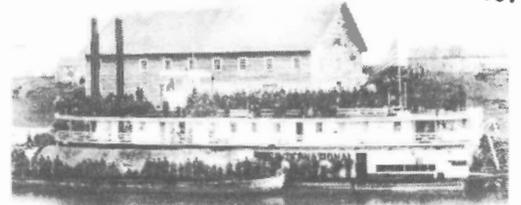


# Preservings

-being the Newsletter of the Hanover / Steinbach Historical Society Inc.

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File photo • The Carillon

*RM of Ritchot councillor Albert Bilodeau and members of the Mennonite Memorial Landing Site Committee, Orlando Hiebert, Frank Dueck and C.W. Loewen study the map at the spot the Mennonites entered Manitoba in 1874.*

## The Mennonite Landing Site Dedication

19 September 1993

Sunday, September 19 turned out to be a beautiful fall day. To the uninformed the small crowd gathered in close proximity of the Red River west of Niverville, Manitoba would probably have evoked questions. To those who were part of this assembly, some sitting comfortably on lawn chairs, it was the witnessing of an historic event.

The occasion was the witnessing of the presentation of the Mennonite landing site lease to the Mennonite Memorial Landing Site Association. This lease involves a site of

a 2½ acre tract of land at the junction of the Red River and the Rat River, where the first Russian Mennonite arrived to settle in Canada in 1874.

A short program saw the Honourable Clayton Manness, Minister of Finance for the Province of Manitoba, present the lease. The group was welcomed by Mr. Cyrille Durand, reeve of the R.M. of Ritchot in which municipality the site is located. Also included in the ceremony was a brief history of the landing site's significance by histori-

an Royden Loewen. Rev. Bill Hildebrand, of the Chortitzer Mennonite Church, spoke on "remembering." Rev. Menno Kroeker, of the Evangelical Mennonite Conference, had a prayer. Chairing the program was C. Wilbert Loewen, chairman of the Mennonite Memorial Landing Site Association.

After the short official program a good number of people took the opportunity to take the short walk to view the spot where the Rat flows into the Red.

— Submitted by Dave Schellenberg

Below are remarks by participants in this historic dedication

## Dedication Speech by Dr. Royden Loewen

Around midnight on Friday, July 31, 1874, the *International*, a paddled-wheel driven, steam-powered river boat passed this spot, going down the river. On board was the first contingent of the 7,000 Mennonites who would settle in Manitoba in the 1870s. The 63 families asleep on board the *International* had come a long way; they had left south Russia six weeks earlier, coming via rail and ship across continental Europe, England, the Atlantic, through Quebec and Ontario, across the Great Lakes, from Duluth to Fargo by rail, and now, in the last leg of their journey, by riverboat; 86 hours of round the clock meandering the fierce circumlocution of the slow and lazy Red; 86 hours of staring at an endless bank of Maples and Lindenwoods hanging over the river. Only occasionally would they stop, allowing an oncoming riverboat to pass (a boat coming two weeks later would add grief to monotony — two children and a grandmother died en route from Fargo on that boat). David Klassen and Cornelius Toews, the headmen of this first contingent, no doubt, retold the stories of how when they, a year earlier, had come down this river with Jacob Peters and Heinrich Wiebe, to scout the land, they had at least stopped at a Metis settlement, where they had spoken with a 102 year old woman through a translator and heard her tell stories of what the prairies at one time had been.

The only excitement for this contingent was the prospect of arriving at their final place of settlement. They would pass this spot at midnight and arrive in Winnipeg, the frontier town of 5,000, at 4 A.M. As the sun rose they clambered on deck for an early morning photo-up at the forks; then they disembarked for a full-Saturday of purchasing supplies and stock. Farmers would complain that the horses of Winnipeg were of poor quality and at over \$100 a piece too expensive; merchants would complain that the Mennonites were impossible hagglers. The \$20,000 this first contingent spent that Saturday indicated that both the Mennonites and the merchants got what they wanted.

In the midst of this haggling, there was another scene of debate — Klassen and Toews were meeting William Hespeler in his office — he was the Canadian immigration agent commissioned to ensure that the Mennonite would settle quickly. Disagreement surfaced between Toews and Klassen as to which side of the river — the west or the east — was the better for the Mennonite settlement: Klassen said the west was better suited for the commercial production of wheat, Toews countered that the east with its sup-

plies of cheap lumber and ready fuel was the better for the poor.

By the morning of August 1 the buying spree was over. Toews and Klassen had agreed to disagree — Toews would take one group to the East Reserve, Klassen the other to a settlement on the west side of the river. Both groups reboarded the *International* and returned to this spot to disembark. From here they would make their way four miles inland to the immigration shelters, the four motel-looking structures of 20 x 100 feet that had earlier been erected for the Mennonites by Ontario merchant, Jacob Shantz.

It was cold and rainy by some accounts, and the women with small children and elderly were hurried from the boat to the shelters. Metis freighters assisted. For three days the supplies were hauled inland, enough to fill nine train car loads — the *International* and the barge it drew was no mere *Paddle Wheel Queen*. Then the boat left and the 63 families faced the wilderness. They would write sorrowfully: "With tears I look upon this place, where I have chosen to make my

home . . . How forlorn am I in this world."

There was little time for poetry though, there were villages to plan, sod huts to erect to withstand the cold of the first winter, hay to harvest. And there was the need to vacate the immigration shelters, for the *International* of August 1 was only the first of five contingents to arrive in 1874 — the *Dakota*, the *Minnesota*, and again the *International*, brought more than 1,400 European farm families to this place in 1874.

There were many heroes that disembarked here. In August 1874 Peter Redekopp would pull two unconscious men to safety from a collapsed well they were digging at the shelters. All men and women would share in the pride offered them by Canada's Governor General, Lord Dufferin, who visited the prairie behind us in 1877, promising the settlers an "atmosphere of freedom", a state of peace, and lauding them for the prosperous villages that had sprung up on the prairies.

— Royden Loewen

## One Giant Step

One small step: What a giant leap!

Because of it, the history, the economy, the religious and cultural complexian of Western Canada was changed.

It happened at the forks of the Rat and the Red Rivers, a few miles west of the current town of Niverville.

On that day, August 1st, 1874, the first group of Mennonite immigrants arrived from Russia, prepared to settle in Manitoba. In the following years, several more shiploads came, making a total of almost 8,000 new settlers, wishing to make new homes in Manitoba.

Several generations later, these same immigrants were in a position to act as sponsors for a new wave of Mennonites, fleeing from the Bolshevik revolution. After World War II, a third group were welcomed by the now well-established settlers and their families.

Manitoba has long been too small to hold them all; their numbers now reach to British Columbia in the west and to Ontario and The Maritimes in the east.

Now, 120 years later, the descendants of the original comers, wish to reorganize the site where it all began. It seems some concrete evidence jogs our memory and increases our appreciation.

