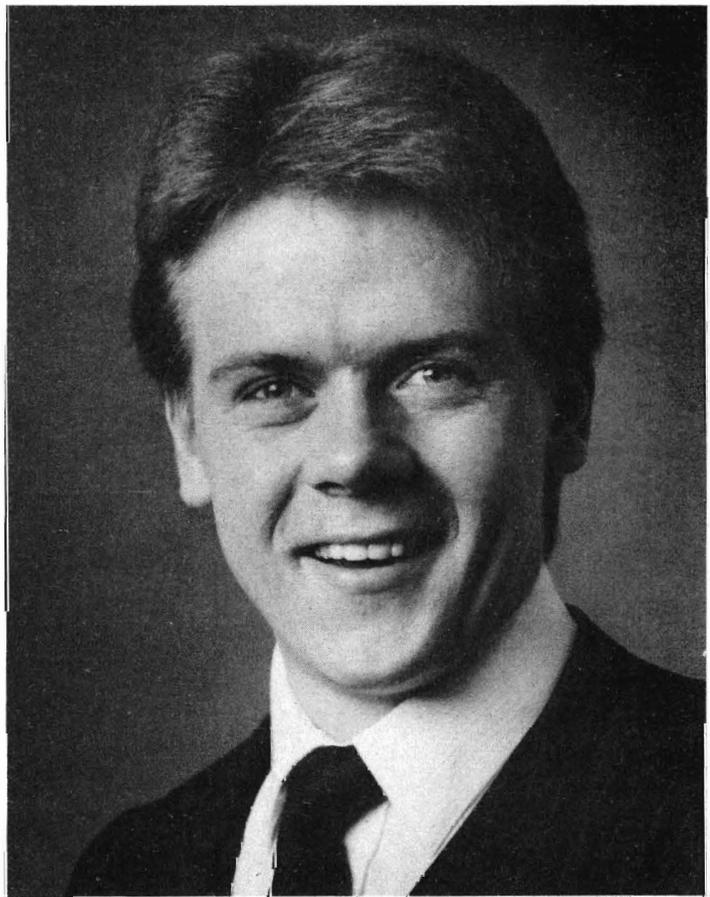


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Fore Word

In the opening article this month, Al Reimer interviews two young musicians whose careers are just beginning — Tom Wiebe and Phil Ens. At the outset Dr. Reimer wonders where all our musical energy as Mennonites comes from. He goes on to answer it in two ways: First by telling us that we see musical performances as an act of worship, as an act of Christian celebration. Second, the point is made in the interviews with the musicians themselves who are acutely conscious that their talent is a gift that must also be used in worship.

The second article takes us to Zimbabwe. Ralph Friesen, who has been there more than a year with his wife and children on a World University Service of Canada assignment, describes his experience on a "safari." At one level it is a story of a group that is outside its element, and therefore its members are somewhat wary of what to expect, and on another level Friesen depicts man as an intruder in nature.

This spring Harold Jantz winds up 20 years of service as editor of the *MB Herald*. Writer Mary Enns interviewed him and we learn that being editor of a church paper is not easy, but is a satisfying experience that tests one's principles and concepts of the church.

Roy Vogt is again in our pages, commenting on the passing world. A series of performance and book reviews, comment on creative efforts that are of interest to Mennonites. Two articles in this issue comment on the recently performed play, *Die Emigranten*, one item is in English and the other in German.

Finally, the Our Word column comments on the "Missing Mennonite Cabaret" to raise the question of the place of the artist in the Mennonite community, particularly within the church community.

Finally, there is a letters column this month. We would like to publish more letters, and we await yours.

The Cover: Tom Wiebe, left, and Phil Ens.

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mirror

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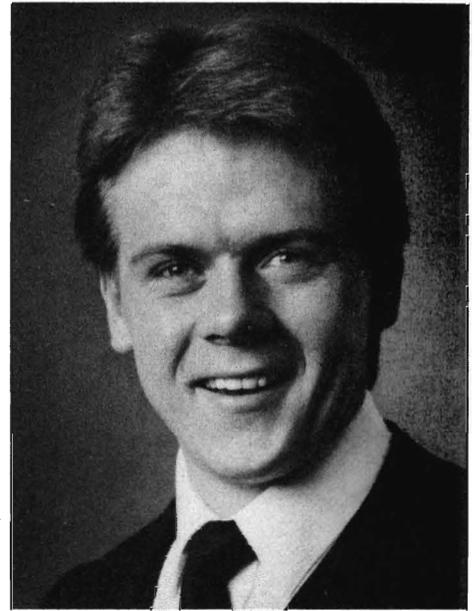


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Tom Wiebe



Phil Ens

Performing With Mennonite Soul and Fire in the Guts:

A Portrait of Two Rising Young Artists

by Al Reimer

Where does it come from, this growing passion for music and music-making we Mennonites have? Were the musical genes there from the beginning in the austere Anabaptist theology and way of life? Did they lie dormant all those centuries we were the quiet in the land suddenly to fructify in this century? "Music," Addison said, "[is] the greatest good that mortals know." Mennonite mortals especially, we might add. In their very bones.

We have all seen the photos of stiffly posed young Mennonite choir singers and musicians in old Russia bearing themselves and their instruments with self-conscious pride. We remember the many amateur choirs gathering from all over rural Manitoba for the electrically charged *Saengerfeste* conducted with reckless energy and spiritual intensity by the late K. H. Neufeld. And all the other dedicated choirmasters who put in countless hours training their raw choirs, coaxing them into singing better than they knew how. And who can forget, more recently, ordinary Mennonites in the Soviet Union and in East Germany singing like angels in their

churches, soaring majestically for a timeless moment above the bleak routine of their lives, or breaking spontaneously into a capella Christian songs in the midst of casual conversations?

Today we are reaping the rich harvest, the musical abundance pouring from our musicians, singers and conductors who have achieved a musical training and sophistication hardly dreamt of by their predecessors even a generation ago. Those elusive professional standards, we have them now. Mennonite music-makers are contributing to the cultural life of this city and of other Canadian communities to a degree where their expertise is taken for granted not only by Mennonites but by non-Mennonites as well. They can even attract an eminent conductor like Robert Shaw, who was delighted and impressed recently by the quality of Mennonite choral singing he found here.

More than anything, what sets the Mennonite tradition of serious music-making apart is its insistence on musical performance as an act of worship, a form of Christian celebration. Old Fa-

ther Bach followed a life-long custom of dedicating his manuscripts with the Latin initials "SDG" — Glory to God alone. Those words could well serve as motto for the spirit in which Mennonite singers and musicians have approached music as a craft in public performance.

In recent decades we have been getting the solo artists as well: highly talented, thoroughly trained and ambitious young performers whose careers can no longer be contained within Mennonite communities, kept for ourselves, so to speak. They are moving on to much bigger things — playing in major orchestras, singing in professional opera here and abroad, and performing in well-received recitals and concerts all over the musical map.

Poised on the brink of major careers are two more young Mennonite artists: cellist Tom Wiebe and bass Phil Ens, Jr. Both are natives of Manitoba who have won major awards in performance recently and both would like nothing better than to have professional careers in their chosen fields. They come from musical families where they were encouraged to develop their God-given

talents and provided with strong value systems that will stand them in good stead no matter what directions their careers may take. Interestingly enough they are also blood relatives — second cousins, to be exact — and share relatives who are themselves prominent music-makers and from whom each of these young men has drawn encouragement and sound advice.

At nineteen Tom Wiebe is a lanky six-footer with dark-brown hair and fine eyes behind his glasses. His manner is as casual and unpretentious as the jeans and floppy shirt he wears in our interview. But that is merely relaxed facade. When he begins to talk music he sounds articulate and mature beyond his years, and soberly realistic about his chances of achieving the kind of solo career serious young musicians dream about. "I do feel I have the soul of a soloist," he admits modestly, "and maybe that's in the cards for me. I don't know." But he is quick to add that he would not regard the alternative of playing in a good symphony orchestra as a "comedown." There are simply too many good young cellists with "unbelievable techniques and mature musically" to give him much hope for a solo career.

Born in Winnipeg, Tom is the son of Menno and Lydia Wiebe. At five he

started on the piano with his mother, who is a busy piano teacher. He picked up the cello when he was eight, and by the time he was twelve or thirteen he chose the cello over the piano and began to make rapid strides with it. His teacher for the past ten years has been Julie Banton of the Winnipeg Symphony. He graduated from the MBCI last year and this year is taking a "sabbatical" from formal schooling while preparing himself for the gruelling years of cello studies that still lie ahead.

Tom has acceptances from two of the most prestigious schools of music in North America, the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia and the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, and must make a choice between them soon. He knows he is lucky to have the choice to make, but it is not an easy one. "It's nice but tough," he sums up succinctly. "Each school has something the other doesn't." He is not even certain that he wants to go to either Curtis or Eastman because that will mean uprooting himself — probably for good. He has personal misgivings about a giant metropolis like Philadelphia, and favors Rochester because it is much smaller — "more like Winnipeg."

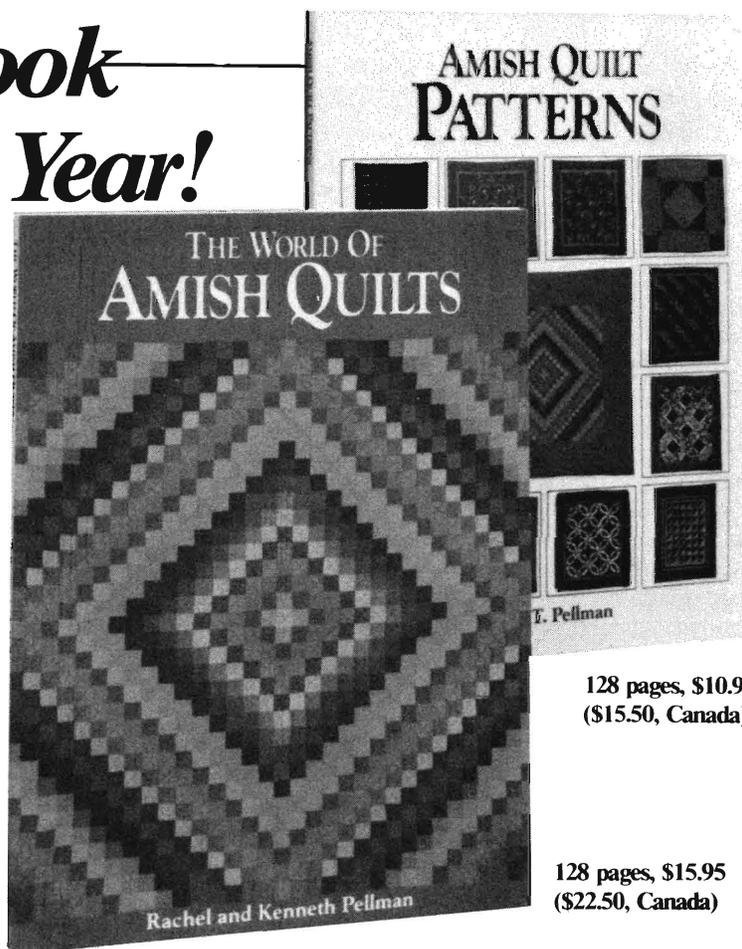
He has also reached the stage where he should really have a better cello than

the "ordinary" cello of Viennese make he now plays. Better cellos are available but are expensive. Inflation has hit the rare instruments market as hard as most other markets. Really good cellos date from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and an instrument that would have cost \$10-12,000 a decade ago has now soared to \$25,000. But while he hopes to get a better cello eventually, he does not complain about the one he has. "It's gotten me by," he says matter-of-factly. Sure, he would like to own the kind of Strad or Amati or Gofriller the big boys play, but he believes in getting the best out of what he has. That Mennonite practicality and realistic sense again.

As one would expect, young Wiebe has his heroes among past and present cellists, the "big boys" of the concert stage. Heading his list is Rostropovich, the towering Russian genius of the cello now a permanent emigré in the U.S. "He's a bold player and I like that kind of style. But I also admire Rostropovich the person for what he has gone through. It's not easy by any means to be stripped of your citizenship." And he admires the way the Soviet cellist came fearlessly to the aid of his countryman Solzhenitsyn when the writer was being persecuted in the Soviet Union. The

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late, great Pablo Casals is also high on Tom's list. And again he admires not only Casals the supremely gifted artist, but also the Casals who steadfastly held out against the political injustices in his native Spain.

This sympathetic awareness of the human being behind or within the artist seems to be a strong characteristic in this thoughtful young musician. Having won top prize in just about every cello competition he has entered in the past five years — from the Artist of Tomorrow contest he won at the precocious age of thirteen here in Winnipeg, to the Lieutenant-Governor's Trophy as the outstanding contestant in this year's Winnipeg Festival — he insists with utter sincerity that he is trying hard to resist the "first place or nothing" kind of competitive attitude. Fulfillment as a musician can only come for him from the kind of attitude Bach had: namely, that the sole purpose of music is "for the glory of God and the betterment of man. Any other [musical] ambition is a hollow one."

When I press him to tell me what exactly that means in practise, he chooses his words carefully. Yes, selecting the right repertoire and giving it a sincere and honest interpretation is important, but above all it is a matter of

attitude: "I have to decide what I'm doing this for. If I play some really flashy piece just so the audience can say 'wow is that ever good' or admire my fingers, then my attitude isn't right. The music must be done not for yourself but must be uplifting for the audience and ultimately played for God."

