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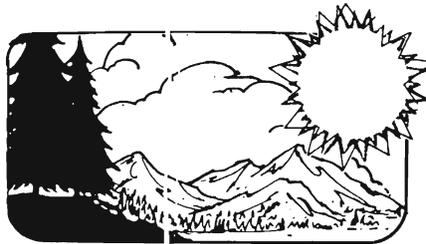
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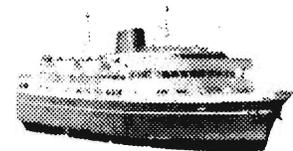


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# ForeWord

This issue opens with a feature on Mennonite Disaster Service and Syd Reimer. The article was prompted by the recent international meeting of MDS in Winnipeg as well as Syd's stepping down as its general director. MDS has done more than any other agency to earn a "good name" for the Mennonites with its mission of helping in the difficult, but necessary, process of clean-up and reconstruction after a major disaster. MDS is also important for another reason: is the most truly inter-Mennonite agency. More than any other, it gets us to work together.

The second article in this issue is appropriate, given that we are just finishing a provincial election. Bob Banman, of Steinbach, took himself to the sidelines for this election, choosing not to run again. He says he learned more from his political experience than he expected, and he leaves it now with a deep respect for the political process.

The story about Taunte Jreeta is an affectionate description of a Steinbach woman whose open-hearted kindness was endearing, but who often appeared to have no idea of the physical danger she placed herself in.

The last Swaziland letter appears in this issue, with more insights into life in a different culture. Another article describes Friesen Printers, the Altona firm that clearly does more than "create jobs" for the community. Roy Vogt went further afield in this month's observed, having returned from China.

There are several book reviews in this issue. Of them, two are worthy of note:

One is a review of Al Reimer's *My Harp Is Turned to Mourning*, by historian J. B. Toews of Calgary. The other is a review of the *Diary of Anna Berg*, which is a rare women's view of what it was like to survive the Russian terror.

The Manitoba Mennonite community was surprised by the January death of Gerhard Lohrenz; his friend and colleague, George K. Epp writes The tribute published in this edition.

**Editor's Note:** *MM* welcomes divergent points of view so long as they are sincere and reasonably expressed. The controversy generated by Johannes Harder's negative review of *And When They Shall Ask*, and by the accompanying commentary by Helmut-Harry Loewen (German section, Nov. '85) has, perhaps, produced more heat than light. The *Mirror* itself has taken no position on the film either for or against but, as always, allowed its reviewers full freedom in expressing their insights and judgments. In this case, however, we regret that certain statements in the review and commentary were expressed in such a way as to be open to misunderstanding or misinterpretation. Now that we have run several letters in support of the film we consider the matter to be fairly aired and consider the case closed.

**The cover:** Some scenes of the Mennonite Disaster Service international meeting held in Winnipeg in February.

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# Mennonite Mirror

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Syd Reimer

## MDS: The Modern-Day Mennonite Samaritans

by Al Reimer

“**H**ope in the Context of Suffering” was this year’s theme when the Mennonite Disaster Service met at the Portage Avenue Mennonite Brethren Church on February 7–8, 1986, for its annual bi-national conference. Every third year the bi-national MDS (the U.S. and Canada) holds its annual conference in Canada. Winnipeg was a good choice for this year’s conference, what with local businessman Syd Reimer, the first Canadian to head the organization, stepping down as chairman of the board after six years in office. Reimer will continue to serve on the bi-national board, as well as being director for Region V (Canada). He has served on the board of MDS continuously for the past twelve years. His successor as chairman is Norman Shenk, an American Mennonite from Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

No Mennonite organization, church or lay, including the parent MCC, draws on a wider spectrum of North American Mennonites or is more democratically run than MDS. Old Order Mennonites, the Amish, General Conference, Church of God in Christ, Mennonite Brethren, American, Canadian, city, rural Mennonites, old and young, educated and uneducated Mennonites — even non-

Mennonites — all participate on an equal footing with the same high level of enthusiasm. The thousands of unpaid volunteers used by MDS annually do everything asked of them with Christian zeal, cheerful good will and almost no budget. Even the bi-national board operates with a budget of \$150,000, almost ludicrously modest by today’s standards. The whole organization has only two full-time, paid staff members, an executive coordinator and a secretary. With 3,000 Mennonite churches plugged into this incredible relief agency, the supply line of willing volunteers seems endless. Even the “Snowbirds,” the affectionate nickname given to Canadians wintering in southern climes, come in handy as volunteers to help with disasters in the southern states.

So just what does MDS do, you may ask, and how did it get started? Among the many well-known relief organizations — the Red Cross, MCC, etc. — MDS is the least glamorous, the quiet but efficient “mucker” among such agencies, the only one designed to do the messy cleaning-up after a natural disaster — flood, tornado, hurricane or earthquake — has done its damage. In an average year MDS volunteers put in

15,000 person-days on site, cleaning out flooded basements, rebuilding damaged roofs, etc. Last year, for example, there were 900 tornadoes in North America and all of them were checked out by MDS field men. When the decision is made to form a field unit at a disaster area, the call for volunteers goes out directly from the churches. And the calls are answered by every type of volunteer from young to old, by rural and city Mennonites from near and far. According to Syd Reimer service in MDS often provides a springboard for young people to do full-time service in MCC. In fact, MDS has become MCC’s biggest recruiter.