The site consists of 2½ acres which the

Manitoba government has leased to the Mennonite Memorial Landing Site Association. This organization, together with Historical Society wishes to design and erect a cairn in commemoration of the event. A few picnic tables and other necessary amenities will grace the site. Hopefully the Provincial Government will declare the area an official historical site.

— C. Wilbert Loewen

### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Yes, I wish to become a member of The Hanover-Steinbach Historical Society and receive *Preservings* twice a year. Enclosed is my \$10 membership fee.

Please Print  
NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
BOX \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: HSHS  
Box 1305  
Steinbach, MB R0A 2A0



Pathway to the river.

## The Site Where The First Mennonites Arrived to Settle in Manitoba

We were at the Site, took in the ceremony, watched the Land Title transfer take place.

After the ceremony, we walked down to the fork of the Red River and the Rat River. Standing at the forks of the two rivers, I tried to go back in history. What would it have been like to view this for the first time? After all the hustle and bustle on the boat, to be greeted by the quietness of the land? To listen to the flowing river, to the wind in the trees, to the birds, the rustle of small animals?

What were these people like who arrived here more than 100 years ago? What were the women like, the wives, the mothers, the girls?

That first woman? Stepping off the boat, glad to be on solid ground again? What was she thinking about, waiting for her family to join her? Her oldest daughter, so gifted and also so determined? Determined to get an education in the old country, so maybe, just maybe she'd be allowed to teach the children. The woman herself had wanted to continue her schooling. "Not for girls" she'd been told, "You are needed at home." Would her daughter be able to continue her

schooling in this new land? Right now, seems like she's forgotten, holding hands with the young man she'd met on the ship.

Her other two girls, still so young but already a big help. Helping the aged grandparents to disembark. They'd had a very difficult journey, but refused to be left behind. Now they were waiting for the woman to make some tea.

The older boys, impatiently waiting for their father to take a walk to look at the land. The woman, who wanted to walk beside her husband to help decide on their parcel of land, again left behind to look after the needs of the family.

The younger children, running, pushing, sliding down the banks of the river and getting muddy. She would have to try to get them to gather wood to make a fire. Dip water from the river and boil it for the tea.

The woman looks at the river flowing past her, at the black soil she is standing on and is thankful. She looks at her strong husband beside her, at their healthy children. She looks at her parents enjoying their tea. Her eyes turn toward heaven and she thanks her God.

— Rose Wiebe

## Junction of rivers to become Mennonite memorial site

by Doris Penner

After several attempts by various groups and a year of negotiations by a current committee, a two and a half-acre tract of land at the junction of the Red and Rat Rivers close to Ste Agathe will be named a Mennonite memorial site.

This is the spot that served as the entry point for the first Mennonites to arrive in Western Canada in 1874, points out C.W. Loewen, chairman of the Mennonite Memorial Landing Site Committee. He suggests this is significant since this paved the way for more Mennonites to settle here. Several important "waves" of immigration occurred in the 1920s and after World War II. "Now Mennonites are living right across Canada," he notes. He says with time this spot could be recognized by the government as a heritage site.

Historian Royden Loewen, secretary of the committee, explains that reaching this area was the end of a long journey for the Mennonites. It began in Liverpool, he points out, and took them across the ocean to Montreal, then inland to Fargo from where they sailed the steamer the *International* up the Red.

He says the ship sailed to the Forks in Winnipeg so the leaders of the group could establish where the land lay they were to settle. Next the whole entourage returned to the junction of the Red and Rat Rivers where, with the help of French Canadians, they carried their supplies by Red River carts to immigration sheds several miles from the rivers. Subsequently other groups have used this as a landing site.

Other people will be drawn in to develop the site further says C.W. Loewen. "Ours is only a facilitating organization." He noted the site could well have significance for other cultural groups such as the Aborigines. "Artifacts from 1790 have been discovered here by archaeological digs," he says.

The landing site committee, which also includes Orlando Hiebert and Frank Dueck, has been negotiating with several levels of government for about a year. Once it was established this area was crown land, they approached the municipality of Ritchot and made an application to buy the two and a half acres.

Although their first intention was to buy the land, the RM recommended a lease for 99 years. "A lease can easily be renewed and there's not a lot of money changing hands," points out councillor Albert Bilodeau. He says the municipality will take care of a road and a parking space at the site.

A formal ceremony marking the handing over of the lease took place at the end of September.

# Cornelis Gysbrechtsz, D. 1535

Three years ago, while duplicating and updating the family tree my mother had researched, I came across a scrap of paper with the words "Cornelis Gysbrechtsz, burned at stake 1535." The paper referred to an oral tradition that my paternal grandmother's Dutch ancestor, Cornelis, had been martyred. Nothing else was known, and the story itself was viewed with some skepticism. A trip to the Steinbach Public Library and a glance at the *Mennonite Encyclopedia* gave credence to the oral tradition. A brief article in the encyclopedia stated that Cornelis Gysbrechtsz was an Anabaptist martyr from the town of Beverwijk in North Holland province (15 miles WNW of Amsterdam). He had been burned at the stake in The Hague on 1 July 1535. The article concluded with the comment that "particulars are lacking" and cited *Inventaris* number 745 as a reference.

J.C. de Hoop Scheffer was a nineteenth century Dutch historian. Part of his research led to the compilation of a list of documents of early Anabaptist history in a three volume work entitled *Inventaris den archiefstukken . . .* A photocopy of this work is in the private collection of Lawrence Klippenstein, archivist at the Heritage Centre in Winnipeg. From this source, I learned that *Inventaris* number 745 is a name list of Anabaptists martyred between the years 1516 and 1574. *Inventaris* listed some other documents which I suspected might make reference to Cornelis Gysbrechtsz. Copies of these documents and helpful suggestions for research were obtained from Bethel College and from Dr. Piet Visser at the University of Amsterdam.

One such document is a letter dated 11 June 1535 from Dutch Attorney-General Reynier Brunt to the stadhouder (Emperor

Charles V's representative). He wrote that four Anabaptists from Beverwijk were arrested June 10 and taken to The Hague. It is possible that Cornelis Gysbrechtsz was one of these prisoners. Brunt commented that he wished to personally participate in their trial. A second letter, written in French and dated 27 June 1535, is from Jacques de Stavalt to the stadhouder. He wrote that he and his agents were questioning Anabaptists in Bolzwart and Leuwarden. He concluded with the words: "God will withhold his grace from these guilty ones [Anabaptists] so that they may be corrected and serve as an example to others." A postscript in Dutch by Reynier Brunt is appended to the letter. Brunt wrote that he learned July 2 of the death of two young prisoners from Beverwijk. These two prisoners were Claes Claesz and Cornelis Gysbrechtsz. Their sentence, dated 1 July 1535, read that since the two prisoners "have confessed without pain from torture or iron strings . . . that they had themselves rebaptized . . . and that they were not sorry, had no regrets for their actions and did not wish to be lectured about it," they were to be burned "from life to death."

From a scrap of paper and with patience and the assistance of archivists, the particulars of the death (if not yet the life) of Cornelis Gysbrechtsz are slowly being revealed.