Christian commitment expressed through the eloquent sonorities of classical cello-playing, that is what makes Tom Wiebe tick as a musician. That is the tradition of sacred music-making in his family and Mennonite community which he describes very simply "as something that has always been there" in his life — "like cars driving around on roads." His sister Rhonda sings and plays the piano and her husband sings and conducts a church choir. Even his dad, Tom says with an affectionate smile, "plays a mean guitar and has a kind of nice voice." And he is most appreciative of the interest his uncle and aunt George and Esther Wiebe of CMBC's music department have taken in his progress.

How does he feel about his career taking him away from the Christian-Mennonite environment that has nurtured him? He has thought about that a lot, he says, and would like to retain his ties with the Mennonite church wher-

ever his career may take him (he has been a member of the Charleswood Mennonite Church since age sixteen). Being a Christian is important to him, he assures me: "I hope that music will only enhance my Christianity, that it will help me grow."

With his kind of rare talent and dedication, this sensitive, reflective young artist is certain to keep growing both as a musician and as a human being.

Still in his early twenties, Phil Ens, Jr. has the robust physical presence, energetic personality and booming laugh typical of male opera singers. Alert, ruggedly handsome and neatly dressed, he could be a young businessman or a college fullback dressed up for a job interview. Compared with his cousin Tom Wiebe, as musical training goes Phil is a Johnny-come-lately who did not begin vocal study until he was twenty, less than three years ago. But he has arrived suddenly with a rush that may carry him a long way indeed.

Blessed with a superb natural bass voice, Phil is showing improvement with every public performance. He is this year's winner of the Rose Bowl, the senior vocal trophy coveted by all aspir-

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ing young local singers. Reviewer Ronald Gibson describes young Ens's voice as "a really splendid bass voice that has enormous potential." He is already in demand for local oratorios and has been promised comprimario roles in upcoming Manitoba Opera Association productions. He is also going into his second season with CBC's popular *Hymn Sing*.

Phil Ens grew up in Winkler, the son of Katie and Phil Ens, Sr., a partner in the well-known Triple-E trailer company. After graduating in 1980 from the MCI in Gretna, Phil studied theology for two years at Bienenberg in Switzerland. Although he enjoyed music and had been singing in chamber and church choirs for years, he had never even thought of singing as a soloist. Then, after his return from Europe, his uncle, Art Wiebe, another well-known Mennonite singer and choir conductor, "roped" him into singing a duet with him in church. Impressed with the lad's voice, Art Wiebe contacted his brother George at CMBC and the two persuaded Phil to start vocal studies at CMBC with Henriette Schellenberg.

He has not looked back since. In 1983 he competed in the Winnipeg Festival for the first time and was runner-up for the Tudor Bowl. He also began to sing duets with baritone Victor Engbrecht, who won the Rose Bowl that year. Since then the two have sung duets frequently, their voices complementing each other so well that they are in great demand for recitals and church performances. Phil is quick to acknowledge how much he has benefitted from his close collaboration with the older, more experienced singer, and that they will continue to sing together. They have also become close friends.

This has proved to be a banner year for Phil Ens, Jr. His rich but unpolished voice has improved enormously and is very much under control now. He made the most of his minor roles in the recent, highly successful performance of the *St. Matthew Passion*, and his performance in Haydn's *Mass in Time of War* performed in the First Mennonite Church on Good Friday was outstanding. In addition to winning the Rose Bowl this year he was also awarded the Doris Lewis Trophy as the top singer in the Combined Bach and Oratorio class.

Where does this dynamic performer go from here? His eyes flash as he tells me that his new love is opera. But much as he would like to have a career in opera, he is as realistic about his chances as Tom Wiebe is about his. "I will keep on going as long as doors keep

opening, as they are right now," he says cautiously. When I suggest that he is singing with the kind of fire in his gut that only young singers who are determined to have professional careers can muster, he looks surprised but delighted. "That really strikes me," he allows, "because I've been told that once before." He has discovered that he has an operatic temperament, but he also knows that he will have to learn how to act. In preparing him for the festival, his new teacher Herb Belyea told him: "We're going to do this piece [the highly dramatic aria "Piff-Paff" from *Les Huguenots*] and get rid of those Mennonite inhibitions."

Phil is singing the small role of the Marchese in the MOA's May production of *La Forza del Destino*, and is already looking forward to next season's operas. He would dearly love to sing the important role of Sarastro in Mozart's *The Magic Flute* with its two great bass arias "In Diesen Heiligen Hallen" and "O Isis und Osiris." In the meantime he is going to Vancouver to tape the upcoming season of *Hymn Sing*, and in early '86 he hopes to get into a school of music to work towards a degree. He has an informal acceptance from Sir Wilfrid Laurier University.

I put the same question to Phil Ens that I had put to Tom Wiebe: as an artist are you conscious of yourself as coming from a Mennonite background and what does that mean to you? His candid answer is "Yes, but less so as the years go by." The next moment, however, he recites the names of established Mennonite singers like John Martens, Arthur Janzen, William Reimer, Bill Thiessen and Henriette Schellenberg, and tells me with pride how these talented performers emerged from the Mennonite choral tradition and that they almost form "a Mennonite club." He sees himself also "as an ongoing member of that group" with its strong tradition in Bach and other sacred composers.

When he talks about his parents Katie and Phil, Sr. he glows with praise and gratitude. They have been quietly supportive from the beginning and are always in attendance wherever he sings. "They're almost ideal as parents," he offers, "supporting but never pushing — well, maybe a little prodding when I need it, but that's all." He remembers his father once taking him aside and saying, "There are people out there who have made it with less talent than you have, but they made it because they really wanted to." At this stage he has no plans to join his father's highly successful manufacturing firm, but with typical Mennonite *Fäasejcht* he intends to take some commerce courses — "just in case." He is aware that Bill Thiessen came back to Canada to become a businessman even after ten successful years as a professional singer in Europe.

Whatever happens or doesn't happen with his career, Phil Ens, Jr., like his cousin Tom Wiebe, is proud of being a Mennonite and has every intention of remaining one. These two young artists do not take their gifts lightly, and both view them as offering a lifetime of service to others rather than as career ladders to self-aggrandisement and personal fame.

mm

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PART ONE

Adventures of a Canadian in Zimbabwe

Down the Zambezi and Across the Veldt

by Ralph Friesen

When people found out that I had signed up for a three-day hiking and canoeing trip down the Zambezi River, horrifying stories came to their lips.

"Not long back there was a man who was caught by a crocodile in the Zambezi River," an acquaintance said. "His friends managed to get him away from the croc, and dragged him to the shelter of a tree some distance from the river. Then they went off to get help. While they were gone, the same crocodile came out of the river, all the way to where the wounded man lay under the tree, and got him again."

"Who was this fellow?"

"I don't know . . . I think he was a Canadian on a canoe trip."

I imagined the man with his back propped up against the tree, frozen in fear as the giant crocodile approached with horrible reptilian purpose, its jaws chomping and slavering. I had paid my deposit, though, and couldn't think of any honourable excuse for backing out. Anyway, who were these unfaithful companions who would leave one of their number alone while both went off for help? I was one of a group of eight, all teachers with World University Service of Canada in Zimbabwe, and all good men and true. We wouldn't leave anyone to be lunched on by a crocodile.

There was another story, and this one I knew to be true. About two months before, on a bush safari in Botswana, a young German woman had been eaten

by a lion. Such things are not supposed to happen, but in this case it had. The group was tenting in the bush, two to a tent. The young woman for some reason had gone to sleep with her body in the tent but her head lying outside. I wasn't quite clear then: had the lion come and bitten off her head, or had it dragged her away and partially eaten her?

Whatever the details were — and I really didn't want to know — one of the Canadians who was to have been on our trip had cancelled, because he had been in the same camp in which the lion incident had occurred. Apparently he'd had enough of the African bush. So I took his place.

It was the usual warm, sunny afternoon that is typical of Zimbabwe almost year-round, as the eight of us waved goodbye to our spouses and well-wishers ("Don't let the crocs get you!") and rolled off in a VW minibus. We were not quite a random sampling of Canadian manhood — in our thirties or forties, not in excellent condition, but not bad either, all with some experience of canoeing and camping. I calculated our chances of survival as fair, given a reasonably competent guide.

Crowded into the minibus, heading west to parts unknown, downing cold beer and being sarcastic to one another, we were men together, happy.

We camped at Chinhoi, a town on the way, and next afternoon we entered Mana Pools National Park. As we neared the park's main camp we saw

herds of impala grazing not far from the road, in the shade of the big trees. There had been three consecutive years of devastating drought, and I couldn't imagine what they were eating, because there was no grass. Sometimes, if we came too near, they would break and run, describing beautiful arcs in the air as they leaped away.

At the main camp office we saw a big, craggy featured, sun-tanned man sitting high on a bench at the back of a four-wheel-drive pick-up truck. He was broad-shouldered and powerful-looking, and wore a khaki shirt and shorts and brown desert boots.

"Are you Rob?" called out Rick, our driver, who had organized us for the trip.

"Rick?" said the big man, climbing down from the vehicle and extending his hand. "I was beginning to think you weren't going to make it." We were, in fact, an hour late, but Rob, offering us beer from a cooler in the back of the truck, was unruffled and friendly. We threw our packs into the truck, climbed in, and were soon bouncing along a barely defined road through the bush toward the safari's permanent camp, which would be our starting point.

The permanent camp, with its bathtub on the river bank, clean beds inside thatch-roofed enclosures, and well-stocked bar, was so comfortable that we, at least the softer and more faint-hearted of us, could almost have been persuaded to stay there for the

three-day duration. As we napped after lunch, waterbuck came right up to the open door of our sleeping quarters, munching on the seed pods that had dropped from the surrounding trees.

In the late afternoon we drove out onto the range. We approached a pool of water; Rob cut the engine and whispered to us to get out, quietly. At the edge of the pool, about 30 metres away, a rhinoceros stood half-immersed, perfectly immobile.

"Keep still," said Rob. "He's sleeping." At this point, to my consternation, the young African man who had accompanied us got into the vehicle and drove off, leaving us standing there on the veldt, watching a rhinoceros who, for all we knew, was only pretending to be asleep. These animals are not famous for being good-tempered, especially when wakened from slumber.

The rhino had passengers — white birds that stood on his back, or poked into his ears. They were picking off ticks. We saw that a trickle of blood ran from one ear down the rhino's jaw; apparently this was from a wound sustained in battle against another rhinoceros. The tick bird, pecking at his ear, was keeping the wound open.

Maybe it was the clicking of all those cameras — for some reason the rhino awoke, blinking. He gazed at us stupidly, perhaps thinking we were a clump of cacti. I looked at Rob, trying to see if I could notice any sign of disturbance on his weathered features, the same way you throw a glance at the stewardess when your plane is going through turbulence.

"Do you think he would charge us?" someone said.

"Probably not," said Rob. "He's too sleepy. He did attempt a charge at the truck the other day, but he turned aside." Rob was obviously no airline stewardess. I looked around for a tree to climb, but there were only a few anthills and some tall yellow grass. At last, the rhino turned and trotted slowly off, away from us, his hindquarters flapping disdainfully.

We stood in the open, not straying far from Rob. He leaned his rifle against an anthill. I remembered that, back at the camp, he had told us that there were only six guides in Zimbabwe qualified to carry a rifle on a safari in a national park. "And you must be one?" I had put in. He had hardly bothered to reply, as though I was trying to insult him. I interpreted that favourably now.

"I want you to remember," he said, "that we are in the habitat of the animals. This is their home and we are

visitors here. You will do well to treat them with respect. Now, in most cases, they will see you before you see them. If you should see an animal, say a lion or a buffalo, at close range, and no one else has seen it, draw our attention to it, very quietly. Whisper, or just go 'psst!' And you'll be wise to look in the opposite direction as well; these animals are often where you don't expect them to be. Now if an animal appears as though it's going to charge, I want you to listen to me and do as I say. If I say 'run,' run. If I say 'sit,' sit. Is that clear?"

It was all too clear. My mouth felt dry. Discreetly, I looked all around, but could see nothing except the river on one side, dry ground all around, and the bush at some distance. I counted the big, brass-jacketed bullets on Rob's belt. He had given us a little demonstration with his rifle and said that it contained three shells — on his belt were nine or ten more; could he bring down a herd of charging buffalo with a dozen bullets?

We began to walk in the direction of the bush, through tall grass. Didn't lions like hiding in this kind of grass? Was it better to walk at the front of the group or the back? I tried to look in directions other than those in which everyone else seemed to be looking.

We reached a little knoll above a delta that the river spilled into. "Let's wait here and watch for a while. If we're lucky we might see some lion."

Lucky? We sat, obediently. Quite a distance away, some elephants came down to the water to drink in the cool of the early spring. We watched them for a while, as they plodded, ponderous but graceful, through the shallow water. From our left came a roaring, grunting sound, very clear in the stillness. "What's that," someone said, "a hippo?" Earlier we had heard the deep snorting of the hippos from the river.

"No," said Rob. "Lion. And he's hun-

gry." We received this news in silence, pretending to be absorbed in watching the elephants drinking. "Let's go catch that lion," said Rob. That, at least, was what it sounded like. We got up, dusted off the seats of our shorts, and followed him toward the river, toward the hungry lion.

"Does it occur to you," said Leroy, walking along beside me, "that we're putting an awful lot of trust in our guide?"

"It does," I said. Just then the lion roared again.

"I wonder," said Leroy, "if the lion hears us tramping along in the dust and says to his buddies, 'let's go catch ourselves a human'?"

"Suppose our guide is a fake?" Leroy continued. "Suppose he got his tan lying on the beach somewhere, and actually has no idea of how to use that gun?"

"Suppose you just shut up?" I said.

