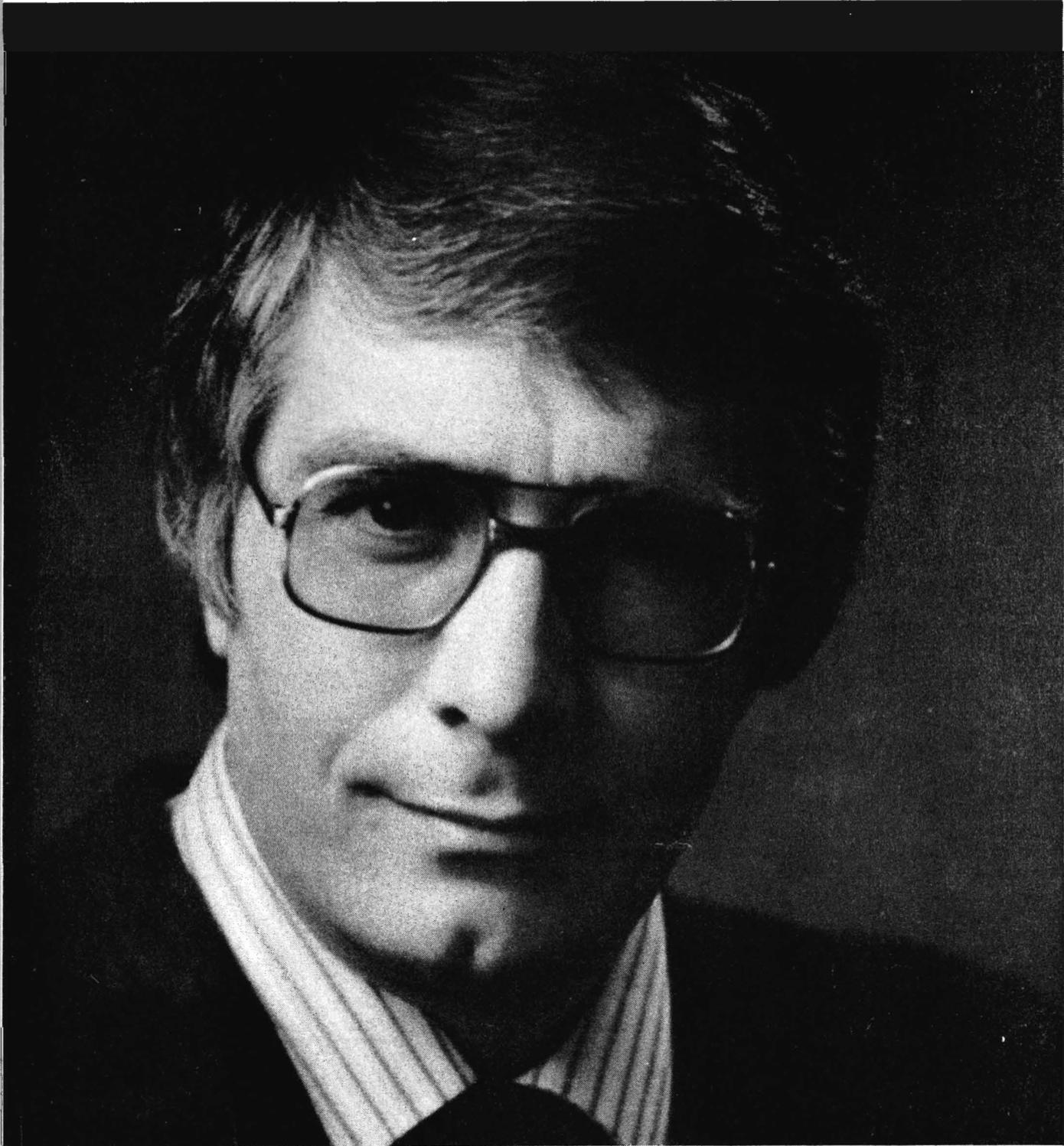


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volume 10 / number 9
may 1981



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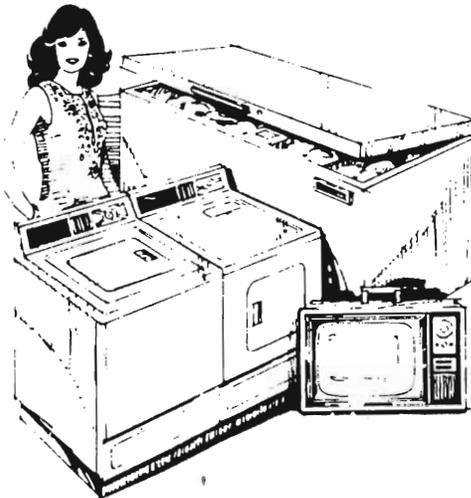
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The letters are to be re-arranged and written in the squares to form words. Letters which fall into the squares with circles are to be arranged to complete the answer at the bottom of the puzzle; the drawing to the right provides a clue.

A winner will be drawn at random from among the contest entries and the prize awarded.

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About This Issue

This issue the Mennonite Mirror features Mennonite musician and Mennonite music. It is in the field of music that some of the most exciting developments in the Mennonite community seem to be taking place. Henry Engbrecht, well-known Mennonite conductor, is the cover subject.

SECRETARY-RECEPTIONIST needed at the Mennonite Heritage Centre, Winnipeg. Qualifications: secretarial skills, must meet people easily, should be fluent in English and German, interest in Mennonite history desirable. The job will include work in both the Conference of Mennonites in Canada Archives and the Canadian Mennonite Bible College Library. Salary and starting date negotiable. Applications accepted till position filled. Inquiries and applications should be made in writing and directed to: John Friesen, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

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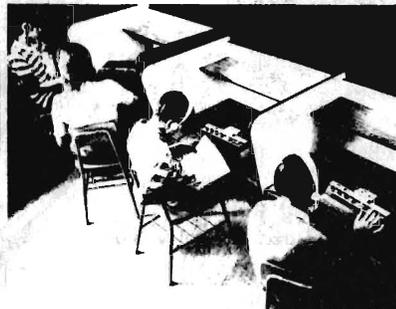
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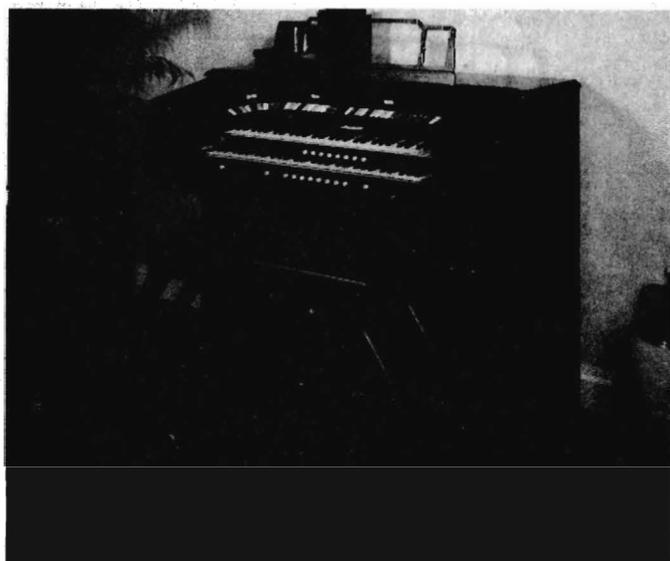
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Passionately in love with music, Henry Engbrecht is a genius when it comes to hard work

by Peter Dueck

On Tuesday, April 7, 1981, the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra revealed its plans for the next season. Here it was announced that Henry Engbrecht would make his debut with the Symphony on November 20 and 21 conducting Bach's *Mass in B Minor* as a part of the Composers' Series.

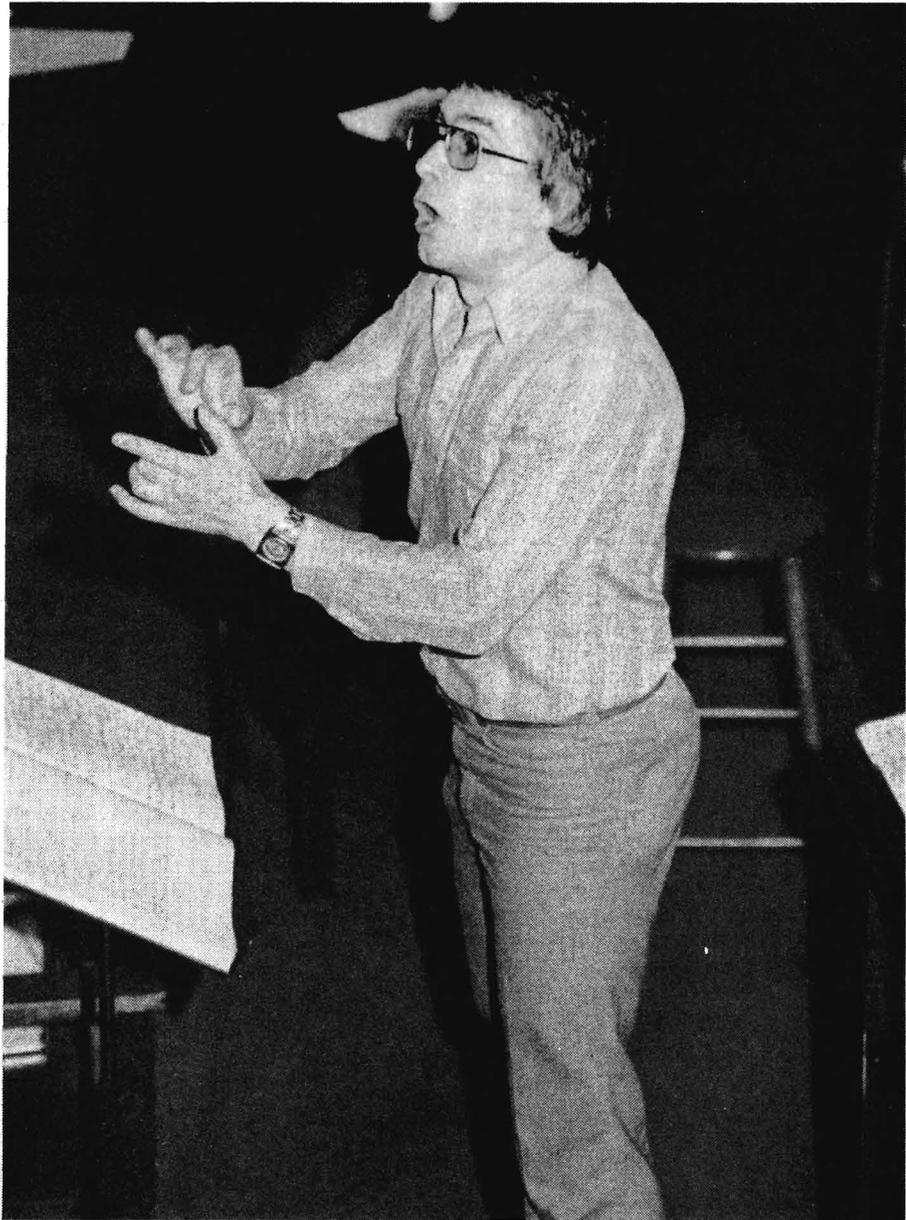
The news should have surprised no one. After all, this latest achievement does not stand in isolation from his daily work. The conductor of the Winnipeg Philharmonic Choir since 1975, Engbrecht also sits on the executive of the Manitoba Choral Directors' Association and the board of directors of the Winnipeg Bach Festival.

His primary responsibility remains with the University of Manitoba, where he accepted a position in 1978 as assistant professor of music and director of choral activities at the School of Music.

That Engbrecht was chosen to conduct the music of Bach also seemed inevitable. After all, he conducted the First Mennonite Church Choir in a Good Friday performance of the *St. John Passion* to conclude this year's Bach Festival. Engbrecht admits that his love for the music of Bach was kindled in 1975 in Oregon at the feet of Helmut Rilling, where he studied the B Minor Mass in detail. He still recalls the experience as "a highlight in my professional development."

mm. The Winnipeg Symphony has just named you as the conductor of a Bach concert next season. Congratulations. How do you feel about the announcement?

Engbrecht. Well, it's a different ball game now. I'm not one to wave the flag or run in the street, as you know, but I am happy. To me, however, it didn't come as a surprise. We've been working



at this ever since I started with the Philharmonic Choir. Now, with the string of guest conductors, this has opened up the opportunity for the choir's conductor to conduct one of the series.

But I'm delighted with the request to do a Bach work. When the subject was first broached, the Symphony Office said, "We want a Bach evening on those nights, and we want you to conduct it." So I chose to do the B Minor Mass.

mm. Your work with the opera chorus and the ballet choruses has always been highly regarded. Your high school and college choirs also have always sung well, and your church choir has done some magnificent work. Even you admit you can't remember a bad review. Success seems to dog your footsteps. Why you?

Engbrecht. When you first asked me that question in a previous conversation, I didn't know what to say. Just after that I caught part of the movie, *Oh, God!* on TV. When the supermarket produce manager keeps getting notes from God, he asks, "Why me?" And God replies, "Why not?" When that statement came out, I had your answer in a flash: "Well, why not me?"