— Janis Thiessen

(Clus reab.)

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144.

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## Book Review

Plett, Delbert F., ed. *Leaders of the Mennonite Kleine Gemeinde in Russia, 1812-1874* (Crossway Publications: Box 1960, Steinbach, Manitoba, 1993). 932 pages, \$30.00

This is volume six of Delbert Plett's "Mennonite Kleine Gemeinde Historical Series." It is also the longest; at 932 pages and over 50 chapters, it is Plett's most ambitious project to date. As in his other works, Plett uses this book as a vehicle to make the point that the Kleine Gemeinde represented a nineteenth-century expression of church renewal in the tradition of the Anabaptist Vision. In his introduction Plett makes the point that the principal teachings of Klaas Reimer, the founder of the Kleine Gemeinde, were "a genuine discipleship, love for fellowman and a restitutional faith focused firstly on the apostolic church and secondly, on the Anabaptist-Mennonite leaders of the Reformation . . ." (9) Like Plett's other works too, this one represents a combination of various types of writing: there is narrative and interpretation by the editor himself, articles by invited guest authors, and translations of writings by historical actors themselves.

# The Jacob Y. Shantz Passenger List

In the summer of 1876 the *Manitoba Free Press* carried a detailed account of a perilous journey of Mennonites going to Manitoba. Four hundred and twenty-two Mennonites along with 200 French cabin passengers had boarded the ship "Ontario" in Sarnia and set out for Duluth on May 10, 1876. The trip went quite smoothly except for some ice flows but suddenly, on May 16, when they were about five miles (20 miles according to Klass Peters) from Duluth the ship got stuck in the ice. Here they remained stuck for nine days. The Mennonites on board had brought provisions with them and fared quite well for the first number of days but as their ordeal dragged on they were obliged to eat the seed potatoes and flour which they had brought with them as provisions for their first days in Manitoba. Before the whole ordeal was over they had consumed everything they had brought with them. The French passengers hadn't brought any provisions with them and were much worse off. They had to purchase biscuits from the ships crew until they were all gone and after which they got one meal

a day from them. The day before the ship was freed it was announced that there was only enough fuel left on board to last for 10 hours and food for another day. This caused much anxiety among those on board but they managed to obtain some fuel and food from other ships also stuck in the ice close by. On May 23 the Captain and 17 others set out for shore on foot. All made it except two who returned to the ship. Finally on the evening of May 24 a small thunderstorm accompanied by fairly strong winds freed the ship after which they were able to reach Duluth.

In 1890 Reverend Heinrich Wiebe was asked by the "Mennonitische Rundschau" to write something about the Mennonite immigration to Canada in the 1870s but since he felt inadequate he asked Klass Peters to write it for him. Starting in January and continuing until April Klass Peters wrote a series of articles about the immigration (later printed and translated as the book *The Bergthaler Mennonites*). In his articles he also wrote about the perilous journey of May 10, 1876. Peters was one of the passengers aboard and with firsthand information he included details that the *Free Press* hadn't mentioned. These two articles speaking on the same subject but from different viewpoints make a very interesting story but one detail that both articles missed which is important to the family history researcher is who were the 422 Mennonites on board this ship. The *Free Press* states that 63 families settled on the Rat River "East" Reserve and 17 at Dufferin "West" Reserve and one fa-

mily who abandoned the group to remain in the United States.

The Quebec passenger lists are excellent records of the immigration up to the point where the immigrants enter Canada but from here on they say nothing. The purpose of this article is to help the researcher find this information. The place to look is in the Jacob Y. Shantz Passenger lists available at the Mennonite Heritage Center. Mr. Shantz was the Government Immigration Official responsible for collecting the transportation fares from the Mennonites on their journey to Manitoba. In his records he records all names of the heads of households who overwintered in Ontario during the winter of 1875-1876. He also lists all the heads of households who boarded the ship on May 10 in two separate lists, "Bergthaler" and "Those stopped in Ontario in 1875 and left 10th May in 1876." He even lists, in the money amount column, names of Ontario Mennonites. It is my guess that these Mennonites paid the fares for the boarding passengers. The only thing he doesn't include is who the family was that remained in the United States. By cross referencing the heads of households that he lists with the Quebec lists it is easy to identify all the passengers.

My reason for writing this article is that I too was surprised to find that my great-grandparents were also on board the "Ontario" when it got stuck in the ice on May 16, 1876.

— Jacob Doerksen  
Ile des Chenes, Manitoba

## News Release

Mennonite Historical Society of Canada

The Mennonite Historical Society of Canada board and executive met on Saturday, December 4, at Concord College (MBBC), Winnipeg for its annual meeting.

Members who attended the meeting represented provincial Mennonite historical societies in Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia, as well as the different Mennonite archives and Mennonite Studies centres.

President Ted Friesen of Altona reported that the society's major project, the writing of *Mennonites in Canada*, Volume III, will hopefully be "out before the end of 1994." Dr. Ted Regehr, Professor of Canadian History at the University of Saskatchewan and the author of Volume III, reported that his writing thus far has compelled him to "rethink, redefine and reorganize any ideals, interpretations and factual information" of the Canadian Mennonite experience of the late 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. "My own ideas have changed and continue to change," stated Regehr. The title of the book will be, *Mennonites in Canada: A People Transformed, 1940-1970*.

The board decided to begin negotiating a publication deal with the University of Toronto Press. It is hoped that the book will be off the press in time for Christmas 1994.

The board re-elected Ted Friesen (Altona, Manitoba), Dr. John Friesen (Winnipeg, Manitoba), Royden Loewen (Steinbach, Manitoba), and Linda Huebert Hecht (Waterloo, Ontario) to the executive.

## Volhynians plan meetings to promote their history

by Doris Penner

The Wandering Volhynians is a group made up of German immigrants from Poland and Volhynia, a province in the northwestern Ukraine. According to genealogist Ewald Wuschke, who has traced the history of hundreds of families from Eastern Europe, there are estimated to be about 100,000 of these immigrants and their descendants living in western Canada.

In a continued effort to promote the unique history of the Wandering Volhynians and to encourage families to record their histories, Wuschke arranged meetings in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The Manitoba meetings were held in Winnipeg, Beausejour and Morris.

Wuschke notes the first Volhynians arrived in Canada in the 1880s and another family had settled in Wisconsin in 1874. He points out these immigrants are often confused with Mennonites, Germans from Russia or Germans from Austria although their background is quite different. The Germans

from Volhynia originally were Lutheran but now belong to many Protestant denominations.

Since the Volhynians are very individualistic and self-reliant — never asking for aid or special favors from the government — the news media and government agencies have no knowledge of their existence. These independent characteristics have also resulted in a lack of organization and cohesiveness which has left them without a history or community spirit.

To bring some sense of unity back to the group, Wuschke began to produce a quarterly magazine called *Wandering Volhynians* six years ago. It concentrates on the history and family research of the German families. Wuschke has also authored several pamphlets on Volhynia, co-authored the book *Marsch: A History of the Marsch Family* and authored and published the booklet *Protestant Church Records on Microfilm for the Former Congress Poland (1815-1915)*.