Rob, carrying the gun balanced on his broad shoulder, strode confidently ahead of us, toward the setting sun, toward the hungry lion. Not having any choice, we trailed obligingly behind. The lion, however, seemed not in the mood for being observed, so we turned toward camp, arriving there both relieved and disappointed at not having seen the reality behind the roar.

Next Month: Canoeing on the river, and a lion is sighted.

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20 years as editor sees faith confirmed, and new challenge ahead

by Mary M. Enns

Harold Jantz, editor of the *M.B. Herald* for the past two decades, has decided to relinquish his editorship and move onward and forward. "After 21 years with the publication," says Jantz, "I felt it was time to move on. I'm relatively young. I've given it a good shot and the time has come to pass it on to someone else. Every editor has his own bias, puts his own stamp on a publication and it would be appropriate to have another person bring their influences into the work. My decision to terminate my work with the *Herald* came also because I have dreams of things I'd like to do and I wouldn't want to wait too long to get into these."

Writing and publication have been driving forces in Jantz' life. During his years of study at MBBC he edited the student paper, did some writing for the *Canadian Mennonite*, the *Mennonite Observer* as well as other incidental writing. Here he met Neoma Hintz. Born in adjacent towns in Saskatchewan, Harold in Laird, Neoma in Waldheim they were too young to have made an impression upon each other before the Jantz family moved to Ontario. After graduating from MBBC Harold studied at Waterloo Lutheran college (now Wilfrid Laurier University) and Neoma took teachers' training in Saskatoon. They married in 1961 and lived in Ontario where Harold taught for three years at Eden Christian College.

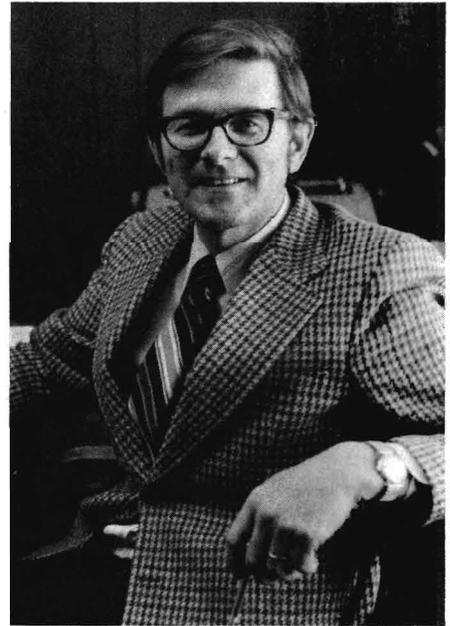
When, during his third year there Jantz was offered the editorship of the *MB Herald*, he knew immediately that was what he wanted to do. Interim editor Peter Klassen, the musicologist at MBBC, had taken over temporarily from Rudy Wiebe, the *Herald's* editor from its inception in 1962. Jantz, aware of his relative inexperience, had no misconceptions regarding his own gifts in terms of Rudy Wiebe's literary skills but decided he also had something of value to contribute and never really felt as though he was or should be labouring in the shadow of the man he was succeeding. "The truth was," Jantz says with confidence, "that Rudy had, by the very strong confrontation that took place in various issues in his writing, opened a door allowing me a great deal of freedom to work. It enabled a kind of debate and exchange that had not existed before. That was a strength and I was grateful for it. At the same time I believe I was then able to create a bridge between different groups in the conference whereby we could come a little closer to one another and have good and vigorous exchange. There was a certain amount of trust I had to work pretty hard to gain, but there were no insurmountable barriers."

Jantz does not think of himself as a "natural" writer as, in his opinion, are people like Ray Bradbury or Isaac Asimov. "I work pretty hard at my writing and agree with John Kenneth Galbraith who insists that most of us are in the much larger camp where we have to do

a lot of writing and re-writing in order to get good copy."

The following eight years were fairly rough years for the young editor. The *Herald*, then a weekly publication, had a one-man editorial staff: Jantz. He worked, alone, six days a week, with extra hours every evening at the paper — an extremely taxing work load, "causing you to run very thin after a while." Eventually the *Herald* went fortnightly and a second staff member was added. That eased the work and a more stimulating environment was added when the conference offices were moved into the Christian Press building. Over the years graphics improved, more columnists were added, news coverage, reviews, and other features improved. Circulation has grown to 12,800 copies. The small editorial staff is still too small and there are not the resources to do some of the things they would like or need to do.

Problems arise, Jantz points out honestly, because of the increasing diversity within our church groups, "though in some ways this is good. We're not the closed communities we once were, but are becoming a broader church in terms of people being drawn into it. We are more diverse ethnically, vocationally and educationally." Jantz feels the tensions between the two major streams in our conference have increased: the Anabaptist stream with social or community-oriented concerns, and the Evangelical stream, emphasizing evangelistic concerns. The two often find



Harold Jantz

themselves in tension and it has been difficult, at times, for an editor to bridge communications across these differences. They are to be found between institutions such as MBBC and segments of the constituency. "I try to be careful not to judge people only by their words. In practice an individual is sometimes better than what he says in arguing for or against an issue. We have difficulty being charitable to those whom we see as representing a different point of view. As many others do I hold my convictions dearly but I want to respect the opinions and convictions of others. My father encouraged us to consider that there might be others with another point of view and that we should never assume that we have the last word."

In discussing freedom to write and publish Jantz explains that he has never felt restricted. "I feel very much a part of this brotherhood. I know our hang-ups but I also know where we want to be doctrinally . . . that's where I find myself in my confession as a Christian. I am in strong agreement with our church, recognizing certain streams that are a part of our church history and position. When you feel at home with these you're not fighting against walls. There has been a liberty in working in that

situation which allowed us to say some pretty hard things when there were issues we needed to address. There were no inhibitions that came from the church fellowship . . . against such writing. That is not to say that I have dealt with everything I needed to. . . . Certainly I've dealt with boards that are more conservative, more restrictive, than others and I'm sure I'm fairly conservative myself in some ways. But I believe there is a kind of illiberality among liberals too which doesn't tolerate another point of view."

The issues Jantz found most troublesome were ideological differences within institutions, agencies, and missions. He was loathe to "sink" them by highlighting differences and problems they might be struggling with because of the people in the constituency who pounce on these difficulties to confirm their reasons for non-support. At times he said things quite obliquely, gently, but quite aware of the implications of his words because "we're within a large, closely-knit committed group and we know the limits of our relationships."

The finest part of those 21 years? Jantz says it was the tremendous satisfaction of putting together a paper. The fact that there was never any serious questioning

of the budget for the publication was a reflection of the kind of support he's had. He always felt the function was to write for the membership, not the leadership, though you can't separate the two entirely. On a deeper level, it was working within a church body and seeing the responses in interaction that doesn't happen in many other settings. There grew within him, he says, an appreciation of the strength of a church community. He felt greatly enriched by the people he learned to know across the continent, not only within our own conference but outside it as well. Of value, he believes, has been his close connection with *The Meeting House*, an inter-Mennonite editors association, meeting regularly to interact, to discuss themes, to work at professional development, their news and article syndication. Jantz grows reflective: "We're all pilgrims in our spiritual walk, never staying at the same point. My work with the *Herald* has been a confirmation of my Christian faith, an encouragement; it has helped me to grow. As I have read throughout these years, becoming always more aware of what's happening in our world, I have become convinced of the adequacy of the Christian gospel to the needs of this world."

Twice during these 21 years Jantz took



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a leave of absence to refresh and recharge mind and body. He wanted to spend time with his family, to read, to meet other people. The first time was in 1972-73 and Harold and Neoma took their three daughters, Connie, Andrea, and Ruth on an extended journey. They went to Ottawa for four months to study for a semester at Carlton University's School of Journalism. Then began a journey that was to become the fulfillment of a boyhood dream for Harold. They started out in their VW van on January 1 — destination South America. The arrangement was that Harold would be writing for the Mission Board along the way. They planned their itinerary to suit their interests. First several weeks in Mexico, a few more in Panama, then Central America. They then put the van on a ship for Colombia while they flew. Then began months of travel in a strange country — first Colombia, then Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Argentina, arriving in Paraguay at the end of April. Harold's eyes light up with remembrance: "This was a tremendously interesting experience for us and quite a lot of writing came out of that period, most of it appearing in the *Herald*. He also wrote a 52-part series which was

translated into German by Eric Ratzlaff for the *Mennonitische Rundschau*.

In Paraguay they faced a set-back when Harold came down with hepatitis and needed to be hospitalized. Except for a few stops in Brazil they felt they had reached the end of their journey. The van was exchanged for air-line tickets. By the end of August Harold was fit to resume a full work-load at the *Herald* once again.

The second leave, 1981-82, was used for several MCC assignments working on the question of government funding of church-related institutions. A lengthy series of articles resulted from information gathered from hospitals, homes, schools, community-related organizations that come under the Mennonite churches, discovering how government funding affects their operations. He also wrote on his travels in Latin America for the Mission Board. A six-part series on the *Christian and War* came out of time spent researching the peace issue. But once again, his family was not forgotten and they enjoyed some extended traveling in Canada. Jantz points out: "I have never really needed a great deal of time away to be refreshed; I recover very quickly. Both Neoma and I read a lot.

mirror mix-up

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This edition we announce the winner of the contest published in the March edition: from the 23 entries, John H. Enns of Mattice, Ontario, was selected the winner. A cash prize has been sent.

In the next edition (June) we will announce the winner for the April contest. We are giving extra time so that more of you can enter and not have to be concerned if the mail delays your edition of the *Mirror*.

The answers to March were react, parse, glean, trial, panel, and spring.

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 from among the contest entries and the prize awarded.

Entries must be sent to the Mirror office by June 15, 1985.

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She is the more avid reader, enjoying current literature such as Alice Munroe's and other authors. She has done some good writing herself and I have encouraged her to write more for publication. My reading now includes stuff like *Atlantic*, *Harpers*, *Time*, *Christianity Today*, *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, the *Conrad Grebel Review* and the *Journal of Mennonite Studies*."

A concern of the past few years is to examine the streams that have shaped the Mennonite Brethren church: the Anabaptist, the Pietist, the Russian experience, and the Evangelical influence. These Jantz feels, are always in tension, struggling against each other. But they can also result in a good balance or a wholeness if we integrate them. "Even when we experience them as tensions these can be good for us, helping to pull us back toward something more wholesome or sharpen us when we want to become too dogmatic in one position or the other. I've never been too unhappy with tension. In the paper we have to create a certain amount of it, which can be very helpful to us."

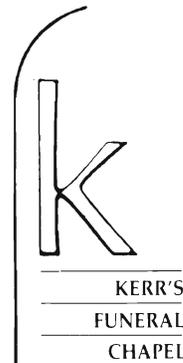
With thoughts like these, Harold Jantz, when he finishes at the *Herald* at the end of June, will launch out into a new venture of his own. "I see a need," he explains, "for a publication which is able to give visibility to a part of the larger church in Canada which is often put down in the secular media, one that can, in broader terms, serve the Evangelical constituency in Canada specifically. This would be oriented to a strong news flow that would have the churches as a primary focus, in contrast to the para-church. It would, hopefully, draw in a wide range of writers working toward a greater consensus amongst Evangelicals and would, with vigorous discussion, bring in a good balance between social and evangelical concerns.

"I'm hoping to do this, not because I have grandiose assumptions about myself, but because I think there is a need there that is difficult to address, a need for something which does not have the constraints or formal ties to any organization but can be critically supportive and work with the goal of giving visibility to the evangelical community as well as developing a way of building more understanding also within the media, for who we are. Mennonites generally have a good press but Evangelicals don't, and since we're part of both I feel maybe I can help do something about it. Financial support would have to come from individuals who would recognize this need as it is presented to them as a worthwhile and important venture."

Jantz has been working closely since the beginning of April with his successor at the *Herald*, Herb Kopp, formerly pastor at the Fort Garry MB Church. "I am very comfortable with the choice," says Jantz, "and Herb is looking forward to the challenge. I hope he'll be his own person and not feel burdened by any attempt to reproduce what I've done. He is a very widely-read, knowledgeable man and has done a substantial amount of writing. A few years ago he collaborated with Waldo Hiebert of Biblical Seminary in Fresno on a book on deaconal work. He has also, in manuscript, a series of his sermons which may result in a good book. He has stature as a churchman with wide across-country involvement. A highly verbal man, he speaks clearly and easily and I believe this can translate into a writing style easy to read."

mm

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observed along the way

by Roy Vogt

Spring, 1985.

• Once again the miracle happens. In the middle of March one cannot imagine the huge drifts of snow ever disappearing. Then, quite suddenly, as if to chide us for our doubts, the April sun shines brilliantly for a few days and melts all of the snow away. What a sensation it is to walk out in the open again without an overcoat! I go without a coat even on those days when it is still a little too cold. It feels so good to walk without winter weight.

• Of course, even spring has its burdens. As I am busy raking the moldy lawn one day it occurs to me that we have friends who now live in apartments and who must surely miss the joy of outdoor yard work. However, a few phone calls assure me that they feel quite healthy, thank you, without taking part in the recreation that I am offering to share with them. They have obviously read Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn.

• Spring brings with it another miracle: the birth of our first grandchild. We know it's on the way, but the news still comes as a shock. There is a long-distance call from Edmonton, and then a male voice says to my wife: "Hello Oma." The first feeling is one of overwhelming relief. For some reason we worried much more about the safe arrival of this child than about any of our own. After the proud new father has given us the good news we are surprised by the chipper voice of the mother, speaking to us from the delivery room only half an hour after the birth. We can even hear one-half hour-old Jamie Roy yelling for food in the background. Six days later mother, father, and son attend their first concert together. Is this new generation healthier than we were?