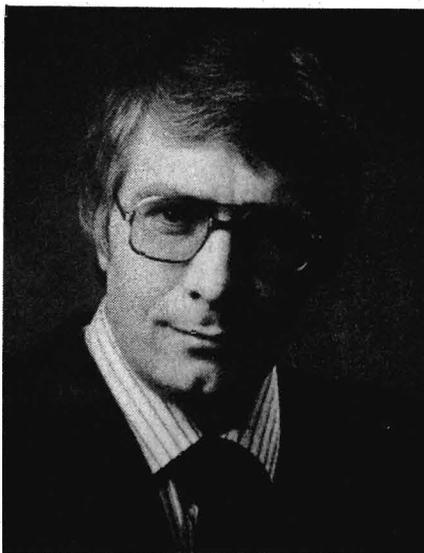
Maybe because nobody is so crazy and stupid to do what I am doing — a lot of people would like the whipped cream, but they don't want to make the pie. I've come across ever so many people who envy the glory that the musician gets, but who have no concept of what goes into it before that. There are those musicians and conductors who want to go sailing into it at the top level; they don't want to start where I started.

Just before I left SMU, a conductor in one of my courses quoted the maxim: "Be ye faithful in the little things, and these other things will be added unto you." He was right.

Somewhere — by studying the lives of people I knew, like George Wiebe and Ben Horch — I picked up the idea that if you want something, go out and get it.

mm. We know that a successful conductor must possess many different abilities — the ability to work hard, to organize, to have patience, to deal with people. What characteristics are most essential in your work?

Engbrecht. A great love for music has got to be first. After that, a conductor must love working with people. I have



Henry Engbrecht

never had to struggle with that. There is, of course, always music from every period that you don't like, but there is so much to choose from. And then I have always had the good fortune to work with very fine people.

mm. Much has been made of the mystique and charisma of world class conductors. How big a role does this really play?

Engbrecht. In my first conducting class with George Wiebe, we were told that a conductor has to be a good athlete, a good actor, a good musician, and a good psychologist. I would add a fifth — he also has to be a good teacher.

If an actor is an actor, then he has charisma. This is something people have or don't have to varying degrees, but I think it's also something that people can develop when they begin to communicate with a group, and when they learn their own strengths.

We have all met people who have had a very strong electrifying contact with a group — they have a kind of magic. I don't think I have that. But it is important to speak well to the group, address them as human beings. Then get on with the music and do it in a systematic way. I think that helps to set up the charisma.

mm. You refer often to the hard work necessary to be a good conductor. Is con-

ducting exhausting physically as well?

Engbrecht. During the first sängerfests that I conducted I was a real pusher in my rehearsing — stimulated by my ideas and readings I had done. K.H. (Neufeld) always poured out an awful lot of physical and emotional energy when he conducted. All young artists emulate their idols; I wasn't above idolizing.

The conducting activity purges the body, physically and emotionally. But the rest of the body doesn't get a workout. I'm a runner or a jogger and I've always wanted to swim. It's still an ambition of mine to straighten that part of my life out.

But I'd have to say that I'm a driven person — and I need the activity of conducting just like another person needs hockey or golf. I'm just fortunate that my hobby is my living.

mm. If that is true, how do you restore your energies? How do you relax?

Engbrecht. Well I would like to read for sheer enjoyment, but right now I get to do very little reading beyond that of professional journals, and even that very selectively.

Again, this relates to my being driven from within. I thrive on more music, especially choral music. If it's that literature that I'm hearing, it sets the whole thing in motion again. I guess I get charged up from exposure to new programming material which I might be able to use.

Also, you have to make room for yourself. What I enjoy is solitude. That may come as a surprise to many, because I spend so much time with people. I guess I'm a bit of a "night person." Often, after everyone is asleep, for a couple of hours I won't read, I seldom watch TV, and I don't even listen to music. It's close to meditation, I guess. That solitude is very necessary to me.

And, as life goes on, so is the enjoyment that a trusting relationship with Erna brings. With her I often find a kind of double solitude. I feel alone and the need of the two of us to be alone. It's unfortunate that during the season, there is no time to step outside the hectic pace to some place where time doesn't matter.

mm. How does your work affect your family life?



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Engbrecht. My family has clearly sacrificed much time for the work that I have done, especially when I worked in the Mennonite schools, when we were touring on weekends. Anyone who has committed himself to teaching in our private schools must expect that, and their families must expect it or learn it with a shock.

But the children have been great. They both exhibit a kind of independence that I think beautiful. Otherwise I wouldn't have had the freedom to do what I did. I often felt guilty about the extent of my involvement, but, because I wasn't being stopped by their demands, I didn't stop on my own.

Some people would say that it's just like speeding; just because you got away with it doesn't make it right. But I never shirked my responsibility as a father.

This is one of the things I thought about in my moments of solitude. Never do I want to take my professional profile into my own home. Home is where we are as four people, as a family. It's as if I were not a musician, and it wouldn't make any difference what I was. Home is where we live, wanting the best for our children and for each other.

mm. Your work as a conductor keeps you quite literally in the public view. How much work is there behind the scenes? Do you have the ability to say "no" to yet another request to serve on a committee?

Engbrecht. I have no regrets about the things that I have done, or the places that I have got involved, even in committee work. But that is also because I have a very understanding partner. There were times when she expressed the wish for me not to do something, and then I didn't. There were also times when my activities conflicted with each other.

I am in the process of cleaning out the margins in my own schedule of activities. I want to drop some things that will not be replaced. When I dropped the opera chorus after five years, I felt very good, even though I enjoyed the work and learned from it.

mm. Let's look back a few years. Questions about how you got started in



music are, I suppose, inevitable. Though your early years practising piano and singing with the Jugendverein were clearly important, we'll have to pass over that. Instead, could you describe how people reacted to a young man who wanted to be a conductor?

Engbrecht. People accepted college study as "good and safe." There were some apprehensions about the young man who was "putting all his eggs in one basket." After all, you could lead a choir and teach music, but you could never make a living from it. After I graduated from CMBC there was the Sunday-school superintendent who suggested that now I could lead the Sunday-school singing. I didn't know how to tell him I wanted to do much more than that.

Though there was but one full-time job in music that I knew of at that time, deep down inside me I knew that this was what I wanted to do. I could never in my wildest dreams have imagined a blueprint of what happened.

I do remember having shared a pipe-dream with a close friend of mine in high-school, saying that someday I wanted to lead a symphonic choir. That was just a gut feeling, a dream.

mm. We know you interrupted your early years as a teacher at the MCI for

study with Lloyd Pfautsch in Dallas. You often mention the support P.J. Schaeffer gave you during those years. Could you elaborate?

Engbrecht. With pleasure. Schaeffer for me was a model as a compassionate teacher, a man with a very strong inner discipline who placed very high demands on himself. He demanded not perfection, but a sincere effort from every student. I think it was his personal interest in me, and partly the compassion he showed as a teacher and as a guide and, while we were at school, as a father figure, that he influenced me so strongly. His great love for people, especially the Mennonite people, really laid the groundwork for my appreciation of my people and the leaders of the past.

mm. Gerhard Ens is someone else you often mention with admiration and respect.

Engbrecht. Yes. Though Gerhard Ens would sometimes be the orator-teacher that Schaeffer was, he was also my colleague. We were most compatible at our jobs. When we would go out as a group, he was clearly the leader, but he would not step out as the dominant figure in the group. Rather he would play more the role of the partner. For someone who had come from a time when leaders were leaders and the rest followed, his achievement here and the respect he maintained were always remarkable to me.

Most remarkable was the clarity with which he addressed both staff and students. What had to be said was said and said clearly.

mm. You have often said that your years at the MCI were some of the best of your life. The reason seems obvious. Those were, after all, your first opportunities to tap the potential of an eager, youthful group of singers, with support from both the staff and the constituency of the school. What did you lose when you left?

Engbrecht. That's a difficult question. Really I guess I lost nothing. I only gained. I kept all the contacts with the school. While I was there, I gained in experience, in my organizational ability, as a person and as a professional. When I left I took those things with me.

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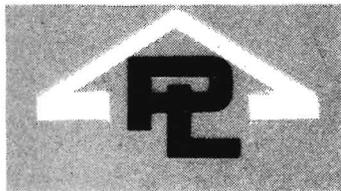


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Summer Session 81

mm. CMBC was your next stop. What were your goals there?

Engbrecht. I wanted to do the best I knew how in the two years for which I had committed myself. I had no dreams of staying on at the college. I was an "interim person", stepping into someone else's shoes. I had no intention of shaking that up or shocking people into something else.

mm. Yet you have spoken of a vision you have for Mennonites and their music. What does this vision entail?

Engbrecht. Mennonites have made a great contribution to music in Winnipeg and in Manitoba. We still are, and we have a responsibility to music here.

I had a vision of what music could do in the church, in the schools, in the communities. I wanted the whole people to gain a new appreciation for what was ours to begin with. This was especially strong at the MCL. I guess I remembered how much the high-school experience stuck with me, and I wanted to share that experience with my students.

We have to make a concerted effort to give every age group the opportunity to sing, in church, in the family, or even more informally. We have to work hard at giving our children good music to sing, songs they will sing all their lives. We have to get back to using our hymnbooks a lot more, in various settings.

Everyone should sing. P.J. Schaeffer never claimed to be a singer — I never really heard him — but he always sang. Certainly every heart sings.

mm. Part of this vision is expressed in the past tense. Has it dimmed in recent years? Or has it been diluted with some of your more secular concerns?

Engbrecht. My goals have been clarified, I think, but not changed. Certainly not dimmed. Here in Manitoba some very exciting things are happening, though there are too few leaders. The First Mennonite Youth Choir under Ed Hildebrand has gone from 15 to 65 members in four years. This is evidence enough that we can still create the opportunity for musical excitement in our churches.

And to answer your other question, I've always had that drive to experience as many areas of music as I could possibly fit in, perhaps partly because my high-school years were somewhat restricted to music history and sacred choral music.

mm. Any advice for the aspiring conductor?

Engbrecht. In music making, as in most endeavours, genius accounts for two percent, hard work for 98 percent. It's just sheer hard work. Those who do their work, strengthen their weaknesses and develop their strengths will achieve what they want. **mm**

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ART IS OF THE DEVIL

Changing Mennonite views on music, culture, and the arts

by Peter Klassen

I'm not sure when I first heard the expression *Kunst ist vom Teufel* but it was sometime during my early teens in the Fraser Valley, B.C. It was a surprise to me, and something of a shock to discover that "Art is of the Devil." Since statements of that sort were made from behind the pulpit during the course of a sermon or during discussions at a church meeting, I discovered that this point of view was apparently the generally-accepted position of the Mennonites (and all true Believers).

What was rather perplexing about the whole thing was the fact that the Bible itself praised God in the Psalms and elsewhere for making the world and all that was in it so beautiful. Christ had said that the lilies of the field were more beautiful than Solomon in all his glory. But I was also told that Jubal, who was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe (or harps and organs — KG) was a descendant of Cain (Genesis 4:17-24). Thus the pedigree of all artists was at best highly suspect and unreliable.

Then there was also the matter of the dance. Along with card playing, smoking, frequenting "worldly places", reading magazines, bowling, and the like, such activities were all to be avoided like the plague. However, again the issue became somewhat perplexing when I discovered passages in the Scriptures such as Psalms 150:4 "Praise Him with the timbrel and dance" or Psalm 149:3 "Let them praise His name with dancing." And what was one to make of King David dancing before the ark? He would very speedily have been excommunicated from a Mennonite Brethren church! The leading brethren of the church explained that David danced alone. (They did not encourage us to follow his example within the same limits.)

Naturally, there were problems in

almost all aspects of life. The great interest in sports was seen as a detrimental tendency, especially if it was organized sports activity and if it took place on Sunday afternoons, when all good Mennonites should be taking naps. The wearing of slacks (for women) was strictly frowned upon at first until the men who visited the berry patches occasionally noticed there were some problems — then wearing slacks became mandatory.

The 1940's created a mild furor amongst those who objected to actors, costumes, make-up, or "secular" content. Those were also the days when a presentation of Mendelssohn's oratorio *Paulus* (under the leadership of Rev. F.C. Thiessen) disturbed at least one listener to the extent that he wrote a full-page article to the *Rundschau* entitled, "Theater in der Kirche." What he objected to most was the dramatic element in the work. All objections to these and similar "inappropriate" behaviour, deportment, or activities were supported by various passages from the Scriptures.

Looking back on those times a generation later, it seems to me that the Mennonites of Canada have reached a new plateau of existence and a new order of problems in the cultural-artistic-religious realm. We have experienced the last phase of a way of life that was rooted in the "Russian Mennonite" tradition. The clashes in culture which resulted once the Mennonites left Russia were to be expected. What made the transition so difficult and often confusing was the fact that many purely cultural practices were seen to have religious significance (the use of the German language in church services and in general would be a case in point).