# President's Report

On November 12, while in Toronto to attend a M.E.D.A. convention, I had the opportunity to take a tour of the village of St. Jakobs, near Waterloo, Ontario. Surrounded by the neatly ploughed fields of Amish and "Old order" Mennonite farmers, the community has become the third largest Ontario tourist destination attracting — if I remember correctly — 1.4 million visitors.

The quaint yards and fields of these horse-powered sectarians are laid out along the rolling hills and between the meandering streams of some of Ontario's richest farmland, seemingly little changed since it was first settled after the American Revolutionary War. Of course the place is horribly commercialized. Over 100 craft shops and stores line the village, including an old deserted mill which has been converted into a "boutique" mall — a sort of cultural "incubator" building. Tourists gawk unabashedly at any black-clad "Mennonite" farmer unfortunate enough to have to take his horse and buggy to town for supplies.

Later that day I walked along the banks of the mill stream chase, a two mile long channel parallel to the river, which powered the mill's water wheel in better days gone by. The beauty of the green placid water was framed by cedars and ash, and squirrels rustled the carpet of red, orange and yellow leaves as they bustled to and fro preparing for winter. Golden fall sunshine was interrupted intermittently by grey clouds scudding across the blue sky.

I was fascinated by the idea that the merchants of St. Jakobs had found a way to capitalize on the concept of heritage preservation — the profit motive clearly was the engine of their success. I can't say to what extent these same avenues would apply to heritage preservation in southern Manitoba. Since our "conservative" Mennonites moved to Latin America during the 1920s and 40s we are missing the premier attraction which so captivated the North American imagination after the release of the movie "The Witness" starring Harrison Ford. I suspect, thought, that some of the above might still be applied successfully in the arts and crafts and regarding books about the material culture of our community in times past.

The role of our historical society, however, has a much narrower focus in any case; our primary goal is the preservation of writings and documents relating to the early settlement of our area. Hopefully our writing and publication efforts will build a base of scholarly authenticity for others who may wish to pursue these ideas on a more popular or commercial level.

In this regard I would wish to acknowledge the heritage efforts of several groups within our community: the Oberschulze Jakob Peters group is planning to erect a chair at

his gravesite on Reichenback Road in Mitchell; another group is planning a monument for the 18 original families which settled the village of Steinbach; the "Local History Committee" of the MMHS planned the talk by Prussian genealogy expert, Henry Schapansky from New Westminster, B.C., at the Steinbach Bible College on November 11; another group is arranging for a lease and a small park at the site of the landing of the original Mennonite settlers on the Red River near Niverville in 1874.

We applaud these efforts and trust that the groundwork laid by the researchers and writers of our society and the books which we have published will be of assistance to these groups and others as they go about their work. It is true that the culture of our area is no longer as dramatically different as the horse-powered farmers of St. Jakobs, but it is still uniquely "our" heritage and well worth celebrating.



Delbert Plett

## New Discoveries: The Penner Family

The documents of the J.J. Braun Archives recently retrieved from Odessa, Russia by scholar Harvey Dyck of Toronto, Canada, join the massive collections of documents of the Kleine Gemeinde (KG) and Berthal/Chortitzer *Schrifttum* which have recently been assembled in Manitoba — each of them in excess of 100,000 pages of materials. These collections herald a new era of research and writing on Russian Mennonite history — these are exciting "new" discoveries which will ensure that the 1990s will be one of the most dramatic decades ever in this field of study; a very good time for anyone interested in the topic to get involved.

The J.J. Braun Archives — mainly documents from the Molotschna — will, of course, have particular relevance to the study of the KG people who settled in Manitoba, Kansas and Nebraska in the 1870s since this was their ancestral home. In a recent telephone call with Dr. Harvey Dyck he assured me that the collection contained many documents which concerned the KG. Many of these, no doubt, were already contained in various KG collections such as the 1841-1842 *Protocollbuch* which was a record of the official correspondence of the Gemeinde.

Nevertheless it will be helpful to access these documents from the side of the Gebietssamt or the Agricultural Society. Johann Cornies was a contemporary and next-door neighbour of early KG leaders such as Abraham Friesen (1782-1849) of Ohrloff and also a benefactor of the group whose members cooperated eagerly with his endeavours to modernize farming in the Molotschna. No

doubt Cornies' collection of documents — and his journals — will contain fascinating details and tidbits relative to the early development of this group.

But perhaps the most interesting of the newly available documents will be the 1835 census of the Molotschna which includes a list of all families and their children, with ages, and the name of the father of the male family head, and sometimes even the date of death if the progenitor had also emigrated to and settled in the Molotschna.

This vast amount of detail will be invaluable for family historians and genealogists. In many cases — especially with *Russ-laender*, who were often forced to flee hearth and home leaving family records behind — even years of diligent research has only brought the ancestral chain back to the early 19th century with seemingly little hope of ever connecting back further.

Well, all of this may change now with the availability of the 1835 Molotschna census. One of the drawbacks of the 1835 census is that it is in Russian, but somehow historian Henry N. Fast of Steinbach has developed an ability to decipher them. He has already used these records to solve a half dozen KG genealogical puzzles and to confirm answers to several others previously provided by Prussian *Gemeindebuch* expert Henry Schapansky of New Westminster, B.C. Examples of these are the families of Johann Dueck (1801-1866)-Muntau, Heinrich Reimer (1791-1884)-Muntau and Henry's own ancestor, Heinrich Fast (1826-1890) of Fischau.

Another family is that of Peter Penner

# Church Historians

Steinbach Mennonite Church held its fiftieth anniversary celebrations last summer, in commemoration of which a church history book was published. The experience of gathering material for that book resulted in the decision to appoint a church historian to make the task of gathering and preserving church records easier. I was appointed this summer as SMC's first church historian.

The job of congregation historian was new both to SMC and to me. Approximately two-thirds of Canadian Mennonite churches now have congregational historians. Assistance in determining my job description was obtained from Peter Rempel, acting archivist at the Heritage Centre in Winnipeg. The Heritage Centre has produced a useful "guide to work" for congregational historians, outlining which documents should be preserved, as well as how and why to preserve them. The greater part of the congregational

historian's task is to track down these materials, organize and index them, and submit copies of them to the church conference archives. Other responsibilities include functioning as the contact person between the congregation and the Heritage Centre, and distributing the *Mennonite Historian* in the congregation. Church historians may also participate in and/or organize workshops on church archives, organize "heritage appreciation" projects within the congregation, and assist in producing church histories. "This task may well be seen as a sacred trust," the Heritage Centre guide observes. "Just as the people of God felt led by God to preserve the story of His work among them, so we may see it as His charge to do the same today."

