg, Austria, in the 1730s. The majority of these Protestants settled in East Prussia at the invitation of King Frederick Wilhelm I.

Horst Gerlach lived through the turbulent years of the Third Reich and wrote extensively on this traumatic period of his life. On January 23, 1945, the family estate was overrun by Soviet Red Army troops. His father was arrested by NKVD (Soviet secret police) officers in early February 1945—the day before Horst's 16th birthday—and never seen again. His mother was also imprisoned for a short time. Horst Gerlach himself

**Horst Gerlach, 1992**

was taken prisoner a few days later, and eventually transported via Moscow and Kotlas to the Labour Camp Ischma in the Komi ASSR (Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic) along with several thousand other Germans. After almost two years of unimaginable hardships, chopping down trees and building railway embankments in the harsh northern climate, the 17-year old Horst was released on November 27, 1946. He was not allowed to go "home"—since his *Heimat* no longer existed—but returned instead to Soviet-occupied Thüringen, East Germany. He found temporary employment as a farmhand, but life and work under Soviet occupation was not to his liking. In the spring of 1947, he was able to escape across the border into the British Occupied Zone of West Germany, where he again found employment as a farmhand near Hannover.

While attending a youth retreat near Hamburg in 1951, led by Mennonite leaders Erwin Cornelsen, Gustav Reimer, and Leonhard Froese, Gerlach learned about the MCC sponsored farm-trainee program. He was accepted into this program, and, during the year from October 1951 to fall 1952, he worked for six months in Doland, South Dakota, and then another six months in New Paris, Indiana, near Goshen. Here in Indiana, he attended a George Brunk tent revival meeting in 1952 and was converted and baptized into the (Old) Mennonite faith community.

He returned to Europe, studied briefly at the Bienenberg Bible School in Switzerland during the winter of 1952/53, but returned to the USA in 1953 to enroll as a theology student at Eastern Mennonite College (EMC) in Harrisonburg, Virginia. He graduated two years later with a Bachelor of Arts.

After his return to Europe, he spent several months in mission service before enrolling for studies in history, geography, and English at the famous Heidelberg University from 1956 to 1962. During these years he was active as a preacher in the Mennonite congregation of Heidelberg.

In 1962, Gerlach received his Ph.D. with a dissertation on "A Comparison of the English Peasant Revolt of 1381 and the German Peasants' War" (*Der englische Bauernaufstand von 1381 und der deutsche Bauernkrieg: Ein Vergleich*), which was published in 1969.

In 1963, he married Gertrud Weber, a young woman of Swiss Mennonite background, whom he had met at the Mennonite World Conference in Karlsruhe in 1957. They were married for 55 years and had two sons, two daughters, seven grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

At the Memorial Service on October 6, 2018, in the Weierhof Mennonite Church, Matthias Gerlach focussed on the word "loss" (*Verlust*) to describe his father's life. First, he "lost" the years of his puberty and youth during World War II. Then, in 1945, he "lost" his father and his homeland (*Heimat*) and had to become fully dependent on himself alone at the age of 16. Finally, having been raised to be proud of his German heritage and culture, he lost his sense of honour (*Verlust der Ehre*), when Germans were assigned full blame by the Allies for the war and war crimes, even though Soviet, American, and British forces had also committed their share of horrible atrocities.

These experiences of "loss" resulted in a traumatic condition that we would diagnose today as PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). But such a diagnosis and an appropriate treatment was not available to him, and Gerlach complained for years about nightmares and headaches. But thanks to an iron and stubborn will, and a deep faith in God, Horst Gerlach survived and built a life for himself and his family.

From 1962 to 1967, he worked as a teacher in the Ludwigsburg region of southern Germany. Then, in 1967, he was hired to teach courses in history, geography, English, and German at the Gymnasium in Weierhof. He taught here for 24 years (with a one-year leave in 1969/70 to teach at EMC) and retired in August 1991. Gerlach

devoted the remaining 27 years of his life to research and writing.