Individuals and groups involved in activities or areas where the cutting edge of these cultural changes is occurring often suffer a good deal of unnecessary persecution, mistrust, lack of goodwill, and occasional outspoken hostility.

Teachers and students at our various Mennonite high schools, Bible schools, and Bible colleges have many examples that come easily to mind. The objection to wearing beards or longer hair styles is an interesting case. Look at any picture of the Russian period, especially those taken of young men in the *Forstei*, or the older patriarchs of the church — and you will see very luxuriant growth and dignified bearing. I thought the older generation would be delighted to see this modern return to decency and proper decorum. But now the longer hair apparently has a hairier meaning, and cannot be tolerated.

Another example more apropos would be the forced resignation of Rudy Wiebe as editor of the *M.B. Herald* after the publication of his first novel, *Peace Shall Destroy Many*. The irony of such treatment becomes evident when the same person is elected as chairman of the board of publications some twenty years later. I know of soloists at Bible colleges who had to turn down offers to sing lead roles in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. The same work is now sung freely in any of our colleges or schools.

Do any Mennonites still believe that "art is of the Devil"? There never was any problem with *singing*. The Psalms are so full of admonitions to "sing unto the Lord" that the message is clear. But shall you sing chorales, hymns, gospel songs, choruses, cantatas, oratorios or even folk songs and songs about nature? Shall you sing in parts or in unison? Will you use instruments in church and will there be any music not understood to be clearly "religious"? If singing to the Lord is important will the church institute some program of instruction in music similar to that carried on for religious instruction in the Sunday School department? You can see at once that the general exhortations found in Scripture about singing and playing to the Lord still leave many unanswered questions about what is to be sung and

played and how best those ideals can be achieved.

Who shall decide these important matters? The significant role played by church leaders in this respect is noteworthy. Martin Luther, besides being an outstanding theologian, a powerful speaker and writer, was also very familiar with music and very fond of it. He placed music right next to theology, although a shade below it. Since the musical tradition of the Catholic Church was not suitable for the new ideals that Luther taught, he called upon all men of talent to compose texts (chorales) and others to write music for them. He himself was active in both these areas. The response was tremendous, and the course of Lutheran and Protestant music-making was given a powerful stimulus that gave the church musicians a significant role to play in the whole movement. The many offshoots of the chorale tradition as seen in the organ chorale preludes and cantatas of J.S. Bach and other musicians have continued to the present day. What Mennonite churches have not benefited from this movement?

Consider, on the other hand, the influence of Calvin in shaping the musical climate in which his followers were to move and have their being. He believed that only the Psalms should be sung — and in unison. Later metrical versions of the Psalms were accepted, and simple four-part settings were used. From this tradition grew another important stem on the church-music trunk. Mennonites still use a few tunes from the Genevan and Scottish Psalters. But the followers of Calvin and Zwingli went into many churches, destroyed or removed the organs already there, and refused to countenance instruments in church services for centuries. The general ban on all art music in the church had lasting effects.

It is clear that Menno Simons and the other Anabaptist leaders of the first generation were primarily concerned with the spiritual welfare of their followers and matters of life and death during times of persecution. Their writings are concerned chiefly with doctrinal questions. Blaurock, in one of his letters concerning the use of music (mainly singing) in the church, seems to side with the Calvin and Zwingli position. Many of the martyrs of the early period composed religious poems in ballad form which were sung by their friends and church members to secular tunes familiar to all. The *Ausbund* contains a good many of these (no tunes), but their use has not penetrated the Mennonite fold as such. The course of Mennonite music-making has consisted primarily of choosing materials from "outside" sources for use in church services.

At first the *Gesangbuch* consisted primarily of Lutheran chorales and other old church music. In Russia some of the Mennonites (especially the M.B.'s) began to use translations of gospel songs and hymns. With the publication of the *Mennonite Hymnary* (about 1940) a new era of church music for the congregation was introduced. Since then most Mennonite conferences have published new and revised hymnals in English. Some effort has been made to maintain a "Mennonite emphasis" in the selection of the contents and also by the use of some translations, texts, and settings by Mennonites. Perhaps there will yet come a day when the same hymnbook will be used by all Mennonites?

In spite of all the privations and sufferings experienced by the Mennonites in Russia, they nevertheless maintained certain traditions that are still valuable to us today, and introduced others that are very much a part of us as well. Amongst these would be the importance given to education (I am taking the religious tradition for granted) and to music, i.e., singing. The church and community choirs (as well as the schools) were nurtured by new publications such as the *Liederperlen*, and the *Saengerfeste* and the *Dirigentenkursen* (seminars for conductors) gradually assumed an important musical role. In a generation or so, a number of churches were singing hymns and chorales in four parts. Settlers who moved to various parts of Russia and into the wilds of Siberia carried on the same traditions as best they could. All that came to a close once the Communists assumed control.

After the difficult pioneer days in Canada, the Mennonite musical traditions have reached a higher level than ever before. Under the leadership of outstanding men with ability, such as K.H. Neufeld, John Konrad, A.C. Sawatsky, F.C. Thiessen, Ben Horch, David Paetkau, and many others, the choral tradition in our churches, schools and colleges has flourished. The Mennonites have become famous for their choral and congregational singing. Many soloists have achieved similar status. Among the instrumentalists there is no lack of talent. Many public schools are staffed with Mennonite music teachers.

Many people fear that the traditional *Saengerfest* is dying out. I don't believe that to be the case, but new forms will need to be encouraged, such as the one held last year in the Centennial Concert Hall involving the choirs from a number of Christian high schools. The annual Oratorio performance by the two Winnipeg colleges is another version. Local churches can easily combine with others to support similar events involving their own choirs.

What we need most is a much greater acceptance of the role of culture and the arts generally by the church, and in particular by the church leaders. If God commands all aspects of our lives and all we have and do belongs to Him, then all of our life should be one religious whole. The church has done reasonably well to harness the resources of its teachers, professors, businessmen and wage earners. The church seems less able to use the lawyers, politicians, painters, novelists, sculptors, architects, and musicians.

The church has lost a great deal by not harnessing these resources or even simply accepting them wholeheartedly. I don't mean by this that we need to accept uncritically whatever an artist produces. (Junk is still junk even if it is produced by a Christian artist). The Mormon church (in an article in the *Readers Digest*) freely admitted that their famous Mormon Tabernacle Choir had won them more goodwill than any other form of proselytising they used. Our conferences have not utilized the tremendous choral resources we possess in similar ways.

The artist makes much use of the imagination in presenting his understanding of truth. Church leaders tend to mistrust this "truth" in principle. The sermon can do it better. Yet Christ himself spent a good deal of time in healing the sick and telling stories (parables) to the people.

The Bible itself is very "artistic" in the manner of its inspiration. We extol God as Creator but hesitate to accept this *image* of God in man. And we have lost many of the fine ways of celebrating our existence before Him. We don't know how to relate our ethnic identities to our spiritual realities as a people. If we need annual conferences, then let us call one concerned with music, worship, and the arts. mm

Peter Klassen is a former teacher of music at MBBC and is well qualified to write about Mennonite music making in Manitoba.

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Bluegrass beat is Stoneground's sound

by David Bergen

When Walt Whitman wrote, "literature is great; language is greater," he was not referring to a language which shared the sophistication of literacy one would use in "proper English" or "good grammar", but rather a language (much more a dialect) of roots, based on tradition and founded in the earth. Whitman's language easily transposes into a different medium; that of folk music, ballads, blues, jazz and more specifically, bluegrass. Simply put, folk music is the anonymous and musically illiterate expression of a whole people. Folk music is language. Just as the Blacks have their soul music and blues, so do the people of the Appalachians have their bluegrass. Both blues and bluegrass music grew out of and are related to such social functions as lovemaking, dancing, communal labour, and religious worship. This "illiterate" music is a form of communication which had its beginnings during the slave period of the South when Blacks sang the blues on plantations. Bluegrass music then is only one step in the evolution of "earth" music but it is important, its effect is felt today.

Walking into the Manitoba Theatre Centre Workshop on a specific Sunday evening can seem like a transportation

to the Appalachians: to roots and tradition, to the musically illiterate expression of a whole people, to bluegrass. . .

The notes of a five-string banjo follow the rhythm set by a bass fiddle and then a mandolin cuts in, picking up the tempo, all three instruments straining between coherence and breakdown. The perception of the Appalachians and corn cob pipes disappears, however, as the crowd joins in on the chorus and seemingly over 200 chorale-trained Mennonite voices break into four and five-part harmony, smoothing the rough notes, drowning out the harsh rasping of original bluegrass vocals and turning "Blue Moon of Kentucky" into a rendition of "The Hallelujah Chorus".

Yes, mostly Mennonites are at the workshop this particular Sunday and only because Stoneground, the bluegrass group playing, is Mennonite. It would not be healthy to be too hard on the smooth harmonies and lack of raw nasal cries in the Mennonite audience, for though bluegrass is an Appalachian original it is a music which affects all people. Like a universal language, bluegrass is, as one fellow wrote, "well, just plain ol' foot-stompin', ear-to-ear grinning, good-time music, no matter where you hail from."

Tom Janzen, Orlando Sukow and Ed Penner began playing and singing together five years ago. It was a casual get-together for the sake of camaraderie, picking and sharing songs and playing the kind of music they rarely heard live.

Says Orlo: "When I was living in the city I looked for good bluegrass groups but I couldn't find any. So, I figured, why not do it myself."

Their playing eventually put them in the public eye as they performed at the Boggy Creek Folk Festival, christened themselves "Stoneground," gradually got a following, and began "backporch singing," which Tom says is "a laidback time" every second Sunday at either the MTC Workshop or the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

Stoneground is a part-time venture for all three. Ed teaches elementary school in Niverville, Tom drives school bus and Orlo lives in Kane, spending his days "playing banjo, gardening in summer and chopping firewood in winter."

Tom says goals are non-existent for Stoneground. Getting a wider audience, playing pubs and being "entertainment" is not their purpose.

"It's sad that we have to play in pubs to make a living," Tom says. "Basically the purpose of a pub band is to sell more liquor, . . . and entertain. We're not just entertainment. We figure why not let the audience join in and participate. This kind of music invites a sing-along style."

Adds Orlo: "People just want to be entertained and we want them to join in. This was the initial purpose behind "backporch singing". The name means a get-together where everybody participates."

Concerning the partisan Mennonite audience Orlo explains, "When we started we wanted a varied audience but mostly Mennonites came. It continued in that fashion and we don't mind it now."

Tom feels the group is gaining confidence musically and rapport with the listeners is exactly as they like it: spontaneous.

Listening to Stoneground can be a pleasure. They give the listener an appreciation for bluegrass music which, Tom says, is their purpose. Although they are better instrumentally than vocally they reproduce nicely the raw mountain quality of a music made for pleasure.

Tom (vocals, bass fiddle and guitar) handles the stage presence, introducing songs, telling jokes (sort of) and getting by with a semi-forced affability appreciated by the crowd.

Ed (mandolin and vocals) is reserved on stage, concentrating on his picking, blending in on the harmonies and look-

ing his part: a school teacher who plays mandolin in a bluegrass band every two weeks (and enjoys it).

Orlo (banjo, guitar and vocals) exhibits polarity. Opposite his soft voice is the clear ring of a banjo which is well played and polished to the point of professional. It is the banjo which seems to carry the group. Orlo knows his instrument, utilizing runs, picking up the tempo, slowing it down, always careful not to overpower the others, yet always aware of his instrument. Clearly a musician in control.

If there is anything lacking in Stoneground, it is the presence of a powerful voice, a voice bluegrass music begs, a voice which can complement the Carter tunes and sustain the mountain tune. That kind of voice would enhance Stoneground's music, possibly make their time together a lot more fun.

An article on Stoneground is somewhat paradoxical. When Tom says they have no specific goals, no immediate need for publicity, no reason for expanding their audience and are playing together for a good time, his basic philosophy states that a review, an article, or a criticism concerning Stone-

ground is unnecessary. Maybe, but any group which has close to 300 persons attending a concert on a "singalong" deserves some recognition, be it good or bad. mm

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When two colleges sing together there's more than one kind of harmony

by Mary M. Enns

When in 1965 the Oratorio Choirs of Canadian Mennonite Bible College and Mennonite Brethren Bible College joined forces to sing Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*, it was hardly done with the

George Wiebe



idea of setting a precedent for the future.

The two conductors, George Wiebe and Victor Martens discovered that they were doing the same work, at the same time, with the same instrumentalists to a great extent, and probably for the same audiences. The decision to give it a try and do it together was a sound one. They've never looked back. Since that year the two choirs have sung in joint performances every year and beginning with 1970 they have made it an annual event. These events have become highlights in the Mennonite community and church calendars. And it is safe to assume that these occasions have by now also reached a height of importance in our city's musical milieu, of which the Mennonites are only one part.

In those early years there was a considerable awareness as to which camp you belonged — General Conference or Mennonite Brethren. That dividing line is no longer significant. "My mother was from the General Conference" says MBBC's Bill Baerg, "as were many of my relatives. In Coaldale where I grew up the two church communities were really distinctly different and did not cooperate with each other, to my knowledge. However, I never did have any sort of hang-up in that regard. Then when I learned to know George and we began to interact it was as with a brother."