The experience and assistance of others should not be overlooked in this job. Church secretaries and pastors can give helpful ad-

vice about where records are stored and whether any records are in private hands. Consult any predecessors, if the church has appointed congregational historians in the past. They can provide information on the progress that has been made, and provide suggestions for further research. Enlist the aid of the church newsletter in accumulating records. Consult with the photographers in the church — they may possess pictures of many years of church events. Church youth may be encouraged to interview congregational members to preserve the church's oral history.

Though new to the job, I am enjoying what I have undertaken so far as SMC's historian. I would appreciate hearing from more experienced church historians, through *Preservings* or at my address: Box 1534, Steinbach, MB, R0A 2A0.

— Janis Thiessen

(1816-1884) of Margenau, Molotschna, the *Stammvater* of the Penners in Blumenort, Manitoba. It was previously known that Penner was born in Ohrloff but since no family of appropriate name was listed in the 1808 Revisions-Listen nor in the 1803-4 immigration records this seemed to be a dead-end notwithstanding that Aeltester Peter P. Toews in his *Genealogy Register* of the KG had even provided the name of his father, also a Peter Penner.

This dilemma now seems to be solved. In a telephone call of August 24, 1993, Henry Fast reported that the 1835 census contained the following information: "Orhloff-Wirtschaft 2, Peter (Peter) Penner age 41, and wife Catherina age 48, immigrated in 1803, children: son Peter age 18, daughter Catharina age 16 (later Mrs Dietrich Isaac who settled in Jansen, Neb.), and daughter Elisabeth age 12." What is especially interesting is that we now know that the name of Peter Penner's (1816-1884) grandfather is also Peter.

I sent this information to friend Henry Schapansky who replied on September 24, 1993, stating that in his view the most likely scenario is that the father of Peter Penner (1816-1884) was Peter Penner (born 1794) who came to the Molotschna in 1803 with his mother and step-father Johann Janzen who settled on Wirtschaft 13 in 1804 in Schoenau where they are listed in the Revisions-Listen in 1808.

Henry Schapansky further believes that the father of Peter Penner (born 1794) was Peter Penner who was baptized in 1786, the child of another Peter Penner who married Elisabeth Reimer in 1763 and who is listed in the 1776 Prussian *Konsignation* in Danziger Neunhuben as a *Wassermuehler* with

"2 sons, 1 daughter." Schapansky believes that his father in turn was another Peter Penner (married to Aganetha Epp) of Weisshoff, Danzig, who died in 1781.

Henry Schapansky points out that the latter two connections are speculative at this point. At the same time a case study of the Penner family does illustrate the far ranging value of the 1835 census which serves as a sort of integrator between family records and earlier Prussian church sources.

In my telephone call with Harvey Dyck on

November 13, 1993, he informed me that these records had already been transcribed to a computer format and that the intention was to publish the same. On behalf of the HSHS I would like to encourage Professor Harvey Dyck in this endeavour. It will undoubtedly be another important building block for many descendants of the Russian Mennonites as they rediscover their rich and abundant history.

— by Delbert Plett



The J.J. Braun Collection includes 1861/2 School Registers for the Molotschna, including the Hutterite villages of Hutterthal und Johannesruh. Left to right: Delbert Plett, Teacher Jonathon Maendel (Baker Colony), Rev. Ed Kleinsasser (Crystal Springs), Rev. Ben Maendel (Baker), and seated Elder Jacob Kleinsasser. January 15, 1994.

# Chortitzer Assistance to Moravian Brethren

Mennonite settlers arriving in Manitoba in the 1870s experienced crop failures and other hardships which made their start very difficult. They received assistance in the form of loans from Mennonites in Ontario and from the federal government which enabled them to become firmly established. Nevertheless, many of them struggled with those debts for many years.

While they were seeking to become established they were mindful of others who were experiencing similar difficulties. Already during the early years they forwarded money to friends and relatives who were experiencing hardships in Russia. But they were not limited in their giving to people of Mennonite faith.

In the early 1890s a group of people belonging to the Evangelische Brudergemeinde, later called Moravian Brethren, were preparing to emigrate from Russia to Canada, planning to settle at Bruderheim, near Fort Saskatchewan in the province of Alberta. They knew that pioneering in a new community would be difficult. There was not only a shortage of cattle, but also of money with which to purchase them.

In 1894 their Aeltester Andreas Lilge travelled to Manitoba to seek aid for his new community. While it is not known what locations he visited or from how many persons or groups he sought assistance, it is known that he arrived on Manitoba's East Reserve in June of that year and visited with several different church leaders.

Minister Heinrich Friesen wrote in his journal on June 13 that Andreas Lilge had come to collect money for his sisters in the faith (were there no men?) who were coming from Russia. Friesen also noted on the same day that Lilge got a ride to Winnipeg with Klassen from Neuanlage. This seems to indicate that he had approached both the Chortitzer and the Kleine Gemeinde churches.

A sheet of paper once accompanied the 1878 Chortitzer Gemeinde Buch with a list of the names of people who made cattle available. The copy of this sheet which we have available was hand copied from the original by Abram Vogt of Mennonite Genealogy Inc. and can be seen at their offices in Winnipeg. It seems that the references on this list is to cattle of which some were donated and others sold without interest to members of the Bruderheim Moravian Church.

List of how many heads of cattle and what kind received from Bergfeld January 11, 1895:

Kornelius Toews and Peter Sawatzky, one cow donated; Julius Toews, one cow donated; David Falk, David Falk and Heinrich Wiebe, one pair of four-year-old oxen do-

nated; Peter Falk and Jakob Falk, one pair three-year-old oxen donated; Peter Toews Sr. and Peter Toews Jr., one cow donated; Jakob Hamm, one dollar donated; Kornelius Wall and Peter Klassen, one cow donated; Jakob Wiebe, one three-year-old ox sold for 21 dollars payable in six years without interest;

January 11, 1899 (should this perhaps be 1895?), Gruenthal, list to record how many head of cattle each person will give:

David Doerksen, Jacob Funk and Johann Rempel, one ox four years old purchased for 20 dollars without interest; Abraham Kauenhoven, one cow purchased for 20 dollars; Peter Neufeld, five dollars; Franz Sawatzky each at five dollars; Abraham Klassen, each at five dollars for this cow all together without interest for six years;

Kronsgarten:

Jakob Martens, five dollars loaned for six years without interest; Peter F. Funk, five dollars loaned for six years without interest;

January 14, 1895, Schoensee:

Peter Krahn, a pair of three-year-old oxen purchased for 25 dollars for six years without interest; Abraham Wiebe, donated money, five dollars, a gift forever.

Apparently the Mennonites even prepaid the freight for the shipment of the cattle and asked to be reimbursed after six years for such charges. Since the above list encompasses only a few villages and they were all on the south side of the East Reserve settlement, it seems likely that there would have been more donations from residents in villages in the rest of the area.

According to a letter received many years later, Gustave Werner and August Schultz were sent by the Bruderheim Church to Manitoba to make the arrangement for the cattle and to bring them back to Bruderheim.