One of Horst Gerlach's most remarkable books was his personal memoir, published in Illinois as *Nightmare in Red* (1970). In it he described his life during the war years and in Soviet exile, written several years before Solzhenitsyn's account of the Gulag became available in the West. Gerlach had apparently written these memoirs in German shortly after his move to West Germany in the 1950s. During his year teaching at EMC (1969/70), he was encouraged by various faculty colleagues to publish the memoir in an English edition.[1]

For some unknown reason, the book was never published in German. However, Gerlach published an extensive adaptation (with a total of 56 installments) in the *Elbinger Nachrichten* between 1973 and 1981.[2]

Well known and respected on both sides of the Atlantic as a distinguished teacher, writer, and historian, Dr. Gerlach was one of the most prolific Mennonite historians of the past half century. He published important books on Mennonite, Amish, and Hutterite history, and contributed articles on many aspects of Prussian and Russian Mennonite life to various German and American scholarly journals, including the *Westpreußen Jahrbuch*, *Mennonitische Geschichtsblätter*, *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, and *Mennonite Life*. Furthermore, he published hundreds of articles in newspapers both in Canada and Germany, including *Der Bote* (280 articles between 1967 and 2007), *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, *Elbinger Nachrichten*, and *Die Rheinpfalz*, to name just a few.[3]

Gerlach contributed greatly to the history of the worldwide Mennonite fellowship through his work with Horst Penner's *Weltweite Bruderschaft* (1955). This unique study of Mennonites in Europe, Russia, North America, and South America only took the story up to the year 1951. In preparation for the 1984 Mennonite World Conference in Strasbourg, Gerlach was invited to prepare a new edition, taking the story up to the early 1980s. Then, in 1995, Gerlach prepared a greatly expanded and updated 5th edition, focussing not only on Europe and the Americas, but also adding material on Mennonite mission churches in Asia, Africa, Latin and Central America, and in the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. Gerlach was an avid photographer and each of these editions, along with many of his other books, was richly illustrated with photographs.

Given his own personal experiences in the Soviet Union and his extensive work and contacts with Mennonite *Umsiedler* from the Soviet Union after the 1970s, Dr. Gerlach also made a significant contribution to the history of Mennonites in Russia and the Soviet Union in his books, *Die Russland Mennoniten: Ein Volk unterwegs* (going through 5 editions between 1992 and 2008) and *Die Russlandmennoniten* (2007). Both volumes were lavishly illustrated with hundreds of beautiful photographs from both the past and the present; they were well received by Mennonite *Umsiedler*.

Finally, he contributed towards a better understanding of Mennonite life in Prussia and Ukraine during the difficult years of the Third Reich and World War II, as well as in the post-war years.[4]

I visited regularly with Horst and Gertrud Gerlach on my annual visits to the Weierhof, starting in 1998. She was always a gracious host and an excellent cook; and he became not only a mentor, but also a good friend.

At the time of his death, three books and many articles remained unfinished.

## Endnotes

1. See the review by J. Lloyd Spaulding in *Mennonite Life*, July 1971, 143–144.

2. Horst Gerlach, "Dammbruch an Wolga und Weichsel: Bericht eines Verschleppten, der mit 16 Jahren nach Russland kam" [Dam burst on the Volga and Vistula Rivers: Report of a displaced boy who was exiled to Russia at the age of 16], *Elbinger Nachrichten*. A shorter version appeared in *Der Bote*, February 17, 1974, 1–3, through to February 2, 1976, 1.

3. Interested readers may obtain a comprehensive 10-page bibliography by contacting me at <lblpeter@shaw.ca>.

4. See Diether Götz-Lichdi, *Mennoniten im Dritten Reich* (Weierhof, 1977); and Horst Gerlach, "Mennonites, the Molotschna, and the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle in the Second World War," *Mennonite Life*, vol. 41/3 (September 1986), 4–9, among many other articles.

# Pilgram Marpeck and Augsburg's Designation as a World Heritage Site

*by Wolfgang Krauß, Germany*

On July 7, 2019, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee at its regular meeting in Baku, Azerbaijan, approved the application of the City of Augsburg for recognition of its historic water management as a World Heritage Site. Anabaptist Pilgram Marpeck, who served as Augsburg's water engineer from 1544 until 1556, had an important role in the development of the city's water system.

Pilgram Marpeck, born around 1495 in Rattenberg on the Inn River, was a mining engineer for his hometown. He came into contact with the Reformation in Rattenberg


**The Augustus Fountain in Augsburg, Germany, at the *Rathausplatz* or the main town square in July 2019. Augsburg was named in honour of Emperor Augustus. The inscription reads, "We are World Heritage."** Photo credit for both images used in this article: Wolfgang Krauß.

and joined the Anabaptist movement but subsequently had to leave his hometown in 1528, when Anabaptists were persecuted there. Other stops in his sojourn included Strasbourg and St. Gallen, before he finally found peace in Augsburg.