George Wiebe, conductor of CMBC choirs smiles: 'I came to study at MBBC after I graduated from CMBC. I made a lot of friends there. Ben Horch, a fine choral man, was there at the time and I felt I wanted to be under his influence for a year.' Both men agree that credit for some of the unifying experience must go

Bill Baerg



to Ben Horch. A 'pan-Mennonite' who spans both MB and GC persuasions." The harmonious working together of the conferences toward and during the Mennonite Centennial celebrations may, in part, be attributed to his leadership, they feel. Here Baert is quick to add, "George Wiebe deserves a great deal of credit as well. When I came to MBBC in 1966 young and green and just out of Detmold, Germany, we began to plan the joint performance of the Brahms *Requiem*. A choir of 300 with a large orchestra — I'd never done anything like that before! I still marvel at how George entrusted that to me. Then, working together, we really had no problems."

And now, 15 years later, both men agree that a great deal of good has come from those years of close working together. "For one thing, you can do a much more impressive performance with the combined choirs. This was the case, surely in 1974 with the Bruckner *Mass* and Bach's *Mass in B Minor* which we sang in 1980. We wouldn't have done these independently. Another consideration is the cost, since each college could not afford a creditable orchestra." Finally, add to this the personal factor that a close friendship, based on respect and admiration, appreciation and sharing a vision, has developed between the two department heads. "We help each other in that we are each others' ears, pointing out technicalities. These are personal gains. Our differences of opinion never come even close to tensions" explains George. "We respond to music in much the same way. The power of music brings true spirits together. That's no new concept. Robert Shaw discovered this in New York when he called the Collegiate Chorale 'The melting pot that sings'. These were made up of all denominations and races, Christians and Jews. There was something in the music that drew them together. Here you have in the Mennonite faith two bodies of believers that 100 years ago worshipped together and who have temporarily severed themselves from each other, and you find you have far more in common than you had thought. We're finding ourselves together again on a common meeting ground. I believe our theological faculties are more open to each other with less mask-wearing than, say 20 years ago. There has also been some exchange between the two colleges; John Regehr has come to our college, Helmut Harder to MBBC. When J.A. Toews died, John Friesen and Adolph Enns helped out their sister college."

Bill Baerg reminds us of the fine working arrangement of the two British Columbia conferences jointly functioning at Columbia Bible Institute. "We're looking for more projects we can work together. There are many agencies such

as MCC and other areas, especially in higher education, where we can get together and work much more effectively."

Two joint college-sponsored church music seminars, one in 1975 the other in 1980, were a result of this concept. In an effort to avoid, in this last seminar, a competitive, comparison-inducing situation, a consistent interchange of campuses and choirs and leaders emphasized the basis of a close working together. The feeling then was that this also set an excellent example for the students.

Future plans include a possible fine arts seminar "where we would deal with all the arts instead of only the music, bringing together instrumentalists from our conferences rather than just vocalists. This working together is a deliberate endeavour on our part to cultivate, and to nurture. At the same time it is an attempt to avoid a competitive situation."

Who conducts when and what? They alternate automatically. When either of them really wants to do a particular work, as did George with the Brahms *Requiem* in March, they discuss it and work it out together. The same arrangement goes for a work like Charles Ives *Celestial Country*. Studying the composer, the time period in which he lived, George was impressed with the work, with its relevancy to our own experience — parts of the work resembled some of the things we did on our *Jugendvereins*. Bill fully concurred with his colleague on this, reasoning that "Any message is not limited to one musical medium. As golden rich as is the music of Brahms, and as much as we like to bathe in the marvelous sounds, we don't stay with that. Bach had something to say to his time, Honegger to his. For us to find that there are works written in different idioms is a growth experience. From the pedagogical point of view it's a tremendous experience for the students. Our students come back to sing and to relive an oratorio performance after a number of years. That's why I sang in The Brahms when George was conducting. The message moved me enormously. It's a high point — the group experience."

"We don't choose works that are beyond our students. They should be something that grips them — *geistig* (intellectual) and *geistlich* (spiritual) — a total expression. We also use contemporary works in order to give our students a wider range of experience, our listening audience a broader scope, and, certainly, for our own growth. It's mind-expanding." George reflects: "I've had to work on conducting techniques in the Ives that I've never encountered in quite the same way."

What has it all accomplished? "Well, we're gaining credibility in the so-called larger society, if that were our aim. Now

with the CBC broadcasts it has put the colleges on the map across Canada. The Mennonites are known as people who sing. We would like to think that the oratorio performances as well as the Mennonite Children's Choir have contributed substantially to this.

Any avenues opened? "Yes," they agree; "Various symphony members feel proud to be working with the choirs. That comes only through a great deal of experience. We hope we are extending our witness in ways that we would not otherwise do. We've won their confidence. On the whole, we as a Christian community have difficulty tying in with the artistic world. As to the CBC, who would have to pay some \$10,000 for the orchestra for this last performance, they wouldn't consider doing that if they weren't confident that this thing would come off."

As conductors the responsibility, the discipline has given us a strength, an authority, a confidence and competence, an ability to work more effectively in simpler things like church congregations and smaller choirs. The group experience works much the same way as does a conference to the many church communities. We all need highs because they provide moral support. Joint festivals of various churches provide strength and support. We are grateful; God has blessed our efforts. mm

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SINGING MENNONITE

Low German songs show what Mennonites think of life

by Doreen Klassen

During the past few years I have frequently overheard comments like "Father pretended he could understand only English at the office, but at home we always spoke Mennonite." People often referred to speaking Low German as 'speaking Mennonite' in a way which suggested that the two were synonymous.

Low German, unlike High German, Russian and English, has not been generally shared with non-Mennonite neighbors, so one can understand why many Mennonites subconsciously equate speaking Low German with being Mennonite. And, if speaking Low German is 'speaking Mennonite', is singing Low German songs not 'singing Mennonite'?

Five years ago when I first began studying Low German songs, many people were convinced that such a phenomenon had never existed, and if perchance it had, they certainly hoped it would never be re-incarnated. Today, through the composition of Low German reunion songs, and the singing of groups like the *Huischratje en Villa Honig* of Landmark, Manitoba Mennonites have been made aware that not only did people sing Mennonite in the past, but they are still "singing Mennonite".

Because Low German songs of the past were either children's songs or *Gausseleeda*, 'singing Mennonite' was often regarded as something crude and humorous, and by implication, incapable of expressing ideas having any social significance. But is this a valid assumption? Let's take a closer look at how Mennonites have sung Mennonite in Russia, in the early Canadian context, and in the past decade, before we draw any conclusions.

Among the songs brought to Canada from Russia, there are several *Schlüsselbund Leeda* such as *Allemal*

kann ich nicht lustig sein, sung by Mennonite youth as they played singing circle games. In the first two verses of this High German song, a young suitor bemoans his rejection by his girl, but in the third verse, sung in Low German, the girl replies saying

Bruckst ye die goanich sou prautzich han,

Chickt ye doch cheena noh die,

En vann duh ves gohne met Russe Meyallen

Dann bruckst duh nich kohme noh mie.

The girl is not speaking only on her behalf. Rather, she is expressing the sentiments of a closely knit society which frowns on marriage outside of the ethnic group, especially to a common servant girl. Rumor has it that this song was also used in the past few decades in southern Manitoba to discourage inter-marriage with *Englenda*.

Even children's songs are used to socialize the child into the expectations of the community. In the song *Tiep Heenaches* for example, the little chickens are scolded for misbehaving with the warning

Mama voat yuent shelle, papa voat yuent shlohne,

Tiep Heenaches . . . vou voat et yuent dan gohne?

The norms of Mennonite society are further reflected in *Aus dee Sheepa malke yingh*, brought to Canada by the *Russlaender* in the 1920s. In this song, we are told about a sheep herd who goes milking and comes home sucking his thumb. Why does he suck his thumb? Because, like a child, he has transgressed the social norms: sheep were not milked in Russia, and, it was women, not men who did the milking. Obviously, singing Mennonite is a way of ridiculing the individual who does not fit into his society.

Equally significant is the fact that the

tune of this song is a Ukrainian melody. Does the use of Ukrainian tunes, at a time when Mennonites sang predominantly High German, tell us something about the attitude of Mennonites to their Ukrainian neighbors?

The same tune was used by *Kanadier* coming to Canada in the 1870s for a ballad about a man called Lemke, and his mare. The ballad really contains two stories: the story of Lemke's horse which goes lame and dies, and the story of Lemke's rejection by the daughters of an estate owner. Lemke is a born loser: he is a poor farmer, and he is unable to find a wife.

The daughters of the estate owner explain that they can't marry Lemke because 'they are too busy'. That reminds us of the Fritz Senn poem in which we are told that the herd blows his horn more loudly

. . . bie de Aunwohnaohte

Wiels doa de Uere langsama gohne, suggesting that the poor are poor because they are lazy. The theme of marriage as an opportunity for upward social mobility appears in several other Low German songs as well.

And one more comment about this song. According to ship passenger lists, the name Lemke almost invariably placed its owner in the Bergthal Colony in Russia. According to oral tradition, many of the Bergthaler people were simple peasant folk. Is this song perhaps a way of ridiculing people of Bergthaler origin?

Aus eck yingh met de Hoak oppe Deyl, a *Russlaender* ballad, brings to light several other aspects of Russian Mennonite life. The reference to *Deyl* or threshing place, indicates that they were still using oxen at this time. Secondly, we are told about girls from the village of Schoenhorst who have made *bubbat*, probably a pun on *Bubatscharshhta*, the

nickname used for Schoenhorsters. These village nicknames were probably used to express rivalry between boys of neighboring villages who were competing for the same girls. Thirdly, we are told that one of the girls from Schoenhorst bakes the *Bubat toh huach en toh rund* and that she has a *Kromme Hack*. Obviously, she has profited through her dishonesty.

Yes, 'singing Mennonite' in Russia might have been crude and humorous at times, but it was also a way of socializing the children and youth of the community, a way of expressing social tensions, and a way of criticizing the non-conformist.

Songs emerging from the early Canadian context are equally informative. Probably the most familiar ballad of this time is *Ons Nohba Klohse haud ne Koa*. A few thoughts about this ballad come to mind. First of all, the name *Klohse* — a good name — I've never felt any need to get rid of it! But, the name places the origin of the song among the *Kanadier* coming to Canada from Russia in the 1870s, sounding vaguely like an ethnic joke. The ballad tells the story of a peasant farmer whose car is made from *ribuhsenshall*, *tveeback's charsh*t and *kuhnenhuht*, just to highlight some of the printable parts of the song. But what is the text really saying? It's saying that the peasant farmer with his agrarian background really doesn't have the skills required to cope with a technological society.

The tune used for this ballad raises some questions. How did the Mennonites acquire a tune like "Mme. from Armentierres", a tune popular among the troops returning from World War I? Does this mean that Mennonites at this time compromised their non-resistant stance and got involved in the war effort, or were they merely repeating what they had heard their neighbors sing over the back fence?

Or what about the song

*Dee Nohba es mie doll yevorden
Eck lied am nich mien nieyet Biel.*

*Hee liet fon mie blous aule Sorten,
Daut lieyen haft bie am cheen Tsiel.
Dee aundra Dach boryd hee mien
Boagen,*

En bruck mie fuats de Diestel tvei, sung to the tune *Mir ist Erbarmung widerfahren*, a song about God's mercy and compassion? Unlike singing about theological ideals in High German, singing Mennonite means singing about the reality of applying those ideals. After all, if God has a neighbor like mine, would he be still gracious and compassionate?

In another song from this period, the poet dares to criticize the work ethic, saying

*Eck muht daut leefste nich shaufen
Dee Son, dee febrennt mie den
Riggen!*

Although we are not able to look at more of these early songs here, I would like to make some generalizations based on the entire corpus of materials from this historic era. By comparison with the Russian period, there is a dearth of Low German songs from the early Canadian experience. This reflects not only the preoccupation with pioneering, but the move from the village to more individualized farming, as well as increasing pressures toward assimilation and the consequent down-playing of all distinguishing ethnic characteristics including language. It may also reflect the fact that many Low German songs were improvised on the spot and sung only once — usually to tease someone. But, in the songs which have survived, one hears the voice of the dissenting Mennonite: the one who criticizes the work ethic, the one who uses popular war tunes, and the one who writes Low German lyrics for square dance tunes.

Turning to the contemporary period, I would like to cite only one song *Blingel Lament* to illustrate various features of the post-1970 Low German song renaissance. This renaissance, incidentally, began with evenings of entertainment reminiscent of the old *Jugendverein*, sort of a secular counterpart to

the onetime Sunday evening church service.

Sung by the *Heischratje* to the tune of "Auld lang Syne", *Blingel Lament* is a ballad about the declining usage of Low German as a *lingua franca* among the Mennonites.