Their timing certainly is good: right before the school break, so that the proud new Oma from Winnipeg can spend a week in Edmonton playing the role of grandmother. Opa will follow when the diapers need to be changed less often, or when the Jets play a seventh game against the Oilers in Edmonton, whichever comes first.

• Early in April, while my wife is busy with meetings, I spend a day supervising her grade nine class at Westgate. The students all have assignments to work at so I can sit at the back of the room and observe them. It occurs to me that they are probably no better or worse than we were at the same age, but I marvel nevertheless at their tremendous nervous energy and restlessness. I can't believe that God intended young people at that stage in their life to be sitting and learning in a school. They should be out in a jungle somewhere, free to swing from tree to tree, wondering every moment whether someone from the opposite sex is noticing them. But no, here they are on a warm day, trying to read, for 10 seconds at a time, while the teacher — that bully — tries to keep them in line. Poor students. Poor teachers. I admire both in their attempts to cope with what seems to be a very artificial situation. I know it was in Grade XII that I first began to appreciate the opportunity to learn. I decide after this day that if I were ever given the job of setting salary scales for everyone in Canada, I would give junior high school teachers the highest salaries and scale everything down from there. When I mention this to a teacher friend he says, "Start with Grade 10 — they are the most difficult." Another says, "No, start with Grade 11." You can see that it wouldn't be easy to be the salary Czar for Canada.

• The Good Friday service in our church leads us very meaningfully into the Easter season. Both the singing and the message take us to the core of Christ's experience on the cross. There is power and forgiveness there that can be found nowhere else. The simple communion that concludes the service binds us all together as sinners living in hope.

Many of our friends are also deeply moved by special choral concerts that take place at this time of the year. Somehow, much of this still eludes me. Individual songs by Bach, like his adaptation of *Haupt voll Blut und Wunden* (O Sacred Head Now Wounded), stir me very much, but unfortunately I cannot say the same about much of his work. I

hasten to add that this is surely not a judgment of Bach; it is much more a judgment of myself. Just because we do not understand something does not mean that we should condemn it. Years ago I was tremendously moved by a performance of the St. John's Passion in a small, very old church in Belgium, in which William Reimer sang a leading role. For some reason a later performance in Winnipeg left me quite cold. The enthusiasm of our friends, however, is obviously genuine and I hope the future will bring a new appreciation for this kind of worship.

• An evening in April takes us to the Act II restaurant, where a group of Mennonite writers and musicians — the "missing Mennonites" as they are called this evening — share some of their more recent work with us. I am amazed by the quality, quantity and type of work that is pouring forth from the artists in our community. Who would ever have predicted that those practical Mennonite farmers and merchants of southern Manitoba would produce offspring with such impractical but fascinating talents. I don't understand nearly all of it, and some of the comments this evening make me feel that we are still far too conscious of our apparent courage in breaking through the traces, but a lot of it is extremely interesting and exciting. I hope Sandra Birdsell doesn't mind if we claim her as one of our own; her writing certainly creates a feeling of kinship. After Jack Thiessen delivers a powerful sermon in Mennonite High German I overhear someone saying, "I always knew he should have been a bishop!"

• A warm day in April, and the need to service our car, takes me to Steinbach for a few hours. As I walk into the M and J restaurant I experience one of the unique pleasures of such a homecoming. Before I can even find a table I am invited by two long-not-seen acquaintances to join them. It is fun to catch up on the old friends we knew. We talk especially about Lorne Rempel, the best natural athlete that I knew in Steinbach. He could easily have played for the Blue Bombers, if only his mother hadn't insisted that he should behave like a

Christian on the field as well as off of it. Though he was bigger than most of us he was the only person I knew who was agile enough to run through the centre of the line in touch football. Now I hear he is living the good life in B.C. I wonder, is he still so agile?

What I don't wonder about is the quality of the werenechi in the M and J. They are undoubtedly the best that I have tasted in a public place. It is worth finding this place dear reader, right across the street from Don's Bakery. And when you're at it, stop at the Village Museum, which has both good food and entertainment (I remembered suddenly that I am on the board of this good institution and therefore can't afford to have the M and J overshadow it too much. Stop for **two** meals in Steinbach.)

- Another evening takes me to the home of a university colleague, for one of those old rites of city life, the cocktail party. Very deliberately I arrive about an hour late, along with everyone else. Before too long the 60 or 70 guests crowded into the home are shouting louder and louder. I know what you are supposed to do at these events: move quickly and smoothly from one person to another, drink balanced delicately in hand. The objective, it seems, is to say something to everyone, and then leave. I am never able to do this. Invariably I end up in a corner with one or two people and spend most of the evening discussing a host of issues. If the men want to talk shop I move on quickly to the women, who talk about more important and interesting things like travel, politics (including their own rights), and literature. I usually return home deaf and exhausted.

- A Saturday in April takes us to the Grant Memorial Baptist Church, for the annual Mennonite Art and Music Festival. In the past it was held on a Sunday at Polo Park, which is undergoing major renovation. Perhaps because of the new location and day the crowds are much smaller than previously, but I hope the people who run it will try to build it up at the new place because it has many advantages. Perhaps an earlier date will bring out more rural people. The food and programs are excellent as usual. New displays, featuring more of our younger artists, might help to inject new life into that section. Running a book and magazine display bring us into contact with readers, who have both advice and encouragement to give.

review

With the Voice of Children

Sing into Spring, a benefit concert featuring the Mennonite Children's Choir with the Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School Choir, Friday, April 12, 7:30 p.m., in the Grant Memorial Baptist Church.

a review by Ed Unrau

The sound of children singing has a quality and a charm that is unique. It is a sound that is welcome at any time of the year, but which is in many respects more appropriate in spring, when the anticipation of a fresh growing season merges so nicely with the refreshingly spirited voices of youthful singers. Accordingly, singing into spring with the Mennonite Children's Choir and the Winnipeg Elementary School was an event to light and lighten the heart.

The evening opened with the Mennonite Children's Choir combining with the elementary school choir for two numbers, Alleluia, and God of Beauty. Two songs which set the tone for the evening.

As the school choir left the stage for seats in the main auditorium, the children's choir stayed on stage and began singing one of the finest numbers in its lengthy repertoire, Dank Sei Dir Herr.

Then followed an hour of selections of the choir's repertoire. Although the selections were announced by one of the choristers, it was not always possible to identify the selections in the printed repertoire given to the audience at the door. Nevertheless, highlights in this section included Purcell's Sound the Trumpet (a number done so well that one could hear the trumpet in the children's voices), All in the April Evening (so appropriate to the season and reverently presented), Christopher Robin's Prayer and Become as a Child (both songs to remind us that from the lips of children can come rich treasures of praise). Two instrumental numbers by choristers varied the musical pace in this part of the program that was a blend of joyful and contemplative music.

After the intermission, the school choir took the stage for a song, I Am A Promise, which it sang by itself under the direction of Marlene Ens. This choir, about twice the size of the children's choir, did so well that one wished for more. One hopes that the elementary

school can develop a music program and school choirs in its own right that are as highly regarded as the other Mennonite schools in the city.

The Mennonite Children's Choir returned to the stage with a medley of songs from *Anne of Green Gables*, *The Sound of Music*, and *Hansel and Gretel*. This section of the program lasted about a half hour and was as informal as the first part of the program was formal — the choir members choreographed the numbers and the soloists took on the roles of the characters from the musicals.

The Grant Memorial Baptist Church is a good location for an event of this type in that the audience has an unobstructed view of the stage and is able to hear. At the same time, one must mention that the church is a big space and even the clear, polished sound of the Mennonite Children's Choir can't always deliver the volume to fill the space with sound the way an adult choir might.

In summary, it was a good evening of cheering music presented with joy and reverence that reflected the promise of spring and the summer to come.

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FIGHTING WORDS

Two rival authors met. One had just published a successful book. The other was offering congratulations.

"I've read your book, and it's great. Who wrote it for you?"

"I'm so glad you enjoyed it," said the first author, with a smile. "Who read it to you?"

PRINCIPAL

Principal required September 1st, 1985, Mennonite Collegiate Institute. A Mennonite residential high school which emphasizes Mennonite heritage, Christian character and ethics, Preparation for Christian service.

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A look at our own past, with questions

The Emigrants, a drama in Three Acts, by Walter Schlichting; performed March 21, 22, and 23, 1985 at the Gas Station Theatre, Winnipeg, by the Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre.

a review by Roy Vogt

When the late Rev. J. H. Enns of Winnipeg was asked some years ago what he considered to be one of the most important qualities of a minister he replied, "A minister must have a very broad, somewhat hollow-shaped back over which a lot of water can flow." What he had in mind, undoubtedly, was the massive flow of criticism to which any minister is vulnerable because of constant public exposure. The advice of Rev. Enns is applicable to anyone who writes or "performs" for the public. It doesn't matter whether such persons are self-proclaimed amateurs or professionals: the moment they place their work before a public audience they invite both criticism and praise from that audience.

Over the past few decades the Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre has had the courage to present several dramas a year to an audience that has, on the whole, been very appreciative. This year, for the second time in its history I believe, the theatre group performed a full-length drama written by one of its own members. Walter Schlichting, the playwright, is not only well acquainted with drama but with the story that he has chosen to dramatize. *The Emigrants*, written and performed in German, is an episodic docu-drama which focuses on two Mennonite families, the Loewens and the Friesens, during three significant but different periods in their lives. The first portrays the tragic aftermath of the Russian Revolution and the emigration to Canada; the second the most equally difficult depression and war years in Canada, and the third the more affluent but problematic post-war urbanization period in Canada.

Though the story is familiar to many of us, this is obviously the stuff of which good drama can be made. There are confrontations between unfeeling com-

munist commissars and desperate refugees, between scoffing atheists and sincere Christians, between critical conservative Mennonites and the more liberal emigrants, between army induction officers and young Mennonite conscientious objectors, and between the emigrants and the Canadian-born younger generation. Tragic irony underlies the fate of a commissar who is done in by his own sword of judgment.

This potential for moving drama was enhanced in Schlichting's play by simple, effective stage setting and by some good individual performances. The play seemed to come alive particularly when Rudy Schulz, Gert Froese, and Eric Lubosch portrayed the conservative Mr. Penner, a Steinbach businessman, and a Mennonite Yuppie respectively. There were also a few scenes that struck sparks even though, or because, they dared more than they could deliver. This was particularly true of the last two episodes, which ventured into the previously uncharted waters of Mennonite cocktail parties and man's tragic progression from senility to death.

However, despite such potential, and some very good moments, the play was curiously weak, both as drama and as historical narrative. Few of the individual scenes drew one deeply into the concerns of the characters.

Much of the dialogue was stilted, with the actors giving what appeared to be set speeches to each other. It is hard to know whether the fault lay in the writing, or in the difficulty that some of the actors had with the language. Having observed the more natural performances in English of some younger actors in last year's *Blythe Spirit*, I am inclined to think that the use of German has become a problem. The material of *The Emigrants* lent itself almost ideally to the use of several languages: German for the scenes in Russia and a mixture of Low and High German and English for the Canadian scenes. It is unfortunate that this was not attempted.

The structure of the play also contributed to the drama's weakness. Short scenes, with frequent shifts, prevented

the build-up of dramatic tension. In the absence of a plot-climax it was absolutely essential that individual scenes resonate with subtle alterations in mood and simmering conflict, but this happened too seldom.

There were problems too with the historical narrative. Although the play is deeply rooted in history, the dramatist can hardly be faulted for inventing scenes and dialogue, or even for changing the sequence of some historical events. The program for the evening quite rightly drew attention to the "phantasizing" needs of the dramatist. However, the fact remains that at least a part of the appeal of such a play lies in its historicity. We are fascinated by it because we know not only that it could happen but that it *did* happen. In choos-

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ing to base the play in history the writer has deliberately added that dimension to its appeal. Therefore, the strength of the play is diminished whenever the history, as perceived by the audience, is seriously violated. A notable example of this in *The Emigrants* was the confused identity of the conservative Mr. Penner. He was either a Mennonite Brethren, in his insistence on baptism by immersion, or he was an old colony Mennonite, in his desire to emigrate from Manitoba, but it is highly unlikely that he was both simultaneously. The dramatic impact of his scenes was seriously undermined by this confusion.

However, a more serious problem with the historical conception of the play must be mentioned. In choosing to dramatize certain types of events in recent Mennonite history the playwright produces what is in fact his particular interpretation of that history. This interpretation may be summarized briefly as follows: the faith of the Mennonites in Russia was deep and strong enough to weather the political storms there, as well as the economic and military storms of the first few decades in Canada. Eventually, however, in the midst of peace and prosperity, this faith degenerates into materialism and debauchery.

Even the strong patriarch of the family dies helpless and confused. The final death scene was one of the most sensitive and moving scenes in the play, but unfortunately it reinforced the notion of spiritual degeneration.

The play's interpretation of Mennonite history is by no means unique. As we grow older many of us are inclined to view our own history and the history of the world in terms of such a downward progression. We are lured into thinking that the pure faith and ideals of the past are always corrupted by more recent realities. But is that true? Were the first four decades of this century more hopeful than the next four? Were the Mennonites of Russia, and the first generation of Mennonites in this country, less materialistic than the generations that have followed, and freer from internal social problems? Is the Mennonite Church in North America

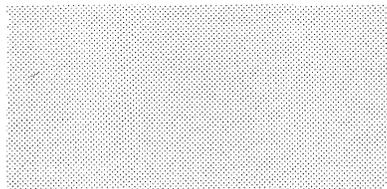
less spiritual than its earlier Russian counterpart? The play might have been more convincing, both as drama and history, if it had drawn more subtle nuances from both past and present, nuances which spring from man's ongoing struggle, in all times and places, with both evil demons and good spirits.

The Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre and the playwright must be commended sincerely for risking an original play of this kind. It would be most unfortunate if the difficulties encountered with these first experiments would stifle further initiatives. By now there must be enough broad, hollow backs around to forge ahead. We will be glad to pay the price of admission, and with it the right to comment on what we have seen.

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A feast of singing, and another Choral Triumph

a review by Al Reimer

Mennonite Oratorio Choir with the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra, George Wiebe conducting, perform Bach's St. Matthew Passion at the Centennial Concert Hall, March 31, 1985.

What a feast of fine choral singing we are enjoying in Winnipeg this season. Last December we had the Mennonite private schools concert and in January one of the finest choral concerts ever heard in Winnipeg when Robert Shaw conducted the specially formed Mennonite Festival Choir. And now the great *St. Matthew Passion* performed by the Mennonite Oratorio Choir under George Wiebe as part of the annual Bach Festival concert series. A fitting local tribute to the Bach tercentenary that has inspired so much fine playing and singing of his works all over the world.

As we have come to expect in these annual oratorio performances, the mass choir drawn from the two Mennonite colleges in town was as finely trained and tuned as possible, and the seven local soloists were also first-rate in every respect. The Manitoba Chamber Orchestra was more than adequate overall, even if the strings sounded just a bit anemic and insecure here and there. The continuo was solid throughout with Esther Wiebe at the harpsichord and Lottie Enns-Braun at the organ. Conductor George Wiebe once again demonstrated his deep understanding of this kind of music and his poetic sensitivity in shaping details and coloring musical and vocal nuances.

What more can one say about the luminous declamatory singing of John Martens, who sang the Evangelist? He is everything an oratorio singer should be — intelligent, insightful, and dramatically convincing. The rich palette of tone colors at his disposal enables him to portray an oratorio role more vividly

and more delicately than if he were in costume and had a whole operatic stage to work on. He carves out the text in vocal sound with the clarity and sharpness of a sculptor. And he does so with the seeming ease and sense of inevitability that come only to a performer who has mastered text and music to the extent where they are second nature to him. Martens is so utterly believable that one doesn't mind top notes that occasionally sound a little pinched or unopened. All that mattered here was that this singer was the Evangelist, with

an eloquence almost unbearable in such recitativi as "Now when the morning came," in Part Two, or in the awesome climactic moment, "And again did Jesus cry aloud and was gone."

Vocally, baritone Victor Engbrecht was nothing short of splendid. His warm, vibrant voice is exactly right for the part of Jesus, and he achieved intense conviction in such sacred moments as the Eucharist: "Drink ye, all of it." It was deeply sincere, yet suave and effortless singing. Perhaps in a few places one looked for a little more dramatic temperament in the singing, but that will surely come with more maturity, as it has with John Martens.

The rest of the soloists had less major roles, but all made the most of what

To Dance

For many years you've studied, taught and written,
You are proficient in so many things,
You can discourse on science, art and music,
Your mind can probe and soar on eagle's wings.

But when it comes to living you're a simplex,
A little child can see that at a glance,
The halls of mirth have never been your homeland,
The learned doctor has not learned to dance.

The sunlight dances over hills and valleys,
The birds and insects rock on swaying trees,
The playful rivers flow in rhythmic motion,
The white-capped waves are waltzing in the seas.

You have one life which is so quickly passing,
You have been given but one single chance
To join the music of the earth and planets,
To join with joy the universal dance.

— Harry Loewen

they had. Soprano Heidi Geddert deserves much credit for filling in for Henriette Schellenberg on short notice. She sang with confidence and fine effect, especially in the aria "For love now is my Saviour dying." Mezzo soprano Lois Watson does not possess a big voice, but it is nicely controlled and always tastefully used. She sang her big aria "Thy mercy, Lord, my God" with great compassion and beauty of tone. The two women blended well when they sang together near the end of Part One.

The second tenor, John Bartlette, who sang the tenor arias, has a lyric voice of great sweetness and purity. I felt he did his finest singing in his Part Two recitativo and aria "Be still though the traitors' tongues shall sting me." The two basses — Mark Watson and Phil Ens, Jr. — also did some expressive singing. Mark Watson sounded a little tentative in the early going, but he warmed up to a noble climax in his last recitative and aria "At even, hour of cooling rest," and "Come, my heart." Young Phil Ens (interviewed elsewhere in this issue) sang his three small roles with commendable fervor and a bass sound that was nothing short of thrilling. He is developing a resonant, secure top register which will stand him in good stead when he ventures into the operatic repertoire.

The 265-voice choir, augmented by the Boys Choir of All Saints Anglican Church for the opening number, sang so well throughout that one is hard-pressed to single out special moments. Suffice it to say that in chorales like "Remember me, my Saviour," "I'll stand here close beside Thee," and "O Head, so sorely wounded," where the singing was reverent, stately and tender by turn, the audience was deeply moved. When the choir screamed "Barabbas" I felt my hair standing on end. And in the closing chorus "Here bide we still with tears and weeping," we were all uplifted to that rare peak of exaltation that comes only when art truly transcends art. With all due respect, however, I found Robert Shaw's English translation of the text in the program somewhat lacking in precision and literary finish and felt a little sorry for those members of the audience who could not follow the German original.

The not-quite-capacity audience had much to be thankful for on this musically blessed Palm Sunday. Let us hope that the remarkably high choral standards set this season can be maintained or even surpassed in future seasons.

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Preferential Treatment

by Isaak Ditj

Maybe it doesn't much matter any more because I am old in a new country, but scenes from yesterday and the day before play back rather often in my mind. And since three different experiences come back most often I have to try to tell you the story: that way I might get rid of it.

The first scene was in Moscow; the year was 1926 or 1927. By then I knew that the arthritis of Communism was there to stay and I wanted to get out of the country. I was taking a first hand look at the famous Bolshoi Theater on this occasion and I must have spent several hours with my fascination. Suddenly a man came up to me and, after excusing himself, presented himself as one of the "Old Guard," as he said, with "new connections." He said if I had a gold coin he could do me a favour or two. I said, let me think it over and we can meet again tomorrow. Same time, same station.

He was there before I got there and we talked for a bit. "Nichts gewagt, nichts gewonnen," I said to myself and acted accordingly. "I want to leave this infested country and I need papers," I announced.

"Two gold coins and you are on your way," he countered.

I handed two of my shiny ones over to him and my eye was still saying goodbye to them when he produced his identity. I was under arrest, he said. I resisted with every ounce of my intrepid peasant blood, and so he pulled out his "Tota" to add weight to his command. He cracked me one on the left side of my neck, snapping a bone. My left arm went limp but I hauled out with my right and ruffled his whiskers; he had not yet contacted the concrete of the Bolshoi plaza when I was already fifty yards away and gaining ground. I made three lefts and then two rights and then straight ahead a piece and then I took three rights and two lefts and there I rested.

After a few minutes I had my story ready for the doctor I was now compelled to seek out. His name, I still remember, was Schlomo Singer. Yes, he could set my bone, but first a little conversation. The long and short of it was, this doctor was a confirmed Communist and the spreading of his belief seemed

more important to him than my aching arm. He offered me a deal: "Give me a gold coin and promise to read *Das Manifesto*, and I'll give you preferential treatment. Ich mach a giete Arbait, nu?" I had little choice but to say "sure" and "ja" and "da" and "bitte!" The collarbone was set, the sling was on and I was out.

Years later I was by no means the youngest recruit to enter — or made to enter — the German army. And for a while everything went good, or "well," as they say in learned English. So I started taking one chance too many. One day I tried to escape a sniper's bullet, but my right foot was too slow — or too long — and I got it right in the calf, just as I dived head first into my trench.

The doctor was young and he had a nice layout in the field hospital. "But first we have to do some talking," he pronounced, as he revealed a vaguely familiar smile. "Mit Hitler geht alles besser. Are you one of us? If so, the treatment won't hurt." and so I was soon a "guter Hilter Jung" and the treatment was indeed preferential.

And, finally, I still don't know how, but maybe I used a little extra force in pushing open the summer-kitchen door — I have never liked it when anyone holds a door shut that I want to go through, or when somebody pushes from the other side. And so I gave the door my full weight with my lungs and throat open. And suddenly the door flew open and I crashed to the floor. I heard a crack and you can guess the rest. "You need," the doctor told me, "a referral to a specialist."

And off I went to the city where they have such important and busy people. I was made to wait for thirty-five minutes. And when the doctor saw me he said, "Aha, Mr. lesaak Ditj. Let's discuss your case history first." And then we retraced my steps and soon he knew everything about me — even where and when I was baptized. Once again I was left with the impression that I would get a dose of preferential treatment if I once again agreed to join the right church or party. But at my age I don't want to walk into deep waters anymore.

From now on I'll be extra careful when I open doors or dodge snipers' bullets. And maybe you should be too!

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Some new books worthy of note

reviewed by Harry Loewen

The 1980s see their share of anniversaries, especially in Germany. There have been a "Goethe-Year" and a "Luther-Year." This year the world is celebrating the anniversaries of two great composers, Johann Sebastian Bach and George Frederick Handel. Less known to those living outside of Germany is the 2,000-year anniversary of the city of Augsburg which with Trier and other German cities are among the oldest cities of Germany. On the occasion of this latter event there has appeared a book on the 16th-century Anabaptists who for a brief period of time made Augsburg an important Anabaptist centre.

Written in a semi-popular style, Hans Guderian's book *Die Täufer in Augsburg* traces the history of the early Anabaptist leaders and movement connected with Augsburg and concludes with references to the evangelical free churches in the city which according to the author are heir to at least some Anabaptist principles.

Hans Guderian, who is the pastor of the Evangelisch-Freikirchliche Gemeinde Augsburg since 1980, is at his best when he summarizes the extensive literature on 16th-century Anabaptism and sketches the lives and views of Anabaptist leaders who resided in and worked from Augsburg, including Hans Denck, Hans Hut, Eitelhans Langemantel, and Pilgram Marpeck.

It seems to me that Guderian cannot quite make up his mind about whether the Baptists, the evangelical free churches of Germany, and the Methodists belong to the Anabaptist tradition or not. There is of course no question about the Mennonites being the direct heirs of Anabaptism. However, similarities between some Anabaptist principles and practices and the beliefs and emphases of evangelical churches today are not necessarily proof that there is a historical link between them. To-

ward the end of the book it comes almost as an afterthought when the author states that with the exception of the Mennonites the evangelical free churches which originated in the 17th and 18th centuries in Anglo-Saxon Puritanism and in 19th-century German revivalism have a different historical origin than Anabaptism.

It is no doubt an irony of history that the once maligned and persecuted Anabaptists have become respectable and even models for other Christians to emulate. Had this been known in 1527 when the Anabaptist "Martyrs' Synod" convened in Augsburg, the delegates to that convention might have suffered their martyrdom with an even greater sense of victory than they did!

Hans-Jürgen Goertz is no stranger to students of Anabaptism. The author of several important books and articles on Anabaptist-Mennonite themes, Professor Goertz in his latest book *Alles gehört allen* focuses on communal and utopian experiments from the 16th century to the present.

This anthology includes the following authors and subjects: James M. Stayer on communal living among the early Anabaptists; Marion Kobelt-Groch on Christian communalism as a programmatic experiment in southern Europe; Klaus Deppermann on Gerrard Winstanley and the Diggers in England; Johannes Harder — well known to many in Winnipeg — on the Doukhobors in British Columbia; Klaus J. Hansen on the search for a new world in North America; Reinhard Klopffleisch on Babouvism and communalism in France; Hans-Arthur Marsiske on utopianism and the labour movement in Germany; Rainer Schmidt on the German youth movement and communal living; and Horst V. Gizycki on social and psychological aspects of utopian living.

It seems that of all the attempts at communal-utopian living — and this anthology seems to bear this out — the present-day Hutterian Brethren are the only ones who have maintained their traditional practice of "holding all things in common" and realized most successfully their ideal of Brotherhood. When I visited one of the Hutterite colonies in Manitoba a few years ago, one of their leaders proudly showed me their "Bruderhof" and then asked rhetorically: "Don't you think we live here like in paradise?" I almost agreed with him.

The more than 600-page book *Maintaining the Right Fellowship* written by John L. Ruth, an American-Mennonite teacher of English, author, minister, and film-maker, is a most welcome addition to the ever-expanding story of the American Mennonites. Dealing with three centuries of Mennonite life in Europe and southeastern Pennsylvania, Ruth has recreated, as we read on the dust cover, "a story-like profile of the spiritual (and until the 20th century largely ethnic) family that became two present-day groupings of congregations: the 'Eastern District' and 'Franconia' Mennonite conferences."

While Ruth is primarily concerned with writing a detailed history of the two conferences — and in this he succeeds very well — he also hopes that his story will confront its readers, especially the young, with questions and answers concerning identity and Mennonite-Christian peoplehood. In the epilogue Ruth waxes almost poetic when he pleads: "The psalmist speaks of valuing spiritual identity above even the art by which it is often expressed. His harp — aesthetic expression — must have a real place to be set; his mouth must have a particular song. If he forgets his Jerusalem — his identity — he may as well hang his harp on the willows, and

let his tongue lie still, since the point of the song is gone. The secular audience, to be sure, finding the song aesthetically charming, may try to call it forth, but not because it cares for the singer's soul, or the covenanted family in which it was shaped" (p. 536).

Thus, "maintaining the right fellowship," according to Ruth, is more important than giving mere artistic, cultural, and learned expression to the life and faith of Mennonite peoplehood. What applies to the oldest Mennonite community about which Ruth writes, applies to Mennonites everywhere.