On February 3, 1896 Minister Heinrich Friesen notes in his journal that Andreas Lilge visited with him in the afternoon. Perhaps he came to deliver the promissory notes which the recipients of these gifts signed, either for freight owing or for loans made or for cattle which were sold without interest. Each note was signed by the recipient and by two cosigners. One note that has survived was signed on June 8, 1895 and had a due date of end of October 1901.

Heinrich Friesen records in his journal that Andreas Lilge came to visit again on July 22, 1898. The following day Friesen accompanied Lilge to Jaunches (Jahnkes?) from where Lilge went to Toews (Ohm Peter Toews?). The journal notes that on the fol-

lowing Sunday, July 24th, Lilge was at the church but did not preach.

Apparently some of the donors in Manitoba were running into difficulties before the payments became due and Aeltester David Stoesz enquired of Aeltester Andreas Lilge whether it would be possible to receive some payments before the due date. Lilge responded with a letter on January 31, 1901 and enclosed a payment of 33 dollars with a promise of further payments. He also notes that he is looking forward to seeing Stoesz at the exhibition in Winnipeg in fall.

A ministerial meeting at Ohm Peter Toews on March 10, 1904 discussed a letter they had received from Andreas Lilge with which was enclosed the final payment for the cattle which had been purchased from the Chortitzer Church members. (Heinrich Friesen Journal) Apparently members of the Bruderheim community had some difficulty in making payments but two and a half years after the due date all the financial obligations had been met.

The generosity of the Chortitzer church members was not forgotten. When the Bruderheim Church celebrated its 75th anniversary in 1970 they wrote to enquire whether a representative of the Chortitzer church would come and join them to receive thanks for the compassionate support which had made pioneering in Alberta a little easier.

— John Dyck

(Printed Note, blanks filled in)

Ich der Unterzeichnete [Gulius Lilge] Mitglied der Evan. Brudergemeinde zu Bruderheim bei [Fort Saskatchewan] bescheinige hiermit, das ich von den Mennoniten-Bruedern bei Winnipeg, Man. [??] erhalten habe [zwei Kuehe und Ein Ochs] auf 6 Jahre ohne Zinsen, im Werte von [zwei u. zwanzig] Dol. ([?22]), welche Summe nach Verlauf von sechs Jahren, also im Jahre 1901, Ende des Monats Oktober, abzubezahlen ich mich verpflichte, und zwar an den Aeltesten der [Chortitzer] Mennoniten-Gemeinde [David Stoesz] oder sein Nachfolger, durch unseren Aeltesten [Andreas Lilge]. Und wir, [??]dwig Lilge] und [Wilhelm Lilge], bezeugen wiederum, das wir fuer [Julius Lilge] Buerge sein wollen, das, in Fall er die [zwei u. zwanzig] Doll. nicht bezahlen kann, wir dieses Geld bezahlen wollen. Bruderheim, bei [Fort Saskatchewan] den [8 Juni] A.D. 1895. Dieses bescheinigt noch [Andreas Lilge, Bevollmoechtichter]

Continued on page 11

# The Vollwerk Cemetery

The year 1993 saw restoration of the Vollwerk Cemetery begin and Phase I completed despite continual hindrance by rain and subsequent wet soil conditions. Mrs. Tina Peters, chairperson for the Peters Memorial Committee, confirmed that removal of trees that were obstructing gravesites as well as restoration and cleaning of the tombstones of Oberschultz Peters' two sons and numerous other gravestones had been the main con-

siderations of the first phase for which they received a grant from the Manitoba Heritage Foundation.

Phase II of this restoration project is scheduled for the coming year when a fence will be erected along the newly determined boundaries of the cemetery. In order to confirm the actual perimeter of the cemetery, the Archaeology section of the Historic Resources Branch made personnel and equipment avail-

able for field studies in August 1992. One day was spent at the site preparing grids and mapping existing stones, trees and other landmarks after which they were ready to spend two days operating the EM-38, an instrument used to slide directly along the ground to measure electromagnetic ground conductivity. Following the collection of the data, much time was spent by the Historic Resources Branch to map out and analyze the readings. Historical records were examined and compared to the incomplete listing of the known graves at the site. Through the availability of these professional services, it is now known that there are an estimated 29 unmarked and/or unidentified graves and 25 marked graves in the cemetery. This number includes the seven victims of the diphtheria epidemic of 1884 who were buried in two multiple grave sites.

Ongoing fund-raising efforts by the Memorial Committee will see the erection of a commemorative marker at the grave site of Oberschultz Jacob Peters (1813-1884). The Oberschultz probably never dreamt of the wide recognition that he would receive because of his work to assist the first Mennonite settlers in Manitoba and to establish the East Reserve. The restoration of the Cemetery, the source of the grants, the efforts of fund-raising, and the modern technology used to aid this project would surely have surprised and overwhelmed this humble leader. Anyone wishing to contribute to this project or wanting more information may contact Mrs. Tina Peters, 326-3387.

— Linda Buhler



*The graves of Jacob F. Peters (son of Oberschulze Peters) and his wife Maria Buhr Peters. Let us gladly honor our pioneers, whose sacrifice made our freedom and prosperity possible.*

## Handy as in Chortitz

It is interesting how certain places become synonymous with peculiar things and how these then are turned into expressions which we use without knowing exactly why. Newcastle is associated with coal, Timbucktoo with nowhere, Selkirk with mental illness, Bothwell with cheese and Sarto with a beach and palm trees, but why is Chortitz synonymous with handiness or invention.

Two possibilities came to mind. The first was that there was a person or persons of particular inventive ability living in this village or secondly that because of its stature among East Reserve villages others out of envy, may have thought its inhabitants a little arrogant. It appears neither of my musings was correct. It should be noted that the following explanation comes from a single source, though not for lack of trying to find some corroborating evidence. All interviewees had heard and used this expression but were unable to say where it came from.

The expression "Handy as in Chortitz"

originated in the village just before the public school came into being which would make it about 1917-18. This expression centers around a young man named George Goertzen, son of Abram Goertzen, who was one of the few people living on the south side of the street in Chortitz. It seems that this George Goertzen was somewhat of a swash-buckling extrovert who cut a wide swath among the young men in the village. It became known that he had gone courting to "yant zeed" and become interested in a girl from Plum Coulee (West Reserve). Judging from how this expression evolved he must have taken some ribbing, and when asked if the girls here on the East Reserve were not good enough, he replied that he was going to marry a girl who could back a harrow into an equipment shed (sheen). Knowing this to be impossible, but no doubt also realizing that George had scored a base hit on their first pitch, the "darp's youngis" then proceeded to embellish this statement. This

girl, the locals said, would not only back the harrows into a shed but she would back the harrows over a six inch high threshold with slack reins and no "beck reymous" on the horse's harness. Soon the news spread about the fantastic things that could be accomplished in Chortitz.

George Goertzen went on to farm in the Plum Coulee area on a quarter of land next to my grandparents' farm. He and his wife Helen (nee Wiebe) were married in 1922 and went on to raise five children. George died August 18, 1969 at the age of 73 years. His wife Helen now 93 years, lives in her own apartment in Winkler, still able to take care of herself. My mother recalled a visit to their farm by Mr. Goertzen.