Like many other contemporary Low German songs, *Blingel Lament* (notice the blind/bilingual pun), recalls an idyllic past, when neighbors knew each other, when we *knachte Soht en gauve Roht*, and of course, *reyde Diets*. This archival function is unique to today's low German songs.

Another unique feature is the self-conscious discussion of ethnic identity. In Russia where the Mennonites lived in relative cultural isolation, that identity was taken for granted. In contemporary society where that identity is changing, people attempt to retain it by spelling it out: we don't drink, we don't smoke, and we are pacifists, according to the *Heischratje* song *Vie vohne hia en Musesiedarp*.

And lastly, contemporary Low German are sung in the way in which they reflect the socio-political context. Mennonites only began singing Mennonite again after their society had told them that at this time in history it is not only acceptable, it is, in fact, desirable to be ethnic. And so Mennonite in an atmosphere which one folklorist calls "romantic pluralism". mm

Doreen Klassen is a "Kanadier" Mennonite descended from the Bergthaler group in Russia. She teaches music at Steinbach Bible College and studies anthropology at the University of Manitoba. She is currently completing an MA Thesis on Low German folk songs.

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With puckish delight they sing Low German

by Wilmer Penner

Wie spele en wie sinje von aule sorte dinje . . . the title song of their record *Sprie* announces, and this "playing and singing of every sort of thing" has delighted Mennonite audiences all over Manitoba. Indeed, if Jim McSweeney is typical, even those not of the true fold have been won over — though admittedly he has had many years of brainwashing in the *Knackzote* circuit on our very own radio station. So he finds their lively presentation and catchy tunes just right for his cheerful morning show.

The group is said to be from 'rum Vin-nipeg', which presumably means their parents were close enough to the *grootstaudt* to call the Eaton's waiting room (of late fond memory) their town home. In fact they are originally from Landmark, or Prairie Rose (Prareroz to the initiated), or if you were a snob from Bloumenhof or Steinbach it was *Kraujelaund*. Here, because they are rootedly Mennonite, they began a religious group they named Locusts and Wild Honey, as if they were a lone voice crying in the wilderness. But then came the first of the well-known Landmark *Plautdietsche Owendts*, and for the occasion they became, and have since remained, 'de Heischrait je & Willa Honich'. It was here that Wilf Carter's old 'You are my Sunshine' was rejuvenated into 'du best mien sonneschien', and the very unfortunate hero, in courting Trut, encounters instead her fierce dog, and in ignominious retreat wails: "Ety feel no klopfleisch" (He made hamburger of me)

Since that memorable evening, a Manitoba Mennonite audience with a

growing nostalgia for what is fading into 'frieajoa' (olden days) has responded warmly to the puckish wit expressed in their very own idiom. Invitations pour in from over the province, and where the cause seems worthy, the group is delighted to oblige. And so you are likely to hear them at any of our numberless Mennonite charitable fundraisers: Folklorama Arts Festival, telethons, *en so wieda*.

With sturdy Mennonite modesty, not one of them will admit to being the leader of the group. With equally sturdy Mennonite *schtetjfaust* individualism none will acknowledge any other as being leader. One can contemplate with some dismay the anarchy of their practise sessions, and one would be right, for we are told some of their arrangements are finalised in whispered *schnetjekonferenz* between their numbers on the stage. Ray Plett is certainly the oldest, and perhaps the wisest, for he was smart enough to marry Willa Honich, Pat, who is the sunshine of this cast. He writes most of the tunes and lyrics, while she plays the piano, soothes ruffled feelings, and gives these farm boy musicians someone to show off to in rehearsals. Grant, recently a refugee from Virginia, plays the toilet plunger, a musical instrument unknown to Bach, which nevertheless requires stupendous talent to play. Fin Plett, who would rather be fishing, supplies the rhythm of the *Schtaulbassam* (broom) — listen for it particularly in *Platt, Platt, sett op'm Bratt*. Dennis Reimer, the resident philosopher, is poison on poor *Plautdietsch* while ad libbing enough *Fraun-*

shousch (French) to make a *Biblingjui Lament*. Gerald Reimer, who will blush when he reads this, is the solid point in this whirl of *sturm und drank*, and so when not making the *Riew* (washboard) sing, he is in charge of their economics.

This economics has boomed since thousands of their first record have been sold, and it is in its third reprint. The old favorite *Dit Laund ess mien Laund*, adapted into Low German for the 74 Centennial celebrations in Landmark, won them the trophy for entertainment that year. *Schafftich en Musdarp* and *Faspa*, extolling the simple village life and the glories of our simple Sunday teatime, were written for the play *Koop'n Bua en Dietschlaund* presented in Landmark in 1977. The tearjerking sadness of *Schwoutung*, soulfully soloed by Gerald, was borrowed from the hit *Ebony Eyes*. *Hackschtait ja* is a takeoff on the old *Chopsticks*, so familiar to piano pupils.

The title song *Sprie* invites all who are burdened by care to gather in company *toom lache äwas Sprie* (to laugh at the chaff); they claim their only purpose is to entertain. But the careful listener will hear more. Our compositives are pricked. In *Toopjefrie*, written for Dennis's marriage to Phyllis, it is our insularity: the dismay that *daut iaschte tjint von en poa tjeenjemeensche lied* had actually *enn pentecostal fried* (the first born of *Kleingemeinde* parents dared to marry a Pentecostal.) Our public squeamishness about romantic love is pilloried in *Sprie: Fraunshousch bruckst du nich senne daut die de Soud woat brenne* (You needn't be French to get heartburn). Then the sly intention, lost in translation of *Greet en eahre burs de lidje mie dicht aum Hoat*. There are also, as must be, little moral lessons, as in Kay Friesen's *Jemies*. What country boy has not wailed at some time *Emma wort ons dan jeschetjt, 'na jung dan go doch weede* but it points the road of life: *Du hast fäla, etj ha fäla, fäla, ha wie aula; Weede mott wie jieda dach, de waich es mau'en schmaula*.

(Boy: Always we are sent to weed the garden!—Mother: you have shortcomings, we all have shortcomings, so we must needs weed everyday for the road of virtue is narrow).

The future for this group is bright. Since release of the record, they have added Peter Suderman as MC; yes, that tall *himmelschtända* Suderman who, as Herr Panna in *Daut Strame Schalduck*, came from the great city in his *Tjreizla* looking for whirlwind romance, and forever put Kildoona and Dodge Panna on the map. He will lead the group with such wit that the time will come when, even for the 'ricksta *Russlaenda en Kildoonz*', *Plautdietsch* will yet become respectable. mm

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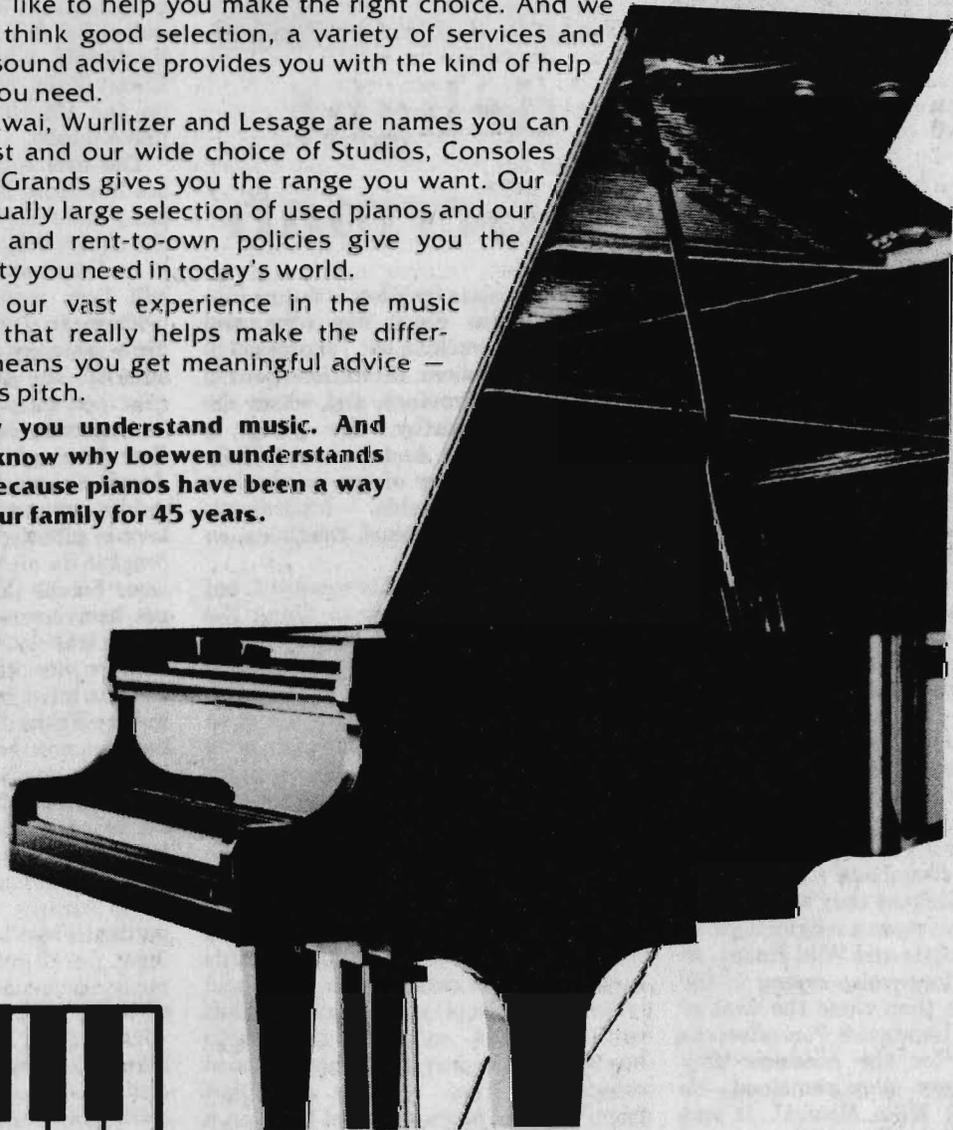
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manitoba news

Construction of a \$3.2 million personal care home in Steinbach to replace the existing Resthaven Personal Care Home and a \$1.6 million home in Grunthal to replace the Menno Home for the Aged has been approved by the provincial government. The new Steinbach home will have 80 personal care beds. The new home in Grunthal will have 40 personal care beds.

Major grant support for the Menonite Village Museum in Steinbach was announced recently by Manitoba Cultural Affairs and Historical Resources Minister Norma Price and Bob Banman, La Verendrye MLA and minister of fitness, recreation and sport. The province will contribute \$3 for each \$1 raised locally up to a grant of \$75,000. Provincial support is to assist with the construction of two major buildings. One of the buildings will house a display of agricultural machinery artifacts and the other is to protect a display of steam tractors.



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South Eastern Regional Shopping Centre, owners and developers of Clearspring Village in Steinbach, are partners in a \$7.5 million shopping centre planned for Winkler. The mall is planned to occupy 180,000 square feet and will be located at the junction of Highways 14 and 32 in the Norquay Industrial Park. The other partner in the venture is Norquay Enterprises, a developing company owned by several Winkler businessmen. President of the company is Walter Kroeker.

The results of trials of Soviet Baptists are not known, reports the Keston News Service. Two of the trials involved Mennonites whose arrests were reported previously. In Aktyubinsk, Kazakhstan on December 12, 1980, Daniul Peters, Heinrich Peters and Peter Abramovich Peters were sentenced to five, three, and three and a half years respectively. They are the father, brother and brother-in-law of youth evangelist Peter Danilovich Peters, who was released from 10 years of imprisonment in July 1980. Rudolf Klassen was sentenced in Karaganda, Kazakhstan to three years' strict regime in labor camps. He was arrested June 20, apparently for his involvement in the printing of Christian literature.

Jake Klassen and Harry Olfert have been appointed to the faculty of Mennonite Brethren Bible College. Jake Klassen, will join the music department and Harry Olfert will assume the position of campus administrator. Klassen's appointment is a two year term appointment to cover the absence of John Martens who will be on sabbatical and leave of absence for 1981-83. He has taught previously at both Winkler Bible Institute and MBBC, and for the past six years has been on the faculty of Winnipeg Bible College.

Harry Olfert's appointment is to replace the current campus administrator, Al Doerksen who is leaving to direct MCC in India. Olfert, 38, has been a teacher for 19 years, including two years at MBCI, and for the past 10 years at River East Collegiate in Winnipeg. He is a B.Ed. graduate of University of Manitoba with a major in school administration.

A third apartment block for senior citizens will be built in Winkler. The block is scheduled for completion in the summer of 1982.

The Steinbach Community Singers under director Rudy Schellenberg

presented their annual spring concert March 21. The concert included the premier of a medley of Plautdietsche Leeda especially arranged for the choir by Winnipeg composer and arranger Esther Wiebe.

David Plett, formerly of Hadashville and Steinbach, was killed March 9, when his light plane struck an unmarked hydro line near Elko in the southeastern corner of British Columbia. Plett, 34, was an employee at an open-pit coal mine and had just received his commercial pilot's license.