The numerous maps and photographs included in the book, add to its value as a historical-cultural source.

Hans Guderian, *Die Täufer in Augsburg. Ihre Geschichte und ihr Erbe. Ein Beitrag zur 2000-Jahr-Feier der Stadt Augsburg* (Pfaffenhofen: W. Ludwig Verlag, 1984). 156 pages, Hardcover, \$10.

Hans-Jürgen Goertz (ed.), *Alles gehört allen. Das Experiment Gütergemeinschaft vom 16. Jahrhundert bis heute* (München: Verlag C. H. Beck, 1984). 248 pages, Paperback.

John L. Ruth, *Maintaining the Right Fellowship. A Narrative Account of Life in the Oldest Mennonite Community in North America* (Scottsdale, Pa.; Kitchener, Ont.: Herald Press, 1984). 618 pages, Hardcover, \$24.95 US, \$32.45 Can.

WINNING WAY

In the Soviet Union, every healthy male must serve in the army. Only Petrov doesn't.

"How come, Petrov, that you, an able-bodied young man, are not doing your duty?" asked an officer.

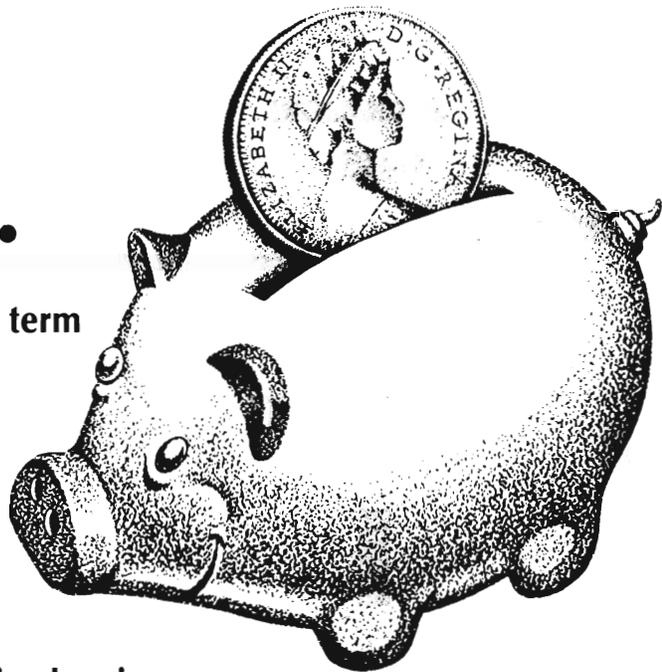
"That is what I am asking myself," said Petrov. "Every time I go for the medical examination I bet 500 rubles with the comrade surgeon that this time, surely, I ought to be fit — and I have never yet won the bet!"

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A **Mennonite Studies Centre** was established at the University of Winnipeg this spring to engage in teaching, research and community service. It will be managed by a Board of Directors consisting of three representatives from the University of Winnipeg and the Dr. David Friesen family corporation, along with representation from the Mennonite conferences and the director of the centre. The Dr. David Friesen family corporation donated \$750,000 towards its establishment. **Dr. George Epp** has been appointed the first director. Dr. Epp was president of the Canadian Mennonite Bible College from 1978 to 1983, and is currently pastor of the Douglas Mennonite Church. A current University of Winnipeg faculty member, Al Reimer, has been seconded to work for the centre as a research fellow.

Missions Outreach has announced that **Steve Klippenstein** has been accepted to serve on a work/witness team in New Guinea this coming summer. Steve is the son of the Jac Klippensteins of the Altona area. He is a second year student at Winnipeg Bible College in Otterburne.

Anne DeFehr, a Mennonite nurse, and **Judith Cracknell**, an Anglican doctor, will be serving as volunteers in Ethiopia under the Anglican Church at the request of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

Mitchell photographer **Marlene Fast** was among the award winners in the semi-annual International World of Wedding Photography Awards program for the second half of 1984. Fast competed with photographers from all over the world to win the award.

The CBC television network broadcast three short dramas written and directed by **Allan Kroeker** on February 21. All three films shown, *In the Fall*, *Hunting Season*, and *Reunion* — have won major awards, including a Genie for "In the Fall" in 1984.

The Mennonite Central Committee has decided to close its **Grosvenor Place hostel** for male offenders at the end of June. The move follows a major review of all MCC Manitoba's victim/offender programs. MCC Manitoba would like to use the Grosvenor subsidy to improve the ratio of its money sent on

to MCC's international work, and also to cover the costs of a new venture at the El Dad Ranch. El Dad Ranch, a residence for four mentally handicapped men in trouble with the law, is located on a farm near Steinbach.

Richard Wall, age 17, of Niverville, won a silver medal in the 75 metres and a bronze in the 300-meters in speed skating at the International Special Olympics Games in Salt Lake City, Utah. Wall was on a 36-athlete Canadian team, and was honored by his home community at a reception following his return home on April 9.

The **Manitoba Mennonite Brethren** convention was held in Winkler, March 1 and 2. The Board of Educational Institutions was given permission to prepare plans for a building to replace the oldest portion of the Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute. The project could cost \$1.2 million. **Roland Marsch** was elected as moderator for the coming year.

Mennonite Your Way Directory IV, for the years 1984, 85, 86, is available for \$7.50 per copy from Box 1525, Sallunga, PA, 17538.

Frank Klassen, long-time Steinbach resident and a member of town council, has been appointed constituency assistant for Provencher by MP and Health Minister Jake Epp.

A committee has been organized to plan centennial celebrations for the **Mennonite Collegiate Institute** in Gretna, to take place in 1990. Members of the Mennonite community and supporters of the MCI will be asked to participate and assist in some of the projects once they have been identified. Suggestions on how to commemorate this significant event are welcome and will be considered. All correspondence should be addressed to the Administrator, MCI Box 250, Gretna, MB, R0G 1J0.

Steve Braun of Altona is serving as chaplain's assistant for one year at Kansas State Industrial Reformatory in Hutchinson, Kansas, as a volunteer with the General Conference Mennonite Church. He is the son of Menno and Helen Braun and a member of Altona Bergthaler Church.

The **Manitoba Intercultural Committee** has called upon the provincial government to extend the right to vote in local elections to landed immigrants with a minimum residency requirement of six months. This recommendation was one of nine approved for submission to the government of Manitoba at the council's meeting on March 16. The council has also asked that landed immigrants be given the right to vote in provincial elections if they meet a residency requirement of one year.

An education package complete with film strip, sound recording and teacher's manual based on the Mennonite Village Museum in Steinbach, was recently released. The kit is the brainchild of Landmark Collegiate teacher Gareth Neufeld. It was funded by the federal department of Secretary of State with technical expertise coming from the Manitoba Department of Education. The kit was designed for the grade 6 Social Studies curriculum, and tells the story of the Mennonite settlement of Manitoba.

Jake Harms, pastor of Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, is the new Canadian co-ordinator for the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

The theme of this year's **Walk for Peace**, to be held on June 8 at 11:30 a.m. is: Make Manitoba a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone. The march begins at the Legislature. Individuals who would like to volunteer to assist the organizers are asked to contact the office of the Winnipeg Co-ordinating Committee for Disarmament, 745 Westminster Avenue, Winnipeg, R3G 1A5

Premier Howard Pawley has announced that the Manitoba Government will assist the Mennonite Bicentennial Commission with the **Menno Van** project, a travelling exposition chronicling the bicentennial of Mennonites in Canada. Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Recreation has contributed \$25,000 to this project to enable the van to tour Manitoba communities, schools, libraries and service clubs, for six months. The Menno Van will tour extensively throughout Manitoba until mid-September, including a northern tour in June. A special ceremony was held at the Legislative Building to mark the start of the Van's Manitoba tour on April 23.

The annual meeting of the **Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society** was held in the Mennonite Brethren Bible College, recently. Highlights of the activities of the society in the past year include the establishment of a book club which will help members and others to learn about and to acquire publications by or about Mennonites. The Russian Mennonite monument committee is well on its way to obtaining the \$35,000 needed to erect a memorial on a site at the Pioneer Village at Steinbach. The newly-formed genealogy committee reports enthusiastic activity including the presentation of a highly successful seminar in October 1984. To keep up with the increased scope of the society's work the board of directors was increased from 12 to 18 members. New Directors elected or re-elected included; Bert Friesen, Ed Schellenberg, Brian Paetkau, Henry G. Enns, Wilmer Penner, Adolph Enns, William Schroeder, Royden Loewen, Margaret Kroeker, and Jacob C. Fehr. After the business meeting a banquet was enjoyed in the college dining hall during which honorary memberships were presented to Elizabeth Peters and Ted Friesen in recognition of many years of service to the Society. The large gathering was then treated to two films, *Hutterites, To Care or Not to Care* and *A Visit to the Mennonite Village Museum, Steinbach*.

An in-depth review of the **MCC Self-Help** crafts program is being conducted to evaluate current programs, review goals and plan for the future development of the organization. **Self-Help Crafts** is a non-profit marketing agency that sells handicrafts made in over 25 countries by an estimated 30,000 producers. Without this marketing network, many of these producers might not have a source of income or employment. Edgar Stoesz, a former MCC associate executive Secretary, is in charge of the six-month review. A five-member study panel has been established to conduct the review; included in the panel is **Herta Janzen**, an administrative nurse at Donwood Manor and a Self-Help volunteer.

Ruth Klassen of Winnipeg Lady Wesmen Volleyball Team was named the 1985 female player of the year in the Canadian Interuniversity Athletic Union recently. Klassen was also named to the women's all-Canadian first team for the third time.

Coming Events

April 19-mid-September: Mennovan in Manitoba. For details, call MCC office.

May 11: 9-12 a.m. Manitoba Multicultural Resources Centre Annual Meeting, University of Wpg. R. 111 Lockhart Hall.

May 11: 8:00 p.m. Mennonite Community Orchestra Spring Concert. Portage Ave. MB Church.

May 12: 4:00 p.m. Mennonite Community Orchestra, Winkler Bergthaler Church.

May 15: Marymound School: Open House and Bazaar, 442 Scotia St. 2-5; 7-9 p.m.

June 3: Westgate Annual Meeting.

June 8: 11:30 Walk for Peace. Legislature.

June 29-July 1: Western Canada General Conference Church Slo-pitch tournament in Winnipeg.

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About Those Letters . . .

What is happening to the letter page? Sometimes you print some but you're not consistent. This section, with all its imperfections, is my line of communication with the rest of your readership. It's the first section I read in a magazine, any magazine.

It is only rarely that I write you a letter. The main reason for this is that I have considerable difficulty in expressing myself coherently. A secondary reason for this neglect is that my last two letters (in as many or more years) were neither printed nor in any way acknowledged. I loathe writing to start with so it goes without saying that writing for your round file just does not inspire me to write.

You must have a policy on "letters to the editor." What is it?

Is it hard to discount the suspicion that you have a policy of not publishing sentiments you disapprove of, especially if they're articulated effectively. For example you insult your readership with your eulogy of Roland Penner but print only a limited reaction. You approve in print of the Manitoba Government's plan of introducing mandatory instruction in values in our schools. How many Mennonites immigrated to Mexico over this basic issue? Still no reaction printed. Whose side are you on?

Please spell it out — draw pictures if necessary.

Ron Suderman,
Winkler.

Note:

We are not blessed with an abundance of letters to begin with. The other problem is that we can't always fit in those few that we do have, with the result that they get "old," and then are forgotten. Accordingly, we promise to be more diligent in publishing letters.

READER DEFENDS CONCERT HALL NIGHT

I would like to make some comments on the article "Multi Media" evening Mennonite style, by Ed Unrau.

First of all, Mr. Unrau criticizes the Locusts and Wild Honey group, saying that their talents run deeper than that required to re-cycle well known English

melodies. Mr. Unrau was evidently not aware that this group was singing this collection of old songs by request. It is these old songs that the public usually enjoys most. Furthermore, if Mr. Unrau were familiar with the records and tapes by this group, of which thousands have been sold, he would know that the record "Ditt Sied, Jant Sied" was largely composed, words and music, by the Locusts.

Mr. Unrau also mentioned that some people believed the actors in the movie "Koop 'n Bua" were not familiar with the Low German, or rather, not at ease with it. But we know that our many Mennonite groups use slightly different forms of Low German; we do not all speak the same way. Who can say who is correct?

Some of the criticism he refers to from the audience, no doubt comes from the fact that they missed the whole point of the movie. The brother and sister team from Germany meet their friends from Canada in an authentic German restaurant where the story takes place. The point of the whole drama is to show the difference between these two Canadian farmers and their cultured friends in Germany.

I agree that the two types of music presented that night were possibly out of place together. However, the beauty and perfection of the choir and orchestra under Mr. Baerg and the Mennonite Piano Concerto by Irmgard Baerg were outstanding. My group and I enjoyed it immensely.

Although I have not had the opportunity to speak to many of the people who attended, possibly two thousand (Which Mr. Unrau must have, to form the conclusion that no one thoroughly enjoyed the movie) I know of one couple who came from California and another couple who came from Nebraska, who enjoyed the whole performance greatly.

Low German is fast dying out. I believe that those who are trying hard to preserve it need much help and encouragement. Among these is the Landmark Drama Group, and the Locusts and Wild Honey, as well as Dave Dueck. They are doing their part. Are you, Mr. Unrau?

Let us encourage these groups and give them the backing they need to preserve our rapidly dying Mother tongue, good common Plaut Dietsch.