Even today, some 75 years later, if by stroke of luck or by perseverance one has devised a better way of accomplishing a task, an observing neighbor or friend may be heard to remark "Hendich aus en Chortitz."

— Orlando Hiebert

# Pennerings

This fall there was the dedication for future historical development of the landing site of our fore-families at the junction of the Rat and the Red Rivers. I asked several participants to record the event from their point of view. Even though there is some duplication, I have let these reports stand as sent in because of their intrinsic value as a record of that important day.

When I enliven our cold winter days with a ski from our farm, I find myself surrounded by the ghosts of our Hanover history in the burial grounds of our pioneer families at Bergthal, Blumengard, and Hochfeld. The woes recorded here — of burying children and young wives, of diphtheria and flu epidemics — remind us poignantly of the price paid for our easy life in today's Manitoba. These burial grounds are now the last mark of vanished villages, for these very families, after only fifty years here, struck out again in a new migration to defend their faith. May I propose that our next issue (June 94) include your research into the causes and *the effect* of the emigrations of the twenties and the forties, especially where they concern your own families and communities.

Linda has reported here on the restoration

of the Vollwerk Cemetery, spearheaded by energetic octogenarian Tina Peters, who has thrown herself heart and soul into this tribute to her adopted family's revered ancestor, Oberschulze Jacob Peters. As a follow-up to get a picture for this newsletter, I proposed a Faspa meeting at the Jolly Miller, but her old-fashioned hospitality had Sheila and me at her table instead. Sipping her coffee, I chuckled at Jake Doerksen's description of the finest Faspa: "Kjeen-jemeensche Tweeback en Barjchtolscha Koffee."<sup>1</sup> She knows well the frustration of those who agree to head committees, where everyone considers a project a fine idea, but is content to leave the legwork and head-break to the leader. Who with typical self-deprecation says she is "too old and not smart enough."

Well, she is smart enough, and her age has given her priceless knowledge. This is not her first work for our local history — she was long a premier volunteer at the Heritage Village. Consider the planning of the authentic Mennonite cuisine for the first Pioneer Day. "Backowe mott senne,"<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Peters decreed, for she remembered her mother faithfully baking in their farmyard. Others

threw up their hands, because even where the "what" was remembered, the "how" was beyond them. So Mrs. Peters found the special clay needed, mixed the proper amount of chaff, and with the help of her husband did the bricklaying that produced the oven for the first of the famous Museum bread-loaves. Thank heavens for such "old" volunteers!

From oldest to youngest - it is always a pleasure to welcome a new historian, and Janis Thiessen in her articles shows literary talent and the historian's observant eye. Knowing your demonstrated ability at the SRSS, I am glad you have chosen history at least as an avocation. Of such as you, Janis, is our future made. Welcome aboard.

Thank you again to all the correspondents for your faithfulness. All readers are invited to contribute historical articles for publication. Send them to: Box 1305, Steinbach, MB R0A 2A0. Deadline: Monday, May 30.

— Wilmer Penner (editor)

1. EMC buns and Christian Fellowship coffee.

2. We must have an outdoor oven.

## Book Review

*continued from page 4*

As the title indicates this book focuses on biography. The first of the sixteen sections in the book focuses on context, specifically the socioeconomic and genealogical backgrounds of the Russian Kleine Gemeinde. Fascinating in this section are reports of ground-breaking research into the theological and genealogical Prussian roots of the Kleine Gemeinde. In so doing the authors have taken the Kleine Gemeinde story and placed it well beyond its official starting date of 1812, to the 1600s and 1700s of the Vistula Delta at Danzig. Delbert Plett provides a unique glimpse into the Prussian background of the Kleine Gemeinde by looking at a late 18th century census; Harvey Plett shares some of the discoveries he made during his doctoral research into the life and teaching of Georg Hansen, an early leader with an influence not only on the Kleine Gemeinde, but, as Plett argues, on the present-day Evangelical Mennonite Conference; Archie Penner provides a highly useful reflection on the theological tenets of the Kleine Gemeinde preachers.

The following fifteen sections are biographical, each focusing on a different Kleine Gemeinde leader. Each of the seven "Aelteste" who served during the Russian period of the Kleine Gemeinde are portrayed, beginning with Klaas Reimer and taking us to Peter Toews and Abram Friesen, the two leaders who lead the emigration to Manitoba and Nebraska in the 1870s. Five sections also contain portraits of leading ministers:

Rev. Heirnich Balzer, the 19th century Mennonite conservative intellectual who joined the Kleine Gemeinde because it preached the true word; Rev. Heinrich Ens, noted especially for his publication efforts; Rev. Peter Baerg, the Crimean minister who rejected the KMB movement and described by the editor as "a man of considerable spiritual sensitivity." Three of the fifteen biographies also deal with lay leaders. They include: Johann Toews, described by Plett as "an introspective and reflective man, sincerely concerned for the well-being and salvation of his children"; and Isaac Loewen, a former deacon, whose vociferous writings concerning the death by lightning of his son Heinrich, indicate above all his concern that "all his children would be able to find salvation and live a life of discipleship."

Within each of the biographical sections are several chapters. Each begins with a biographical sketch by an historian; Delbert Plett himself has penned useful genealogical and historical portraits of most of the leaders. The editor, however, has also mined the resources of various recognized historians who had expertise in a particular era: Leland Harder, Clarence Hiebert, Harry Loewen, James Urry, Al Reimer, Henry Fast and John Dyck have each contributed valuable insights into one of the KG leaders. Each of the biographical sections also includes complete translated reproductions of sermons, letters, poems, autobiographies, and journals of the various ministers and lay leaders.

This massive book has achieved several objectives. First, what must be known by

now as the "Plett Thesis," that is that the KG embodied the purest attempt to rekindle the true Anabaptist faith in Russia, is advanced by reproducing the writings of the leaders themselves. It is to Plett's credit that he invited authors like Leland Harder who openly disagree with Plett's view on the secession of Aeltester Jacob Wiebe and the founding of the Krimmer Mennonite Brethren in the 1860s. Secondly, by bringing together the thinking of 13 different scholars, Plett has provided a mechanism for the reporting of the latest scholarship not only of KG history, but of Russian Mennonite history and certainly advanced the position of the KG on the historiographical agenda. Thirdly, Plett has provided a service to all interested readers of Mennonite history by allowing the actors to speak for themselves. The plethora of sermon and piety here alone will provide material for students of theology as well as history. The most noteworthy, no doubt, is the first complete translation of Klaas Reimer's 1836 autobiography, that has been quoted so extensively in Mennonite history, but never reproduced in its entirety in English. Fourthly, by again providing a rich index, Plett has allowed students of genealogy to research their particular ancestors. Finally, biography, as no other medium, gives the reader to a sense of a vivid interaction with real people of the past. Mennonite histories of the future will have no excuse not to note the rich contribution of KG leaders to the shaping of Russian Mennonite thought and society.