Provencher MP Jake Epp was on a three-week speaking tour and vacation in South Africa and Brazil. Epp spoke to the Christian Businessmen's Association in South Africa and then went to Brazil for a vacation with his wife. Epp has been particularly busy over the past few months as chairman of the Conservative committee on constitution.

Arthur Kroker, of the department of political science, University of Winnipeg, has been declared the winner of the Research and Travel competition for support for travel to an international conference in Arts. Dr. Kroker will present a paper to the Conference on The Meaning of Life — The Meaning of History sponsored by Dialectics and Humanism under the auspices of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, Poland, August 25-28.

Recognized by the Western Board of Music for results in practical and theoretical examinations held recently were a number of young people from southeastern Manitoba. Three girls from Grunthal received first class honours in theory tests. Cathy Krahn completed grade four and Monica Wiebe and Sheryl Kornelson both completed grade three. Coleen Schellenberg of Steinbach received first class honours and was awarded the Intermediate Aural Musicianship for grade five theory. Also from Steinbach were first class honours winners in grade three: Michele Loewen, Robert Siemens, Carol Loewen, Jennifer Goossen and Karen Toews.

Abe Dyck of Winkler was elected president of the Pembina Valley Development Corporation at a meeting of the directors in Altona on March 16. Dyck, who is a councillor in Winkler, is serving his first term as a director of PVDC. He succeeds outgoing president Herb Anderson.

Jack Penner, a Halbstadt farmer, was re-elected president of the Rhineland Agricultural Society at the annual meeting of the society March 9.

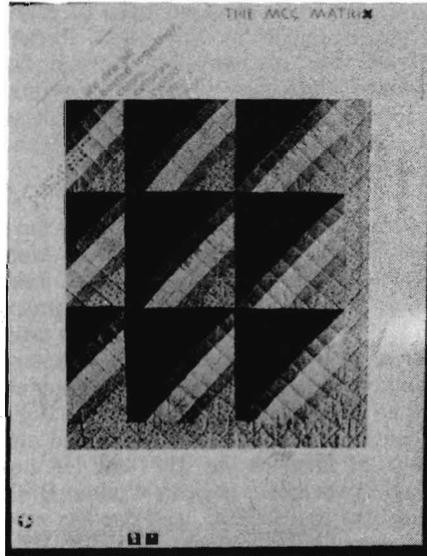


Over 100 youth from 24 Manitoba Mennonite youth groups attended the **Elim Bible Institute Youth Festival** held February 28 in Altona. The theme for the day was "The Christian and Modern Music." Serving as special resource per-

sons were **Gordon Nickel**, associate editor of the Mennonite Brethren Herald; and **Holly Bear, Karin Friesen** and **Dawson Harms**, music students from Brandon University. An evening coffee house included the performance of original compositions by some of the participants.

Steinbach Bible College Chorale, under the direction of **Rudy Schellenberg**, was scheduled to perform in the four western provinces this year during their annual tour, March 27 to April 9. The chorale will give a total of 14 performances.

MCC has collected and published a volume of Mennonite statements on peace and social concerns from 1900 to 1978. Entitled **Mennonite Statements on Peace and Social Concerns, 1900-1978** and edited by **Urbane Peachey**, the volume is a topical and chronological compilation of U.S. Mennonite statements and official actions. The project was conceived and authorized in 1976 and will eventually include a volume of Canadian statements.



The 1976 MCC annual report is one of 75 posters chosen for a current exhibit entitled "Ephemeral Images: Recent American Posters" in New York at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, the national design museum of the Smithsonian Institute. **Ken Hiebert**, professor at Philadelphia College of Art, designed the poster. Under the heading, "The MCC Matrix," is a portion of quilt pieced by **Guy and Edith Martin** of Goodville, Pennsylvania. "We are all bound together, colors, cultures pieced into a world," the poster states. The museum has also added two other annual report posters by Hiebert to its permanent collection.



Cheyenne Mennonite pastor **Lawrence Hart** recently visited Winnipeg to meet with personnel from the Native Concerns office of the Mennonite Central Committee and Native Ministries of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, as well as students at Canadian Mennonite Bible College and the congregation of Home Street Mennonite Church. In his meetings, Hart stressed Indian self-determination as a key for true development.

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Hanover School Division requires the services of a Secretary Treasurer beginning November 1, 1981. The Division Office is located in Steinbach, a town with a population of 7,249, lying 38 miles Southeast of Winnipeg.

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MCC (Canada) and Asterisk Film Productions of Toronto have produced two short public service announcements to be seen soon on approximately 145 television stations across the United States. A 60-second "Self-Reliance" spot contrasts scenes of hunger and poverty with ones of Bolivians raising their own food. In a 30-second "Teach to Plant," a farmer works his field with a horse-drawn plow. The purpose of the spots is not primarily to raise funds but to make a wider audience sensitive to the needs of the Third World.

COMING EVENTS

The second **Juried Crafts Exhibit** sponsored by the Crafts Guild of Manitoba will open at the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature on April 7, and run to May 18. Over 260 items have been entered in this juried show. The Crafts Guild of Manitoba has played a major role in preserving the traditional crafts of many of the ethnic groups that make up Manitoba's population. Entrance to "In Praise of Crafts 1981" is via regular museum admission.

The **Mennonite Brethren Bible College** will present its **spring concert** on the evening of April 24 at the college. **Graduation exercises** are scheduled for 7 p.m., April 26, at the Elmwood Mennonite Brethren Church.

The annual spring concert of the **Treble Teens** is scheduled for the weekend of April 25 and 26. Performances will take place Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon.

The annual conference of the **Manitoba Women in Mission** will take place Saturday, May 2, at the **Boissevain Collegiate** in Boissevain, Manitoba. Guest speaker is **Esther Wenger**.

Westgate Mennonite Collegiate is gearing up for its **Cyclathon**, slated for Saturday, May 2, at Birds Hill Park.

The **Canadian Mennonite Bible College** will hold **graduation and commencement celebrations** on May 2 and 3. On Saturday, May 2, at 8:00 p.m., the **CMBC Singers**, directed by George Wiebe, and the **CMBC Ensemble** will be featured in the annual spring concert. A **baccalaureate service** will be held on Sunday, May 3, 10:30 a.m. in the college gymnasium. The baccalaureate address will be given by **Peter Letkemann**, instructor in music at the college. At 2:30 p.m., the **graduation ceremonies** will take place at Home Street Mennonite Church. The convocation address will be made by **Larry Kehler** and the valedictory speech by **Phyllis Nickel**. CMBC alumni are also invited to a lunch May 2,

at 3:00 p.m., in the college dining hall, with a program to follow at 5:00 p.m. Graduates of 1951, 1961, and 1971 will be holding special class reunions at 3:00 p.m. on May 2.

"Peacemakers' Quest for Global Security" will be the theme of a seminar for members of the historic peace churches in Washington May 3 to 6. The seminar planners will examine current foreign policy issues from the perspective of the Christian faith. **Colin Bell**, former executive secretary of the American Friends Service Committee, will address the opening session. During the following two days there will be discussions with representatives of the government. For information and registration, contact MCC, 100 Maryland Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, or telephone (202) 544-6564.

The **Mennonite Art and Music Festival** will be held Sunday, May 24, from noon to 6 p.m. at the Polo Park Mall. Admission will be \$3 for adults and 50 cents for children.

OPERA NIGHT By Mennonite Theatre

The Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre, in conjunction with the Manitoba Multicultural Theatre Festival, presents the one-act comic opera, *Gianni Schicchi* by Puccini in the Warehouse Theatre on Thursday, May 14 and Friday, May 15, at 8:05 p.m.

This opera, sung in English, accompanied at the piano by Irmgard Baerg, stars Robert Loewen, John Bartlette, Sylvia Dyck, Heidi Geddert and others, under the musical direction of John Martens.

The story revolves around Gianni Schicchi who is called by the relatives of the recently deceased Buoso Donati to change the will so that Donati's fortune will go to the relatives rather than to the friars as Donati intended.

Tickets are available from: Mr. David Rempel (Tel.: 453-8601; members of the board of directors; members of the cast and at the Warehouse Theatre Box Office, May 14 and 15, 7 p.m.



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Ten times each year the *Mennonite Mirror* publishes a variety of news, feature articles, reviews, and creative writing that relates to Mennonites. It's a magazine intended for people who are Mennonites, and who are concerned about what it means to be Mennonite.

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School days...

... at MBCI

With Spring break having passed we now are well into the last term before exams. This term brings more than just the summer vacation. For instance, the Grade 11 are busy preparing the Grade 12 graduation banquet and everyone is looking forward to the operetta to be performed this month.

Every year, the Grade 11 students are in charge of preparing the Grade 12 graduation banquet. This involves everything from creating a theme to menus, decorations, entertainment, and clean-up. It is not entirely a student centred task because many mothers are recruited with their sewing machines and pots and pans to join in the fun. The students may put an awful lot of work into the evening but the mothers and teachers allow the night to go on. Everyone enjoys the work involved, even to the point where some grade twelves have said they would prefer to create the evening instead of enjoying it.

Although graduation is an important event in the lives of grade elevens and twelves, more emphasis is placed on the operetta because it affects the entire student body. This years production *Fiddler on the Roof* is consuming much student time. It not only involves lunch hour and evening rehearsals but also ticket sales, costuming, and set designing. Mr. Brown, Mrs. Friesen are busy directing orchestral and chorus practises, while Mr. Epp and Mrs. Vogt are occupied with the actors and actresses. Overall director is Mrs Sawatsky.

Once again the mothers, along with their sewing machines help to keep the production rolling by sewing costumes for the performers. Mrs. Unruh has been in charge of costumes, while Miss Unruh has worked on the beautiful sets for the play. They have to make sure everything is ready for the April 23rd opening night performance. Mr. Peters, the principal, pitched in to help Mr. Peter Willems, and Peter Woelk (Grade XI) to build the set.

This years production has gone exceptionally well for ticket sales. After only one week all the reserve seats were gone and the rush seats were well on their way to getting there. Mr. Schroeder has done an excellent job in promotion for the operetta.

Once the play, graduation and exams are finished, everyone will be looking forward to two months of well deserved rest after another year of school life.

by Linda Radkewicz
and Maria Wickstrom

From MCI

On March 11, 1980, Reverend Morris Hatton, a Negro Mennonite minister, arrived at M.C.I., for a six-day visit. Chapel period was filled with interesting stories, sermons, and songs. During choir period we learned how to clap our hands and move while singing. For three days we got to know and like Rev. Hatton. Then came the big event: The 1981 Christian Life retreat.

Reverend Hatton's major topic for the weekend was "getting into the Word." He tried to show the importance of reading the Bible, using many Bible verses. He showed us the benefits and responsibilities brought on by Bible reading. He taught us that if we read, we must try to understand and follow what

we learn, and that God will reward us for following Him.

Being from "the South", Rev. Hatton had a very interesting and effective style of speaking. It was very easy to pay attention to his relaxed and personal style, and very hard not to think about what he was saying. He also led us in a lot of very enjoyable singing. It was exciting to come in contact with another style of worship.

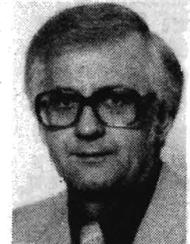
The retreat was blessed with good weather and better fellowship. Free time was easy to fill with horseback riding, sleigh rides, board games, pillow-fights, and lying in the sun (reading the Bible, of course). I think the retreat fulfilled it's purpose.

—by Gary Fehr

business and professional

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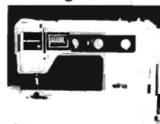
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Mennonites better represented in the "status" jobs

Part 3 of 3 part series
by Elfrieda Rempel

Through the survey, described in the first part of the series, we found that most Winnipeg Mennonites earned their livelihood either as professionals, proprietors/managers, or as craftsmen and labourers. How do Winnipeg Mennonites compare with respect to occupa-

tions and education, to the rest of Winnipeg? Does their choice of occupations and their educational level distinguish them from the rest of Winnipeg society? These questions will be answered using the data collected in this survey and the 1976 Canada Census for Winnipeg.

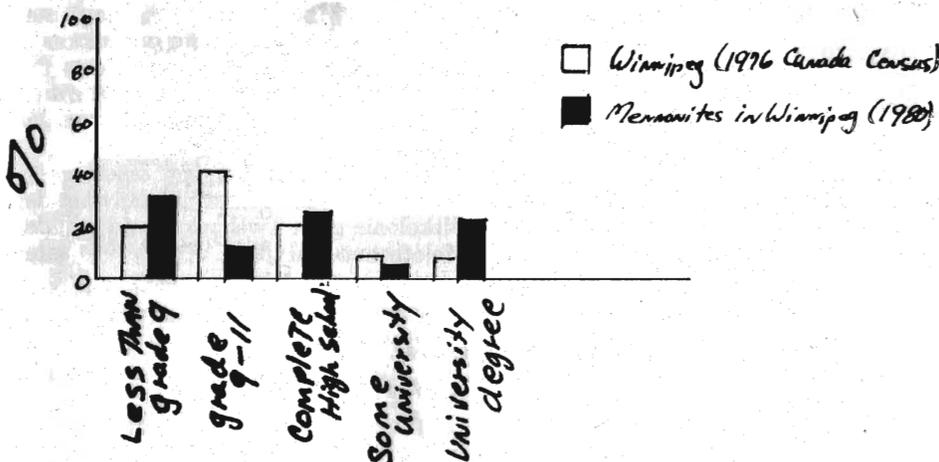
The 1976 Canada Census contains the most recent available data concerning

the occupational and educational status of the Winnipeg population. Absolute comparisons cannot be made because the two surveys were conducted in different years, with different procedures, i.e. the samples were selected differently and the information received was classified into different types of categories. The Canada Census used a population that consisted of people, 15 years and over, who worked for pay or profit, helped without pay in a family business or farm, looked for work or were on temporary layoff. It excluded persons doing housework in their own home or doing volunteer work. The survey of Winnipeg Mennonites included all church members living and/or working in Winnipeg.