The water towers at the Red Gate, one of the twenty-two stations of the Augsburg water system that has now been declared a World Heritage Site, are regarded as one of the places of residence used by Pilgram Marpeck and his wife, Anna. Marpeck's contributions to the water system include the renewal and expansion of the well system, as well as the extension of the pipeline network for the first water connections to private houses in the world. Marpeck was also responsible for rafting the wood needed for the wooden water pipes down the Lech River.

The Romans had already built the first water system at their base strategically located between the rivers Lech and Wertach. In early modern times, the separation of waste water and drinking water practiced in Augsburg was exemplary. The numerous canals also provided water power for the local businesses and enabled the beginning of industrialization even before the invention of the steam engine. From today's point of view, it is especially interesting to note that hydro power enabled an ecologically sustainable use of energy without $CO^2$ emissions in Augsburg.

At a major exhibition titled "Water-Art-Augsburg" in 2018, Marpeck's role as master of municipal utilities was appropriately honoured and a manuscript found in the city—thought to be his last will and testament—was exhibited. A few months before his death, he issued this instruction manual for the water system and admonished the city to always train enough specialists for its operation.

Marpeck's presence in Augsburg was mutually beneficial to him and the city of Augsburg. The city profited from his technical abilities as a specialist for water management and tacitly tolerated not only his dissident theology and practice, but also the Anabaptist community led by him. A decade and a half earlier, approximately 1,000 Anabaptists had been criminalized and expelled, one of their preachers even executed.

Marpeck worked as an "engineer by day, theologian by night" (Walter Klaassen and William Klassen, *Marpeck* [Herald Press, 2008], 301), writing about the core concerns of the Anabaptist movement: Baptism, the Lord's Supper, non-violence, the relationship between state and church, and the discipleship of the church to Jesus. He participated in the debates with theologians from other Reformation movements; for example, he debated the spiritualist Kaspar Schwenckfeld and his followers who were active in Augsburg. He also had extensive contact with other Anabaptist groups through visits and correspondence. Agreement among Anabaptists was often limited to the rejection of infant baptism. Marpeck, however, tried to expand understanding on basic theological questions or at least to achieve fraternal relationships, despite continuing differences of opinion.


**Etching by Johann David Neßenthaler of Augsburg using a drawing by Caspar Walter, ca. 1760, Stadt- und Staatsbibliothek, Augsburg.**

Even though they shared a mutual respect, there were conflicts between Marpeck and the city. In 1544, at the beginning of his time in Augsburg, he was threatened with expulsion from the city, and in 1553 Marpeck was warned regarding secret teaching activities. Indeed, on July 8, 1546, at the outset of the Schmalkaldian War, six members of his congregation refused armed sentry service on the city's fortifications and were expelled from the city three weeks later. However, until his death, Marpeck remained in the city's employ and payroll. Some researchers surmise that his wife, Anna, worked as a midwife. He appears in the municipal documents during his lifetime almost exclusively as Master Pilgram, probably to disguise his exact identity. In 1556, in contrast to many other Anabaptists, Marpeck died a natural death.

Speaking for the project *Die andere Reformation* (The other Reformation) that aims to make the Anabaptist movement visible in the city's profile again, Wolfgang Krauß expresses satisfaction at Augsburg's recognition as a world heritage site.

He notes, however, that it is important to highlight not only the technical achievements, but also the underlying social-historical conditions. Augsburg's role as a venue for the emergence of the free churches, for example, could be added to the recognition of its cultural heritage. By featuring the personage of Pilgram Marpeck and his role as a water engineer and a theologian from a disquieting minority group—perhaps with a plaque on the water tower or the naming of a street—the Anabaptist contribution to Augsburg's profile on the world stage would be extended.

*Wolfgang Krauß is a Mennonite pastor and Anabaptist historian working in Augsburg, Germany, and blogging on theological and other topics at www.wolfgangsnotizen.de/. He wrote this article originally in German and his friend, Peter Rempel from Winnipeg, translated and edited it with the help of www.DeepL.*com/Translator/.