Sincerely,
K. Friesen
Steinbach

Unrau's "Creative Faith" Assailed by reader

Your April editorial by Ed Unrau contains several interesting statements of faith. For one we are told that "responsible Christians should insist creation scientists limit their arguments for a divine creator to those things which cannot be explained any other way". Wow! Are "responsible Christians" now really obligated to embrace philosophical scientism? Are "responsible Christians" no longer allowed to point out that structural similarities between living things may indicate design by a shared Creator just as much as descendency from shared ancestors? Are we no longer allowed to note that both interpretations are equally compatible with properly empirical scientific method even though one explanation is required by philosophical naturalism or scientism and the other by philosophical supernaturalism or theism?

Mr. Unrau seems to be unaware of the larger historical situation regarding Galileo who was as much opposed by the 17th century scientific establishment as he was opposed by the 17th century religious establishment — *both* of whom look silly today. Gallileo's maligned minority scientific views have much in common with today's maligned minority scientific views of scientific creationists both inside and outside confessing Christendom in regard to the intolerance they face from their respective scientific establishments.

When Mr. Unrau concludes "creation scientists run the real risk of looking just as silly because modern technology may soon confirm the facts they are now so ardently denying," he is clearly engaging in an incredible leap of faith concerning which competing interpretation of the data on the origin of living things will yet be verified in the *future*! Such is the faith of today's scientific establishment! This faith a growing number of non-Christian (as well as Christian) scientists are finding to be as "silly" as the scientific and religious establishments' opposition to Gallileo's maveric views of the solar system.

Another faith statement from Mr. Unrau bears noting: "No one living today can explain with certainty 'how it all started,' so one concept is as good as another." This dogma apparently rules out anyone who today dares affirm with confidence our Creator's concise description of "how it all started": as recorded in Genesis. Further, this dogma also contradicts Mr. Unrau's earlier faith

pronouncement that "Creation science is a false doctrine" and his earlier arguments favoring the "much refined" current "theory of evolution" — he seems to be unaware of the significant variety of theories of evolution as well as of the significant variety of theories of creation.

There may be some merit in Mr. Unrau's opening argument that a court injunction to prevent the CBC's broadcasting parts of David Suzuki's series may be an inappropriate means of promoting or protecting a Christian viewpoint. However, that merit is more than negated by his rejection of the biblical teaching on God's special creation of the kinds of plants and animals and of man. As to his argument against equal time arrangements he seems almost to recognize the absurd weakness of his analogy to requiring that equal time be

given to "dishonesty" if a program explores "honesty." Surely portraying creationist interpretations of scientific data related to the origins of living things is not as clearly "absurd" as programming favoring dishonesty would be! To suggest such is hardly responsible Christian journalism.

Sincerely,
Al Hiebert
Kleefeld

The fifth annual western Canadian General Conference Slow-Pitch Tournament will be held in Winnipeg June 29-July 1. Larry Ens, chairman of the organizing committee, expects about 20 teams to participate. Any GC church can sponsor a team. Ens can be contacted for further information at 479 Woodydell Avenue, Winnipeg, R2M 2V3.

Two Notes

Many thanks to everyone involved in the publication of the Mennonite Mirror. You have been encouraging to Mennonites in their efforts to keep the faith yet you have, in an objective and constructive way, challenged those beliefs based on ignorance and fear.

Bill and Barbara Toews,
Lowe Farm, MB.

Thanks for the good articles you have been publishing, including Observed along the way. Special thanks to Roy Vogt for the article "When Idealism turns to Disillusionment," March '85.

Frank Sawatzky,
Winnipeg.

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Jantsied

fonn Jack Thiessen

Jo, hee heet Diedrich Thiesse, enn etj kjand am aul fonn dee Tiet aun, aus etj Footkoddre enn Burrsteewle druach.

Emm loten Somma enne Draschtiet fetald Thiesse emma lange Jeschijchte fonn Jantsied. "Doa," säd hee, "weare dee Kjätels fäl stoatja, enn de Draschkaustes bediedent jrata, enn de' Stroohupes dreemol soo groot, wann nijch noch jrata. Enn doa buscheld de' Meschien soo haustijch, daut dee Tala daut meist nich nokaum."

Jo, jo, opp Jantsied, daut wea fe mie een bät soo's een Tweschendintj tweschen Jrientol enn de Eewijtheit emm Himmel. Etj wea noch niemols doa jewast, enn daut sach uck nijch seea, aus wann etj jeemols doahan kome wudd. Daut wea eefach too wiet auf, enn butadäm "wellen se' doa uck goanijch soonen fetjlämden Misa haben soo's Die," säd Thiesse. Jo, enn donn wist etj uck, daut Thiesse een ajchta Jantsieda wea, wiels hee emma "stoaken," "haben" enn "bushlen" säd. Enn daut kaum mie uck emma bediedend meea fäah aus "stoake," "habe" enn "bushle" — jo, fleijcht tweemol soo fäl.

Wie haude opp Ditsied mau bloos McCormack Deerings, fehtien dartijch, ooda John Deeres Model D, tweetsilindasch. Feseatj mol mett dee eene stobbje, steenaje Wäs opptoobrätje. Biem fieftsolljen Stobbe gauf daut soon Rucks, daut eene sijch oppem Trakta toonijcht schluag, ooda äwrem Stiearaut fluag enn oppem heeten Hudd too riede kaum. "Deitja," haud etj boold jesajcht. Enn tseowens wea eene mäa enn fierijch enn meed, hundmeed, enn jries enn februckt enn schratjlich toonijcht.

Oba Thiesse spaund sienen schworen, grooten Hart-Parr feerem Pluach bie Jrientol opp Ditsied enn dann jintj'ett loos. Aules fluach enn stritst enn

kjeiweld wann Thiesse Gas gauf enn äwre Wäs mullwad. Hee pliejd one Rucks, Steena enn Stobbes kjrieselde. Dee Hart-Parr rätad enn breld, rumuad enn stentjad emma jliti färewajch . . . Etj jleew uck noch fondoag, daut Thiesse daut uck Tus measchtens one Rucks jlitiwjajch jing. Weens sach'et siene Fru doano. See haud emma een schwatet Kjeled mett een Schaldoak fäajebunge aun, enn een buntet Koppdoak mett Fraunse oppem Kopp. See säd nich fäl, enn wann see waut säd, räd see mau lieseltjes. Enn hiele deed see foaken.

Eemol fua etj emm Winta no Thiesses oppe Mestschleep enn feraun ons Kunta Piet. Enn donn fetald Thiesse mie emm strenjsten Fetue, "See haft Lies, fetal daut kjeenem, oba see haft Lies!" Schratjlich, schratjlich: Lies. Nu dentj junt bloos mol nenn, soone Schaund, Lies oppem Kopp. See haude ar den Kopp blank jeschoore enn mett Kerosien jewosche. Enn daut "stunk enn brennd, oba daut holp uck," enn boold wea see dee Lies loos, oba see word nu schaubijch. Ar fäld earemol waut, maunchmol haud see Rieting; maunchmol reete ar de' Täne, dan de' Oare; emma schod ar waut. Enn daut diad uck nich meea lang, enn dann wea see een bät jelämt. See saut enne Atj, must bedeed woare, hield fäl, flautad ennwea februckt. "Daut woat woll nuscht meea mett ar," säd Thiesse. Enn donn fruch etj Thiesse, "Mottst Du uck emma soo hunjsch senne?" Hee kreiweld sijch aum Kopp, kijtj mie een Stootje aun enn säd, "Daut halpt aulatoop soowe-soo nuscht. Easchtens jehea wie too de faulsche Jemeend, enn tweedens brucke de' Mensche je emma eenem opp dem see rommbiete kjenne. Frei Die doch daut etj soon hunjscha Utbunt sie, wiels sest wurscht Du fleijcht deejansja senne, opp dem de Mensche äa Jebiss wacklijch keiwe!"

Oba etj fefeald mie aulnoch ernoa, jo, etj must mie wundre. Daut latste mol aus etj bie Thiesses jewast wea, haud Diedrich ar mett dem Läpel jefoodat, enn ar daut Mul aufjewescht. Oba fondoag? De Thiessche wea läwendijch enn oppjeriemt enn utjelote enn koasch enn see koakd enn brezhaujd enne Kjätj. Lied enn Frintschauft weare jekomen, oba de' Thiessche wea daut Meddelstetj. Enn donn deschd see opp: Jebrodnet Fleesch, Reatjaworscht, Schintjefleesch, Holoptsee, Kotlette, Eadschocke mett Schal, Schmaundfat, Sure-Gurtje, Jëmiese, enn etj weet nijch waut noch aules. Dee Desch knoad enn piepad, soo fäl Scheens wea doabowe. Enn toom Läpelkost gaufet Pei äwa Pei: Reboaba, Aupel enn Saskatoon. Enn donn noch Plauts enn Koffe.

Boold fekoft Thiesse siene Foarm enn donn trocke see nom Darp enn hee word Caretaker. Thiesse wea uck boold "nich meea de Jinjsta," hee fong fäl aun fonn Fräjoa too fetale, hee fejljht Priesse mett dee fonn tien Joa tridj, enn jieden Moonat fua hee nom Bejrafnis — hiea han, doa han, oba measchtens no Jantsied, woa hee Frind haud, woone nu eendrajchtig storwe.

Jo, enn waut saul etj junt noch fonn Thiesse fetale, wautjie noch nijch one ooda weete? Mett eemol haustijch, tiedijch tsemorjes emm Hoafst, wea uck de' Reaj aun am. Tweschen Hus enn Hiestje bute lach hee. Diedrich Thiesse wea doot.

Etj fua uck nom Bejrafnis. Lied weare jekome, Jast enn Frintschauft weare jekomen, omm am toom latsten mol Audee too sajen. Mett dem "Komt wada, komt mol han," warett nu febie.

Etj wull nom Bejrafnis aul no Hus foare aus Taunte Thiessche mie biem Grauf aune Meiw toohoole kjreaj enn säd, "Heea, Du kjemst fondoag doch noch too Owenkost?" "Jo, etj kom," säd etj. Enn jintj. Etj docht mie emm Stellen, "Na, daut woat mau een bät wietleftijch woare mett daut Owenkost."

Enn biem Äte fetald wie enn freide ons soga een bätje wada toop too senne. Wie drunke noch eenen kjlienen Schnaups enn aus etj "Audee" säd, kaum Taunte Thiessche noch bett ferre Däa enn säd, "Mien Diedrich wea doch een gooda Maun. Oba aus hee omwar-tle must, enn hiehäa kaum, haud hee waut feloare, waut hee hiea niemols nijch finje kunn. Hopentlijch haft hee doabowe, opp Jantsied, meea Jletj. Dankscheen ferret kome. Mol wada!"

mm

Drehlöcher im Meer?

von Gerhard G. Thiessen

Auf dem Atlantik. Ruhig geht die See. An Bord der *S.S. Marin Tieger* haben sich einige von den vielen Passagieren (es sollen zweitausend Personen gewesen sein), die nicht gerade seekrank sind, in den Klubraum begeben, wie sie sich die Langeweile mit Kartenspiel oder Dominoes zu vertreiben. Andere wiederum sind im Begriff, die englische Sprache zu erlernen. Das beweist die lebhaftige Diskussion über das ABC mit der Besatzung, die englisch spricht, weil die *Marin Tieger* amerikanisch ist. Da geht es etwa so zu: A-B-i-i, C-i-i, nein, nein, es ist doch A-B-e-e, C-e-e, no! no! A-B-i-i, C-i-i, Englisch no, Nein, . . . Nach einer Weile kommt man schliesslich dahinter, dass es im Englischen anders ausgesprochen wird, — und wetteifert weiter um der Sprache willen.

Was sind dies denn für Menschen? Heimatlose, Auswanderer, Emigranten aus aller Herren Länder, auf der Suche nach einer neuen Heimat. Canada ist ihr Ziel, Halifax der Bestimmungshafen. Daher das willige Lernen der englischen Sprache. Plötzlich wird die Szene von einem Steward unterbrochen, der an einem Brett im kleinen Vorraum eine Art Karte anbringt, und nun will jeder seine Neugierde stillen. Eine Meute junger Leute umgibt die Stelle und will wissen, was das ist. Endlich finden sie heraus, dass der Anschlag die Tages-Route anzeigt. Aber leider ist auf der Karte kein Name oder Ortsangabe anhanddessen man hätte schliessen können, wo man sich eigentlich befindet. Sie ist mit vielen dem Laien geheimen Zeichen und Kreuze versehen und man bemüht sich,

dieselben zu enträtseln. In der Gruppe ist auch ein Herr im vorgerückten Alter, der sehr besorgt fragt, was das bloss für Zeichen wären, ob es sein könnte, dass auf diesen Stellen Schiffe gesunken seien?

Nein, das glaub ich nicht, meint ein anderer.

Dann müssten es doch mehr sein, ein Dritter.

Wieso mehr?

Kann ja sein, dass. . . .

Seid ihr aber doof, kommt es von einem der hinten steht. Der ältere Herr scheint ihn zu kennen. Er fragt: Und was meinst du, Hans, was diese Kreuze bedeuten?

Ich meine nicht — ich weiss es, kommt die schlagfertige Antwort, sie sind Drehlöcher!

Etwas zitternd kommt die Gegenfrage des älteren Herrn: Drehlöcher hier mitten auf dem Meer?

Ja, doch, genau! solche wie auf dem Djnepr!

Und wie willst du das wissen?

Vom Steward.

Kann der Deutsch? Du kannst doch nicht Englisch?

Er hat es mir erklärt — Zeichensprache.

Der ältere Herr hat sich wieder der Karte zugewandt, mit besorgtem Gesicht. Er sagt: Wenn wir so weiter fahren, kommen wir schnur stracks in einen hinein. Das muss ich doch gleich den Frauen sagen. — Er will auch sogleich weggehen, aber der Junge hält ihn auf.