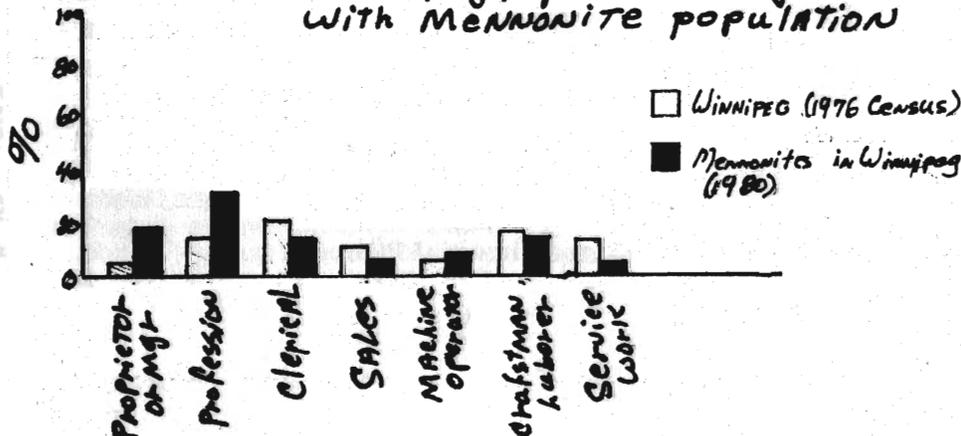
Graph No. 1 indicates that there are significant differences in educational levels attained. A larger percentage of Mennonites than Winnipegers have received an education of less than grade 9. This difference could be due to the inclusion of retired persons, who had fewer educational opportunities, in the survey of Winnipeg Mennonites whereas the Canada Census did not include them. A smaller percentage of Mennonites have completed some high school but a larger percentage have graduated from high school. An almost three times larger percentage of Mennonites have received a university degree as compared to the general public in Winnipeg. Mennonites appear to have achieved a somewhat higher level of education than the rest of the Winnipeg population.

As in the case of the educational level attained, there are significant differences between Winnipeg Mennonites and the rest of Winnipeg with respect to occupations. These differences are illustrated in Graph No. 2. The most striking differences are found in the proprietor/manager and professional categories. The percentage of Mennonites who are proprietors or managers is almost four times as large as that of Winnipegers. Also 32.2% of Mennonites in the work force (i.e. not including retired persons, housewives and

Graph 1: Comparison of Education Levels



Graph 2: Comparing Occupations - Winnipeg population in general with Mennonite population



students) were professionals, whereas 13.8% of the Winnipeg work force were professionals. There is an almost equal percentage of craftsmen/foremen and laborers in both populations. There was also a slightly larger percentage of Mennonites working as machine operators. In terms of the other occupational categories such as clerical worker, salesworker and service worker, the percentage of Winnipeggers was larger than the percentage of Mennonites.

On taking a closer look at the professional category, one finds that a larger percentage of Mennonites are teachers or school administrators (37.7 percent) compared to the percentage of teachers of the Winnipeg population (20.0 percent). There is approximately the same proportion of professors in both populations. There is a slightly larger proportion of ministers among Mennonites (3.1 percent) as compared to the rest of Winnipeg (1.7 percent). 7.1 percent of the Winnipeg work force are engineers and architects while only 1.5 percent of Mennonites in the work force are. The fraction of Mennonites who are social workers (6.9 percent) is greater than that of social workers in Winnipeg as a whole (4.0 percent). Mennonites also have significantly fewer lawyers (0.8 percent as compared to 4.0 percent of the Winnipeg population) and slightly

fewer artists in proportion to the rest of Winnipeg.

It is difficult to establish how Mennonites stand in comparison to Winnipeggers in terms of the medical professions because the Canada Census does not divide the occupations into explicitly defined titles such as physicians, nurses, therapist, etc. 21.3 percent of the Winnipeg work force are in nursing, therapy and related occupations. 12.3 percent of the Mennonite population is in the nursing profession. There are approximately the same percentage of people in the health and diagnosing professions in the Winnipeg population as physicians and pharmacists in the Mennonite population.

Most Mennonite craftsmen/foremen and laborers are employed in the construction industry while the majority of the Winnipeg craftsmen and laborers are employed in product fabricating and assembling industry. (e.g. assembling automobiles, garments, furniture, etc.)

The table below illustrates that a larger percentage of Mennonites are self-employed.

	% self-employed
Mennonites	15.75%
Winnipeg work force	10.5%

In summary, there are more proprietors/managers and professionals, particularly teachers and social workers among Mennonites compared to the rest of Winnipeg. Also a larger fraction of Mennonites are self-employed and in general Mennonites have attained a higher educational level. In these areas Mennonites are distinctive from the rest of the Winnipeg society. mm

De Twee back

Riwideat von Johaun Niefelt

De Mennoniten Jischichti leht, daut de Oltkolonia auls easchti no Russlaund kaumi onn sich enni willi Stapp biem Dniepa aunsiedeldi. To de Tied weari Tweback aula aewereen. Doa wea mau eni Moat. De Mussti so senni daut enn jieda Back to jlitj ena nenn jintj.

Loata kaumi meha Mennisti von Ostpreussen aun. Den easchten Winta blewi Lied bie de Oltkolonia Frind onn Vowaunti. Von de langi Reis mett Pead onn Woagi weari dissi Menschi seha utjihungat onn auti uck doanoh. Oba nich mau auti de so seha, de stoppti sich uck noch Tweback enni Stewelschacht tumm tweschen enn aeti. Daut wort de Oltkolonia doch aula top to bunt. Opp eni jihemi Brodaschoft wort bischloati daut von donn aun auli Tweback sulli auls Fustgrot senni.

Naesten Farjoha trock de tweedi Grupp wieda onn jrind de Molotschna Kolonie. Bolt kaumi de Oltkolonia bie ahn to Gaust. Daut gauf Jilegenheit auf-toaeti.

Oba de Molotschna wisti daut de Oltkolonia seha aunstaendig sennt onn nich meha Mohl tolangi wuddi auls de godi Aunstaund erlaubd. Aulso en klena Tweback ded daut selbji un aus en groata.

Onn so es daut bat opp disem Dag jiblaewi. Onn so es daut jikoami daut de Oltkolonia groti Tweback moaki onn de Molotschna soni tjleni. mm

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Singen in der Bibel verboten?

von Harry Loewen

Mennoniten, Gesang und Musik gehören zusammen. So scheint es jedenfalls. Mennoniten sangen Dankeslieder, als sie aus schweren Zeiten und Ländern herausgerettet wurden. Sie veranstalteten Sängerkonzerter, wo immer sie sich in einer neuen Heimat niederließen. Und heute besuchen Mennoniten nicht nur die städtischen Konzerthallen, sondern tragen auch tatkräftig zur Förderung der Musik und Gesangeskunst auf vielen Gebieten bei.

Mennoniten verdanken ihren Glauben und geistlichen Gütern den Täufern des 16. Jahrhunderts, namentlich den Schweizerischen Brüdern und solchen Führern wie Conrad Grebel. Doch Gesang und Musik haben die Mennoniten nicht von Grebel mitbekommen. Im Gegenteil, Grebel stand dem Gesang in den Gottesdiensten ziemlich kritisch gegenüber.

In einem Brief (1524) an Thomas Müntzer behauptet Conrad Grebel, daß Paulus das Singen in den Gottesdiensten verbiete. Man solle dem Herrn *im Herzen* spielen und singen (Eph. 5, 19; Kol. 3, 16), sonst aber einander *mit Worten* vermahnen und belehren. Was in der Bibel nicht ausdrücklich vorgeschrieben sei, solle als vom Herrn verboten gelten. Und singen und musizieren, meint Grebel, wird im Neuen Testament nirgends befohlen.

Nun, zum Glück, haben die Täufer und die frühen Mennoniten Grebel in dieser seiner Schriftauslegung nicht allzu ernst genommen. Schon im 16. Jahrhundert sangen die Vorfahren der Mennoniten Lieder und Märtyrerballaden aus ihrem ersten Gesangbuch, dem *Ausbund*. Durch Gesang stärkten sie ihren schwergegründeten Glauben und schritten

dann mutig und getrost in den Wassertod, zum Scheiterhaufen und ins Exil. Als die Mennoniten dann später in den verschiedenen Ländern und Territorien geduldet wurden, verschönerten sie ihren Kirchengesang durch das Hinzutun von Musikinstrumenten.

“Wo man singt, da laß dich ruhig nieder, böse Menschen haben keine Lieder.” Dieses Sprichwort ist zwar kein Bibelwort, doch liegt etwas Wahres darin, auch in bezug auf die Mennoniten. Das Musiktalent ist gewiss eine Gabe Gottes, und die Mennoniten sind mit dieser Gottesgabe reichlich bedacht worden. Selbst Conrad Grebel, wenn er heute die mennonitischen Leistungen auf dem musikalischen Gebiet sehen würde, könnte seinen geistlichen Nachkommen nicht allzu gram sein! mm

your word

GERMAN LETTER

Werter Editor:

Mir gefällt der “Mennonite Mirror”. Die Zeitschrift benutzt unsere drei Sprachen und das ist fantastisch. Ich schätze sehr die Artikel von Al Reimer über den Besuch in Russland. Mein Wunsch ist, dass Sie auch weiterhin Fortschritte verzeichnen. Anbei sende ich Ihnen einen Scheck für \$12.00 für zwei weitere Jahre Abonnement.

Ihr dankbarer Leser
Isbrandt E. Friesen
Winnipeg.

RENEWING NOTE

Dear Sir:

Enclosed is a cheque to renew our subscription. We continue to enjoy the articles, German and English, and were particularly interested in Roy Vogt's accounts of his travels in the Soviet Union. I personally was interested in the special section on Westgate in the March issue. Being an alumnus (65) I have fond memories of my years at Westgate.

I thank you for your quality publication!

Mrs. Marlene Buffie
St. Francois Xavier

Dear Sir:

Enclosed is a cheque for a further subscription. Thank you for sending it to me. I read every issue of the MM from beginning to end. I find all the articles interesting and especially enjoy the front cover pictures, the low-German articles and the Manitoba news.

Yours truly
Helen Peters
Morris

PENSIONERS WRITE

Dear Sir:

I noticed by your letter that readers that are old age pensioners do not have to pay for receiving the MM. I am 78 years old. I am sending you \$12 and that is maybe the last time. Thank you for putting out such a good paper. May God bless you.

A.A. Dyck
Newton, Man.

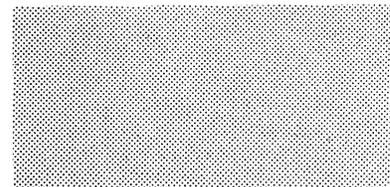
Dear Sir:

Seeing you don't require subscriptions from pensioners, I want to thank you very much but would like my daughter to read this interesting paper, so enclosed find cheque.

J.C. Klassen
Killarney

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A Book of Low-German words

Herman Rempel. *Waed Buiak*. Altona, 1979.

A Review by Wilmer Penner

Toom Kukuk, Rample, wo de Tiet wach jerannt ess. Book browsers who easily lose track of time should beware of this little book of low German vocabulary, for it has much that will seduce them for hours. Chuckles as a special word seems so perfectly *plaut*; flashes of nostalgia as another sums up a cherished memory of *fräja* (days of old). Of course: the visits to the *knoaken oats* (bone doctor); to January chill of the *sejkreet* (outhouse); how he is *oppjedäwat* or *oppjedonnat* (mostly meaning better dressed than you yourself are). This book is less than a dictionary in its modest aims, but it is much more than a mere Webster in its evocation of a lifestyle fast disappearing.

We are especially grateful for its list of idiomatic expressions that express our ways of doing things. How the landless laborer will have longed or *Martien hoole* (St Martin's Day, when labor agreements usually ended). Did our earnest forebearers really have the *bromm top* (New Year's mumming)? And there is a sly twinkle in *shpajk mäate* — the 'measuring of the bacon' that meant sneaking out for a nip of brandy at the *Shwiensjkasst* (literally a hog wedding, a word for the hog slaughter day not listed in this book).