— Reviewed by Royden Loewen

## **Chortitzer Assistance**

*continued from page 8*

(Across the end of the document are the following words - not quite clear but this is what it seems to read.)

[Dieser Schuldschein steht ganz unter den Bund in zeugen der Vollmacht]

Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta  
May 9, 1970

Dear Mr. Schellenberg,

I was advised by the Curator of the Mennonite Museum, John C. Reimer, to contact you for information regarding help the Mennonite Brethren gave to the Moravian Brethren (Brueder Gemeinde) in Bruederheim, Alberta in 1894 and 1895.

As our church records start in 1896 with our first resident pastor we have no record of our contact with the Mennonite Brethren.

We have a copy of a promissory note for \$22.00 for two cows and one ox which I understand were freight charges as the animals were donated by the Mennonite Brethren. Two men, Gustave Werner and August Schultz were sent by the Bruederheim Church to Manitoba to make the arrangement for the cattle and to bring them back to Bruederheim.

We plan to have 75th anniversary of our

congregation about the 16th of June 1970.

Would you be so kind as to search your records, as I was told one of your old timers still remembers the incident, and let us know if there is a possibility of getting a man from the church that was responsible for this help to speak at our anniversary? Would you please hurry things so we can arrange our program accordingly?

We know that Andreas Lilge, the leader of the "Brueder Gemeinde" settlers, contacted the Mennonites in Manitoba and was promised help from these same Mennonites, but we do not know which church or churches gave this help.

After 75 years I would like to thank your people for the Christian compassion your people showed to our people and wish you God's Blessing for the future.

Sincerely yours,

Arthur Stelter, member of the Anniversary  
Committee  
Bruederheim Moravian Church  
Box 434, Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta

Bruederheim, Alta.  
Jan. 31, 1901

Lieber Br. Stoesz

Da du einmal schriebst, das einige von deinen, die Vieh nach hier abgelassen, gerne sehen moechten, wenn sie im Baelde die Bezah-

lung erhalten koennten, weil die Ernt in diesem, oder im vorigen Jahr sehr schwach ausgefallen, habe ich diesen Wunsch unter meinen Leuten laut worden lassen u. habe nun bis jetzt schon \$33 eingenommen, die ich dir hiermit zuschicke. Du moechtest so freundlich sein u. mir eine Quittung hierueber zuschicken u. auch wieviel von dieser Viehschuld noch zu zahlen ist. Diese kleine Anzahlung jetzt schon soll Euch ein Fingerzeig sein, das Ihr ebenso puenktlich alles ausbezahlt erhalten sollet; also nur geduld bis zum Herbst. Waehrend der Ausstellungszeit in Winnipeg sehen wir uns hoffentlich, u. werden wir dir Angelegenheit ausfuhrlicher besprechen.

Mit freundlichen Gruss an Alle,  
Dein Br. im Herrn,  
A. Lilge

## **NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING**

### **HANOVER STEINBACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.**

**Date:** Friday, January 28, 1994

**Place:** Mennonite Heritage Village Museum, Steinbach, Manitoba

#### **Agenda**

7:00 p.m. - Business meeting, elections, etc.

7:30 p.m. - Panel discussion: recent developments in historiography of the Hanover Steinbach area.

Moderator: Dr. Lawrence Klippenstein, Archivist, CMBC

Panelists: Professor Royden K. Loewen, historian John Dyck and Delbert F. Plett.

8:10 p.m. - Coffee break

8:30 p.m. - Drama by "Anne Funk and Gesellschaft", Grunthal.

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"Preservings" is the Newsletter of the Hanover Steinbach Historical Society Inc., Box 1960, Steinbach, Manitoba, R0A 2A0, published semi-annually at Steinbach, Manitoba. Editor, Wilmer Penner, Box 1305, Steinbach, Manitoba R0A 2A0. The publication of the Newsletter is funded by "D.F. Plett Foundation Fund."

## Books available from the HSHS

### Working Papers of the East Reserve Village Histories 1874-1910

(Volume One of the East Reserve Historical Series)

This 229 page volume begins with an introduction to the East Reserve which offers a brief background to the Mennonites who settled here in 1874 and their reasons for coming to Canada.

In the pages that follow ten writers present the early settlement stories of ten villages and the pioneering experiences of the people who lived in them. Many of the articles give names and dates of people who came to this area from 1874 to 1876 and tell where their descendants are living today. All of them describe specific communities.

A map of the East Reserve showing the early as well as the later villages is included, as are some village organization and dissolution agreements. Appendices include fire insurance and early internal census records as well as school attendance summaries. 228 pages ..... \$10.00



### The Bergthal Gemeinde Buch

(Volume two of the East Reserve Historical Series)

This 439 page book comes in two major divisions. Sections A and B deal primarily with residents of the Bergthal Colony and their descendants. They first provide information on all members of families who were part of the Bergthal Colony in Russia between 1843 and 1876. That is followed by indexes to some of the early Manitoba Chortitzer church registers.

Sections C and D include information on all Mennonites who immigrated to the East and West Reserves and the Scratching River settlement in the 1870s. Perhaps the most significant item is the passenger lists for all Mennonite immigrants who arrived in Manitoba via Quebec during the 1870s, which includes the names and ages of family members at the time of immigration.

The other item to cover the entire Manitoba Mennonite community is the 1881 federal census which gives names and ages of all family members living in Manitoba Mennonite communities at that time. This is followed by an index to all heads of households of families who immigrated in the 1870s complete with a cross reference of that family to their record in the passenger lists and the census and church records. All indexes in the book show both spouses and their birth dates. 439 pages ..... \$20.00



### Oberschulze Jakob Peters 1813-1884: Manitoba Pioneer Leader

by John Dyck

Jakob Peters was born in the village of Kronsweide and relocated to the newly established Bergthal Colony in 1839. At the age of 31 he was elected to the local governing council and continued to give leadership to the Bergthal people until his death in Manitoba in 1884. This 138 page volume describes his experiences during the Crimean War and as a delegate to America in 1873.

Peters stayed in Russia to oversee the departure of all emigrants and arrived in Manitoba with the last Bergthal settlers in 1876. He won the respect of his people in Russia and continued to serve them in Manitoba. 138 pages. .... \$10.00



### Order Form:

Please send me the following books:

_____ Working Papers of the East Reserve Village Histories 1874-1910 .....	\$10.00 each
_____ The Bergthal Gemeinde Buch .....	\$20.00 each
_____ Oberschulze Jakob Peters 1813-1884: Manitoba Pioneer Leader .....	\$10.00 each
Total Order .....	\$ _____
Signature _____	Address: _____

Send your cheque to Hanover Steinbach Historical Society Inc. Box 1960, Steinbach, Manitoba, R0A 2A0, together with \$2.00 per book for postage.

\*\*\*\*Note: A free copy of "Working Papers . . ." Volume One of the East Reserve Historical Series or "Oberschulze Jakob Peters" will be given with every new membership.

Also available at Die Mennonitische Post