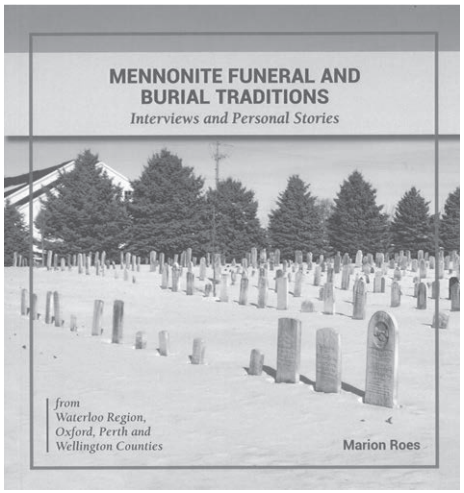
## Book Review

Marion Roes, ***Mennonite Funeral and Burial Traditions: Interviews and Personal Stories from Waterloo Region, Oxford, Perth, and Wellington Counties*** (2019), 96 pp.

*Reviewed by Esther Epp-Tiessen, Winnipeg*

Old Order and Old Colony Mennonites dress their deceased loved ones in white shrouds, while the Amish use suits for men and black dresses for women. Old Order Amish hold both their visitation ritual and the funeral in the home (or barn) of the deceased, whereas most other groups hold the funeral in the church building. Old Order women dress in black for a year after a death, whereas the David Martin Mennonites wear "mourning clothes" for only six months. A typical funeral meal menu for the Old Order Amish includes potato salad, buns, and cold meat, while the Old Order Mennonite menu includes applesauce, buns, and orange-flavoured cookies.

These are some of the fascinating tidbits one learns from reading Marion Roes's book *Mennonite Funeral and Burial Traditions: Interview and Personal Stories*. In this brand-new book, Roes describes the practises of seven Mennonite groups scattered through southern Ontario (primarily Waterloo Region): Old Order, David Martin, Markham-Waterloo, Amish,




Old Order Amish, Russian Mennonite, and Old Colony Mennonites.

A descendent of several generations of funeral directors, Roes brings a longstanding personal interest in the topic of undertaking and burial practises. Much of her research is gained through personal interviews and conversations with funeral directors who serve various Mennonite groups or contact persons within those groups.

This book makes a helpful contribution in describing diverse funeral and burial practises of faith groups that share their origins in the Anabaptist movement, but who may have little contact with one another. Roes makes no claim to be comprehensive in her overview, but she has made an effort to cover the practises of the main groups. Understandably, she devotes most attention to the more conservative or traditional groups—likely, because these are the groups that are least known or understood by mainstream society or even by more acculturated Mennonites.

One of the common themes that emerges from the description of the different practises is the important role of the community in supporting the family of the deceased from the time of death until after the funeral. Especially for the more traditional groups, members of the community will step in to build and line the casket, prepare great quantities of food, clean and arrange the home for visitation, dig the grave, and organize the funeral service. Among some groups, women within the community will also bathe and dress the body of the deceased, although most now use commercial funeral homes for embalming and other services.

Another theme is the simplicity of many of the practises associated with funerals and burials. Casket or coffins are built of pine or even plywood; they are covered with home-sewn black cloth or sometimes simply left bare. Coffins are often placed in hand-built "rough boxes" rather than vaults. Shrouds require minimal sewing. Funeral meals can be as basic as buns, butter, and sugar cubes (the Old Colony Mennonites). Readers interested in environmentally sustainable funeral arrangements today need look no further than this book.

One of the book's weaknesses is that is that Roes does not reflect or comment on the types of funeral and burial rites practised by the different groups. For example, many of the groups only include a brief obituary of the deceased at the very end of the funeral service; otherwise there is little mention of the person who has died. Why is this? Presumably, the reason has to do with a culture of humility, but this is not stated. What is the symbolism of the white shroud which clothes the body of the deceased of some groups? Why are flowers—or singing—not allowed by some groups? What are the cultural or theological beliefs behind some of these practises? Some reflection by the author would have been helpful.

Another weakness of the book is that the research is somewhat uneven. Roes has obviously consulted some of the main Ontario Mennonite historians (Sam Steiner, Barb Draper, and Laureen Harder-Gissing), but her primary sources are conversations, interviews, and email correspondence. In some instances, the interviews were actually conducted by someone else, but then reproduced verbatim. For some of the groups, Roes's research includes funeral and burial rites that go back several generations, but for other groups the information is entirely contemporary. It seems the point is to highlight those practises that depart from current mainstream practise, but this is not clear.

The book is attractively designed in an 8 x 8 inch format. It includes many high-quality colour photographs and a map identifying the primary locations referred to in the text. The book also includes a bibliography and helpful index, as well as a sampling of "funeral food" recipes.

For people interested in learning about some of the unique funeral and burial rites among traditional Mennonite groups in southern Ontario, Marion Roes's book is a good place to start.