The words reflect the concerns of our people. Rich and varied and specific vocabulary springs from our roots in the simple life of the land. Our urban offspring will never know the daily chore of the *drank ama* detail (slop pail) There is the functionally named *nacht topp* (night pot or chamber pot). All the warmth of washday and the neighbourliness of hog killing bees are wrapped around *miea grope* (cauldron). How proud we were of a straight *opprijg* — that tricky opening furrow of the plow! And River Heights affluence doesn't need the *owe sied* — a lean to add to accommodate the firewood in cramped kitchen quarters.

The view of human nature revealed here is pragmatically cynical. There are a thousand ways to describe human weakness. A lazy bones is a *fuil lens* or *fuil pels* (or choose a dozen others for this cardinal Mennonite sin). A coward is a *shietshtremp* (soiled hose) or *shluuw* (sunflower seed husk). A braggart is *grootfrätsh* (big-trapped). In contrast, the terms of endearment are few and understated; it seems that to eulogise your darling and heart's desire, you must be content with *oole* or *oola*. But the traditional respect for the elders is preserved in the *jie* form of address. A curious note is the scarcity of words of religious faith and life, the Mennonites being so religiously based a people. Perhaps High German has performed the function of Catholic Latin to freeze the expressions of worship out of the everyday.

In spite of the pleasure the words afford, this book is not altogether satisfactory as a dictionary. The pronunciation guide — admittedly always a difficult section — offers as dubious phonemes the *au* in *Maun* as gown' the *ae'a* as in *bae'a* (beer) is compared to 'lay'. And surely every Mennonite accent joke of the "We are talking a launch-break" type must be confirmed by equating 'kind' with *freid* and 'off' with *blott* (mud). Nor does the distinction made of different local pronunciation seem usefully explained by drawing lines on the Manitoba map. While there have no doubt been local influences, surely the differences of -n endings and other variations owe more to colony of origin in Russia than arbitrary lines drawn through Plum Coulee.

More lamentable, even given the confusion of Low German usage at this time, is the idiosyncratic orthography. The author invites a continuing dialogue to pursue a standard usage, but this invitation does not excuse his failure to build on work already done. The master of Low German writing in Manitoba, Arnold Dyck, provides an excellent guide to usage in his last works. Thiessen's *Mennonite Low-German Dictionary*,

(Marburg, 1977) has systemised much of this usage. By not following either, Rempel has made it difficult to locate specific words if the reader has experienced the other writing. Particularly jarring is his use of *jk* for the widely accepted *tj* — e.g. *jk oak* instead of *tj oak* (church), a fault compounded by the unexplained separation of the words beginning this way into the tail-end of the 'js'. More careful thought would have avoided many of these difficulties.

These are very real faults, but they should not obscure the gratitude owed for this necessary work. Had he delayed till all the p's and q's were perfectly in place, this might have gone the way of hundreds of other good, but unrealised, ideas. It does not deserve *frautse* (grimaces) but a vote of thanks. It preserves for all time a good many perishables. The author invites us to build with him; may I start with one of my mother's expressions missed on his list? Its strength is vivid idiom; it also reflects, however, the suspicious ethnicity that has not entirely been lost from our Mennonite tradition. But if *jude* is acceptable for 'to bargain', perhaps we can chuckle over her name for a smokefilled meeting room — a *juide koma*. After all, this Mennonite word lists includes a last word for ourselves — *plautfootijch*. mm

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Auls de Barmherzji Samarita Klopp Tjreach

Von John C. Neufeld

Enzji saedi he wea en Loslada, aundri behaupti he wea en niedatrachtja Bengel, onn de waut meha schonend mett earem Uadel weari, mendi he wea en tjrae jelja Utbund. Na eck saj, he wea en barmherzja Samarita. He wea wenigstens seha veraunloagt ena to senni.

Ladajoawa Friesens Jeat, so heet on Held, dref daut manachmoal uck en baet to bunt, Kratjt so auls ensji plautdietschi Schreftstalla. Oba deswejen wea doa doch noch maunch en Godit aun ahm. Na eck woa junt loati daut Uadel spraetji.

Jeat wea noch gaunz jung aun Joahri onn jing no Schol emm suedlichen Ontario, waut maun den Bananabelt nannt.

Nu passead daut enis Doages daut he sich eni Garter Schlang enni Fupp stopt onn doamet no Schol jink. He haud de Tieri jearn, onn nie wudd he de aufmurksi. He haud de Tieri jearn, onn nie wudd he de aufmurksi. He haud daut enn de Schol jileat wo nuetlich dissu Tieri sent. Daut de nie wuddi enim waut enim waut aundoni uck daut de seha reinlich sent, wisst he.

Aun disem Dach jing aulis so sienem gewoehnlichen Gang enni Schol bat mett enmohl daut Maetji daut hinja am saut, oppsprunk onn trieschend to Dea rut rand. Na oba waut wea dann nu los? Daut stald sich bolt rut emm Jirecht daut doa fologd, daut sich de Schlang de Welt en baet aunsehni wul, onn doabie wea si tweschen Jnetj onn Kroagi rut jikropi. Nu wriggeld daut Ding doa romm. ditt Maetji wea so auls de aula sent, na wenigstens de measchti. Sonin Spoass kenni si nich vodoragi. Uck tieri si sich dann gaunz mords gemaes.

Waut kunn de Leahra vael doni? He haud Jeat daut biejabrocht daut maun dissu Tieri got bihaundli mott. Dit moal weara doch en Baet to wiet jigoani, obba waut het hia. Jeat kaum wach mett eni Vomohnung daut he sont lewa sull senni loati.

Donn kaumi de Depressionsjoahri. Aun enim Aprell Dag foaht he opp sienem Flizzipee. Daut Wadda wea aul Inag seha schoen jiwesi so daut aul vael Kommst onn uck Saloat Plaunti opp daut Feld jiplaunt weari, onn waut noch aulis aundri. Oba aum Dach verhea, haud sich de Wind mett enmohl haustig noam Noad-wasti jidreit onn nu bloast en seha kilda Wind von de wastliche Provinzi, krajt so auls nu de koldi politichi Wind von Alberta.

Auls he so fohat, enn sienem woamen Burnus jiklett, donn sitt he mett enmoal eni utjiwossni Schlang opp dem Wach lidji. De wea suls dot von de Tjild onn kunn sich nich rehri. Na waut deit en goada Samarita bie so eni Jelegenheit? he hillt stell naum daut Ding opp onn stoppt daut enn sieni Fupp.

Auls he no Hus kaum, hong he sienem Burnus hinja dem woamen Koakowi, enn de Tjaetj onn vogaut gaunz von daut Lebiwesen en de Fupp.

Aulis wea stell em Hus. Jeat sieni Mutta onn Sesta weari pienich enn de

Tjaetj beschaftigt. Jeat haud sich en baet opp de oli Ruhbaenk opp't Oha jilagt. Mett enmoal rausseldi de twe Frulied opp't Oha julagt. Mett enomal rausseldi de twe Frulied mett enim Jischrecht opp onn sprungi beid opp earem Stohl. Na, waut wea dann nu de Klock?

Nu seht enmoal aun! Daut oami Tiatji wea enn de woami Stoaw gaunz tridu ennt Laewi jikoami, wea ut de Fupp opp de glauti Linoleum-floa jifolli onn wriggeld auls auli fettig doa romm ohni wieda to koami. Oaba de kuckuck wea daut si groad to feet von Mutta onn Sesta jifolli wea onn doarom de groti Schratj.

Doa holp nu nuscht doato. So seha sich Jeat uck doajejen stiepda, Mutta wea doch noch Harr em Hus. Jeat musst mau schmock em Holtschoppi komi woa Mutta am jrintlich de Becksi mett dem Maltjbratt utstof. Jeat haud bie soni Jilegenheiti sieni ejni Philosophie. He saed dann to sich selbst,

“Schell deit nich weh,
Klopp diat nich lang”.

Onn so moak sich daut, daut he emma noch enin woamin Plautz enn sienem Hoat fer de oami Tieri bihillt.

Waut denk jie? Wea Jeat en goda Samarita oda en vodorwna onn niedatrachtja Bengel? mm

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our word

MENNONITE MUSIC-MAKING IN MANITOBA

This special issue on Mennonite music-making marks the first time the *Mirror* has devoted an issue to a single Mennonite subject or activity. That this special issue should focus on Mennonite music seems entirely appropriate, considering what our people have achieved in this field in little more than a generation. "Mennonites, song and music go together," writes Harry Loewen in his German article in this issue. While that may not always have been true in the past, it certainly seems true today.

As our articles suggest, the very range of musical activities by the Mennonites in this area is impressive. The range extends from the accomplished conducting of a serious musician like Henry Engbrecht to the new interest in Mennonite folksongs and the remarkable renaissance of Low German song-making and performance, to the bluegrass idiom of the Stoneground group. There is even a Mennonite rock group — Sweetwater Creek — in Winnipeg. These few articles, of course, by no means exhaust the subject. We could probably fill half a dozen issues with interesting accounts of Mennonite music-makers and their activities.

Our growing musical prominence in this community and province raises some interesting questions. For example, how and why has this rapid musical development come about? Many of us who are over 40 remember a time when there was very little music in our lives, even in church, where there were no musical instruments and mostly one-part singing, very occasionally enlivened at *Jugendverein* by simple performances on the guitar, violin or, heaven help us, the musical saw. Even so, the sophisticated choral groups which today perform great oratorios in vast concert halls were not created *ex nihilo*. They have grown out of the rich musical soil lovingly prepared by pioneers like K.H. Neufeld, Ben Horch and the many others mentioned by Peter Klassen. Those pioneers also taught and inspired the Engbrechts, Wiebes and Baergs of today.

Assimilation is another reason for this rapid development. Most Mennonites now belong to the affluent middle class, and can provide their children with the same kind of musical education as can their non-Mennonite counterparts. We are coming to expect the same high standards of musical performance in religious music as we expect in secular concerts. And here is another point. We have probably embraced music among the arts because it is the least controversial, the one the church can most readily use as an aid to worship. The rising career of a Henry Engbrecht illustrates how a highly gifted musician can make important contributions to his Mennonite community and church while at the same time successfully pursuing a larger musical career in society. Similarly, Mary Enns' article on the colleges' oratorios shows that our music is important to the larger community. It would be impossible for a Mennonite writer, a painter or sculptor, a dancer, actor or movie-maker, to bridge these two worlds as effectively.

Another question we must ask ourselves is what impact our many musical activities are having on us as Mennonites?

Is our growing musical sophistication helping us to become better Christians and Mennonites? I am sure most of us would like to think so. But is it not possible that by concentrating so much on high-level performances, the "show-pieces" that give us our enviable musical reputation in the community, we are also neglecting other, less visible, aspects of musical development? In his interview Henry Engbrecht stresses the importance of *informal* musical activities in church and family settings. And we must not forget that we are still almost exclusively performers of other peoples' music. But consider: is there not a sense in which an original work like Esther Wiebe's folk opera *The Bridge* is a more important musical "event" than any number of polished oratorio performances at the Centennial Concert Hall? Unfortunately, it is all too rare an event.

Finally, we must ask the difficult question of where our music-making will take us in the future. For a religio-ethnic group cultural assimilation poses many dangers — some crucial. All but the youngest of our musical artists have their roots in a less-assimilated type of Mennonite experience, and can thus strive for a balance between the two. But where will we be culturally in another generation — in half a generation — when most of that earlier experience will be erased? Will the time come when the better Mennonite musicians and singers will no longer feel the need to combine religious and secular musical careers? Will it mean that the first-rate artists will have secular careers and that only the second and third raters will take care of church music? It would be sad to see Mennonite musical culture outstripping and leaving behind the religio-ethnic experience altogether.

That time has not yet come, thank goodness. As Doreen Klassen reminds us, we Mennonites are now riding a nostalgic crest of ethnic culture. The Low German group "Heischraitje & Willa Honich" is "singing Mennonite" and revitalizing that almost dead tradition of Mennonite folk songs. Their first recording has already sold over 5,000 copies in a matter of weeks. But how long will this modest "renaissance" last? In less than a generation there will be few Mennonites left with enough Low German to appreciate this kind of thing.

Most of this Mennonite musical activity should be regarded as highly desirable in itself. But there is also a potential danger in it. Both Henry Engbrecht and Peter Klassen point out that there are not enough leaders ready and willing to harness all this activity and make it work properly for the Mennonite church and community. The arts, by their very nature, are intimately connected with secular culture. And music is no exception. Unless we learn to create music and art generally that will, as Klassen points out, "relate our ethnic identities to our spiritual realities as a people," our music-making and other cultural activities will soon become indistinguishable from the larger culture in which we live.

And that means we won't be "singing Mennonite" anymore in any sense at all.
—by Al Reimer

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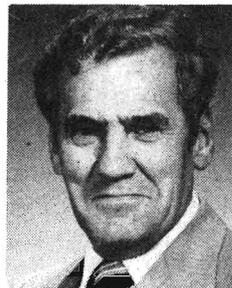
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