Aber bloss das nicht, Onkel R.!

Warum denn nicht?

Bedenken Sie doch, die Frauen, alle

seekrank und dann kommen Sie und jagen ihnen noch die Angst ein wegen der Drehlöcher. Das könnte eine Katastrophe geben, womöglich noch Tote, und wo wollen wir sie begraben? Bedenken Sie! Der Junge hatte viel Mühe, Onkel R. zu überzeugen. Schliesslich meint dieser: Hast recht, Junge. Vielleicht fahren wir vorbei und dann wäre die ganze Aufregung umsonst. Ich werde es ihnen nachher sagen. Damit begab sich Onkel R. nach unten.

Der Junge atmet erleichter auf: Das wäre aber bald schief gegangen, war alles was er zu sagen hatte.

Am nächsten Morgen fand sich dieselbe Meute wieder vor der Karte ein. Auch Herr R. war erschienen. Jedermann konnte sehen, dass auf der Karte sich der rote Strich dicht am dem Kreuze vorbeizog. Erlöst meinte der Onkel R: Wir sind also doch nicht durchs Drehloch gefahren. Jetzt kann ichs ja ruhig den Frauen erzählen. (Ob er es getan hat ist nicht bekannt.)

Worauf der Junge meinte: Ja, wir sind gerade am Rande vorbei, ich habe gemerkt, wie das Schiff geschwankt und gezittert hat. Der Steward meint, wir haben einen sehr guten Kapitän, der wird uns schon sicher nach Halifax bringen.

Und wahrlich, so ist es dann auch geschehen. Man landete in Halifax und Kanada wurde die neue Heimat. Das Drehloch hat man höchstwahrscheinlich längst vergessen, es sei denn, die Canadian Navy beschäftigte sich noch mit dem Fall.

mm

Woher-Wohin, Mennoniten?

Zu den 'Emigranten' von Walter Schlichting

von Victor Doerksen

Wie es den anderen Zuschauern gefallen hat, weiss ich nicht. Das volle Haus war nach dem Applaus still und sah sich bedeutungsvoll an — aufgelöst war man nicht. Ob es den anderen auch so zu denken gegeben hat, wie mir?

Die Emigranten sind ja mennonitische Bauern Südrusslands, die sich entschliessen, auszuwandern. Sie wandern aus — nach Canada und dann auch später, einige nach Mexico, einige nach Winnipeg und sogar nach Selkirk. Zuletzt wandern einige den himmlischen Pforten zu. . . .

Die Frage, die sich hier zu stellen scheint, hiesse: Warum? Was hat das alles zu bedeuten? Soll hier nur noch einmal die bekannte Geschichte nach-erzählt werden, oder will der Autor sich zu diesem Thema mit irgendeiner These äussern?

Mir kam der erste Teil des Stücks zu bekannt vor und ich hatte wenig Ursache, nach der Pause etwas anderes zu erwarten. Doch da passierte es trotzdem. Die Befürchtungen der Farmer, es könnte in Winnipeg schlimm werden, gehen vor unsern Augen in Erfüllung. Junge Mennoniten, die eben vor dem Richter ihre Religiösität zur Schau getragen haben, torkeln angetrunken (man kann nicht sagen: angeheitert, bzw. aufgeheitert) in der städtischen Szene herum. . . . Der alte Abraham Friesen wird in die Irrenanstalt geliefert, wo er den Kontakt mit der engsten Familie nicht mehr fähig ist — so endet die lange Reise der Emigranten.

Was soll man von solch einem Stück halten? Warum werden diese drastische Schlusszenen nicht im Vorhergehenden vorbereitet? Soll man wirklich glauben, dass der Weg in die neue Welt und die neue Wirklichkeit so auf ein ahnungsloses Völklein hereingebrochen ist? Wahrscheinlich kaum.

Und doch ist was an der These Schlichtings. Die Farmer Loewen und Friesen haben Ahnungen, wenn sie über die Grosstadt und über die Studienlust ihrer Kinder sprechen. Und Penner weiss es auch besser und geht nach Mexico (ob als M.B. oder Alt-kolonäer tut nicht viel zur Sache). Wäre das also der gewiesene Ausweg?

Ich glaube, man muss bedauern, dass Schlichting nicht ein etwas differenzierteres Bild gezeigt hat. Aber, das wäre natürlich auch für ein Drama eine schwere Aufgabe gewesen — auf den Brettern zeigen sich viel leichter scharfe Kontraste. Und in diesem Stück hat man es wahrhaftig mit Kontrasten zu tun. Aber es sind auch positive Ergebnisse zu verzeichnen. Das Drama muss nicht die ganze Wahrheit zeigen, aber es soll echte Fragen aufwerfen. Dafür liefert die Partyszene ein grelles Beispiel. Mich hat aber die letzte Szene weit mehr beeinflusst. Hier liegt der sterbende Friesen im Irrenhaus und redet unverständliches Zeug — das meinen die Personen, die ihn besuchen: der Arzt, die Gattin, die Kinder.

Aber für Friesen ist auch eine andere Wirklichkeit vorhanden, die das Stück

wirkungsvoll vorführt. Alte Freunde und Feinde aus seiner Vergangenheit suchen die Himmelpforte und mit diesen Leuten unterhält sich Friesen. Mag auch das Ende ("steh auf und wandle" — man vergleiche den Schluss bei Rudy Wiebe, *My Lovely Enemy*) nicht befriedigen, wenn es letztenendes in Melodrama ausartet, die Szene als ganzes hat mich bewegt.

Das ist doch vielleicht die letzte Konsequenz. Der Farmer Friesen ist tatsächlich auf den Himmel eingestimmt und findet das andere uninteressant. Was er geglaubt hat ist nicht weiter zur Sprache gekommen, daran leidet das Stück, aber seiner religiösen Vorstellungswelt gemäss ist der Schluss durchaus.

Gegen diesen Schluss sollen wir wahrscheinlich auch die vorletzte Szene halten, in der die 'innere Leere' der mennonitischen Zukunftsmenschen demonstriert werden soll.

Für diese Bilder, eher Karikaturen (die auch eine würdige Funktion haben), sollten wir Walter Schlichting dankbar sein. Ich glaube, Walter Schlichting hat das Mögliche vernachlässigt (oder gemieden) um das Unmögliche zu versuchen. Für die fünf Minuten in der letzten Szene, wo die Diskrepanz zwischen Diesseits und Jenseits vor uns sich auftut passiert auf der Bühne etwas Grossartiges.

mm



The Missing Mennonites and the Lost Talents

"Act II" is an underground restaurant — an appropriate setting for the event which took place on two consecutive evenings in April — the "Missing Mennonite Cabaret." As the host, poet Pat Friesen, explained to the capacity audiences, the "missing Mennonites" are the artists who are missing from the church because they feel that they are not accepted by the church; they are forever on the fringe, rejected either because what they have to say, or the way in which they say it, is too radical, heretical or both. All true artists must experiment with new ways of saying things, and it is by listening to them that we are enriched and challenged to see life in a new way.

It is true that artists often take purist positions, frequently seemingly unrelated to life; and they often make little effort themselves to understand the church communities from which much of their creative energy is drawn. Our artists need to test themselves within the church, seeking to participate and to speak from within rather than without, accepting the fact that sometimes compromise is necessary even here, as it is in all other aspects of life.

The church, though, must remain flexible and allow for creative expression, for change, growth and criticism. The groups that do not allow for this type of expression, and for change, will ultimately stagnate and die.

A very unfortunate tendency exists within our community to equate and confuse personal taste in music or literature with the fundamentals of the Christian faith. A further unfortunate tendency exists to attack the Christian integrity of a person whose taste or mode of expression does not coincide with our own personal taste. Recently, a highly sensitive artist who had written for our magazine commenting on the materialism and insensitivity of modern Christians, received a letter implying that no Christian could write such material. The letter was not signed. It was very clear that the writer of that anonymous letter had not understood the work of the artist. Instead of commenting on the content of what the writer had said, the letter writer chose to attack her integrity. Is it not possible for us to dialogue openly as brothers and sisters about our differences within the church community?

In a recent personal opinion column in the newspaper *Der Bote* a writer criticized the type of music that was per-

formed by students at a fund-raising banquet for Westgate Collegiate. The article in which he raised his concern was entitled "Are our private schools Christian?" The music in question consisted of a group of songs which were sung with skill, verve and enthusiasm by the students. The music was modern, and secular, but so was the event. Prior to this song cycle, presented by a small, advanced music class, the school choir had sung some very "traditional" songs. The writer suggested that German folk songs would be more appropriate for such an occasion, and presumably more "Christian." Several others had voiced similar opinions following the evening performance, but none of them spoke directly to the music teacher who had selected the songs.

There are several concerns which arise from these criticisms. Firstly, there is too much of a tendency to equate a style with a religion. Secondly, there is far too much of a tendency to attack the *person* with whom one disagrees, rather than to examine as objectively as possible the ideas or the style which that person represents. Thirdly, far too often disagreements are not discussed openly with the person directly involved. In general, there needs to be more room for constructive and positive criticism, and less for condemnation; and more allowance needs to be made for growth and change within our institutions.

All too often, the people who become victims of condemnation are those who are dedicated to the church, who have given years of service and have truly attempted to be faithful servants. It is tragic that they often decide to leave because of a sense of rejection, with the church community becoming poorer as a result. The church needs these, and all the artistic "missing Mennonites."

The main message of the Christian church is a positive one. It is one of faith, hope, trust, and new life. It speaks of healing and love. Let us not let it be otherwise in our community. May we seek out those who are "missing," but who accept our name, and may we listen to what they have to share with us. Love and forgiveness are not weak emotions. We can disagree, and challenge and raise questions, and we need to do this in a vigorous, but positive manner.

Ruth Vogt

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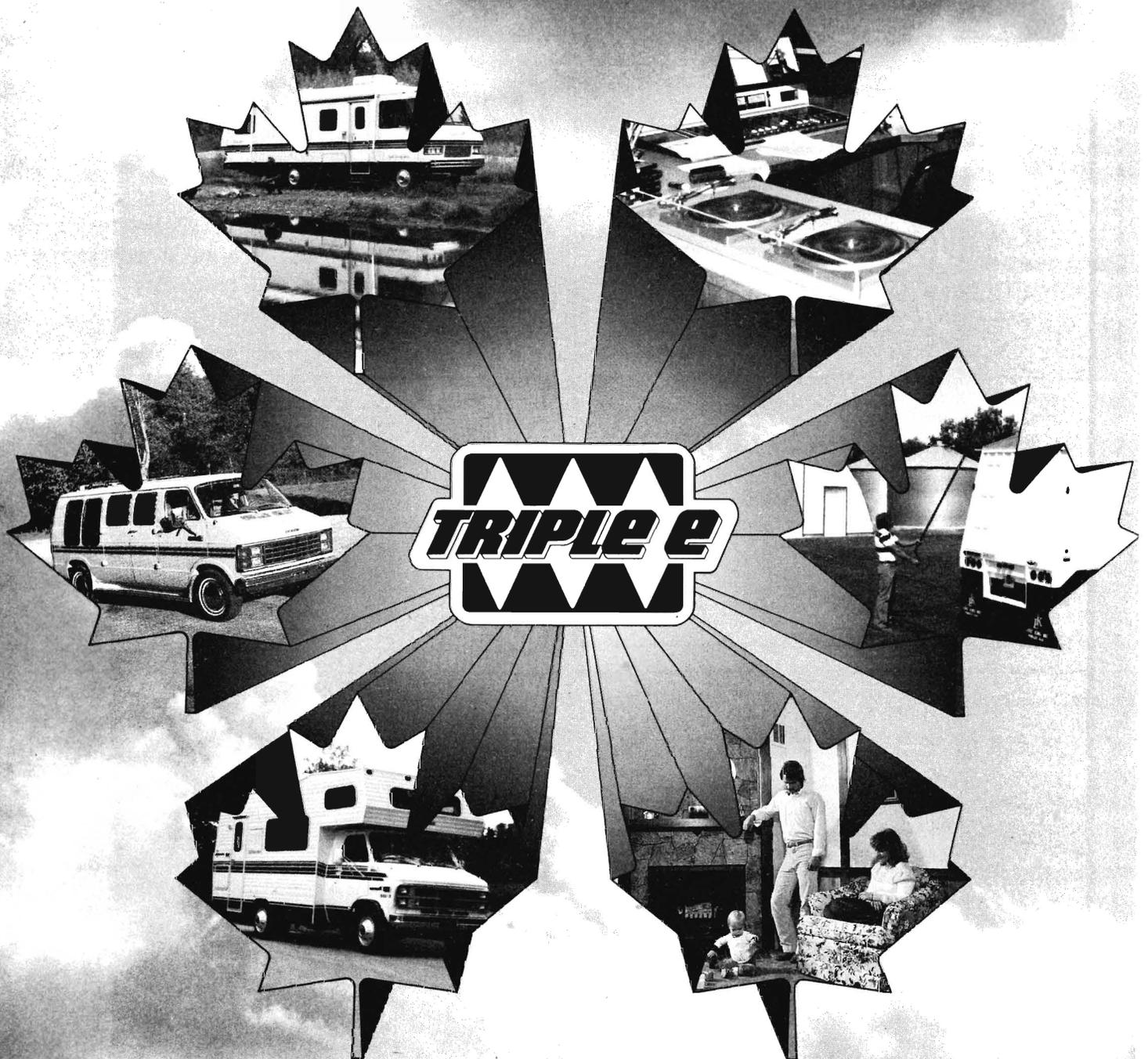
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