MDS began quite spontaneously and unobtrusively in states like Kansas and Oklahoma back in the fifties. There was already a long tradition of Mennonite communities in these states helping each other collectively when disasters like floods and tornadoes occurred. All that was required really was a formal organization and the first step towards that was taken at a Sunday School picnic in Hesston, Kansas, in the summer of 1950. By the early fifties MDS was a going concern, although organizationally it was still somewhat loose and informal. MDS activity in Canada began

in much the same informal manner. By 1958 there were provincial MDS units in Manitoba, Ontario and Saskatchewan, the three provinces with the greatest concentration of Mennonites. In October, 1961, MDS (Canada) was established officially.

The catastrophe that more than any other put MDS on the map as a major relief organization was the terrible flood at Rapid City, South Dakota, on June 9, 1972. The toll was horrendous: in a few hours 234 people lost their lives, six thousand families had their homes flooded and property damage was estimated at \$75-100 million. Hundreds of MDS volunteers, including Syd Reimer, spent up to 14 weeks that summer mucking out basements in the stricken community, washing down, repairing.

It was also the project that first brought out the leadership qualities in Syd Reimer, a young businessman living in Rosenort, Manitoba, who had been sporadically active in MDS for about ten years. With hardly any on-site experience he agreed to take charge of the project "for two or three weeks." That hastily made commitment stretched out week by week until the whole summer had gone by. Soon he had practically his whole family living and working on the site. The very competent job Reimer did at Rapid City got him elected to the MDS Board, and started him on a second career.

Syd Reimer is a master salesman and a high-powered businessman, but when he talks about MDS and his role in it there is not a trace of salesmanship or self-promotion in his voice or manner. A deep-running but modest pride there is, but Reimer makes it clear that his involvement in MDS is simply his way of putting his Christian service where his mouth is. For the past 15 years he has given at least one month a year to MDS (during his six years as board chairman it has been closer to one-third of his working time), and has travelled hundreds of thousands of miles on MDS business. As bi-national head he has visited 48 states, most of Canada and some countries in Central and South America.

When asked what his biggest satisfaction has been in his work with MDS, he gives a typically modest personal answer: "It's having made so many friends all over the continent and to have enjoyed the complete support of my family. They've all worked for MDS at one time or another." Another reward he cites is that of getting both young and old people working together and feeling useful again, especially if they have

been unemployed or retired. He has seen ladies in their seventies working strenuously on roof repairs. Reimer also takes satisfaction in having helped to improve the overall organizational side of MDS. By strange coincidence, twice during his six years in office his home community of Rosenort has suffered serious floods and required the assistance of MDS.

MDS is far from resting on its laurels. While its main function is still clean-up work at disaster sites, it now performs other functions as well. It sponsors blood drives, especially in Ontario, and holds relief sales in various places. More and more work is being done in slum areas, and Myron Augsberger recently fixed up an old building as a church in Washington, D.C. MDS even builds new homes now; from the sites of the three built recently in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Reimer says with more than a trace of irony, he had a clear view of the costly new tower at Orel Roberts University.

While the future of MDS seems assured, the organization will more and more be forced to generate its own funds as budgeting gets tighter. In the U.S. the states and the four regions generate their own budgets. In Canada the funds come from the provincial treasuries and from MCC (Canada), so Region V doesn't

have to concern itself with fund-raising, at least not yet. With MCC and 3,000 churches participating in the MDS cause, one cannot envisage this unique relief agency ever withering for lack of physical and financial support.

As one surveys the hundreds of conference guests assembled at the Portage MB church, one can't help noting from their costumes, hair styles, etc., what a diversity of Mennonite churches and conferences they represent. And all are warm, friendly, ordinary people without that aggressive or anxiety-shot expression one sees so often at conferences these days. These are Mennonites of very different backgrounds and geographical regions united in a deep but unassuming form of practical Christianity: the literal application of doing unto others, etc. These deeply committed men and women are what Anabaptist Mennonitism is all about.

As Syd Reimer, face aglow, moves through the crowds in the anteroom of the church, up and down the banquet tables in the basement, shaking hands, slapping shoulders, exchanging loud quips in English and Low German, one can believe his claim that he knows all these people, can call them all by name and that they are all his personal friends.

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Bob Banman

## Bob Banman found political life worth a college degree

by Marjorie Toews

When Manitobans go to the polls on March 18th, the constituents of La Verendrye will not be able to vote for Bob Banman as their Progressive Conservative candidate. After thirteen years in politics, four as a cabinet minister in the Lyon administration, Banman has decided to leave politics and return to being a full-time businessman. Among other pursuits he plans to upgrade his Nissan and Honda car dealership and get his new gasoline retailing company off the ground.

Though Banman will probably not be pumping much gas himself, he in fact got his start in the business world in 1953 by pumping gas evenings and Saturdays. That was the year his father opened a filling station on the corner of Main Street and Highway 12 in Steinbach. The garage had a coffee bar which not only was a meeting place for local residents but was also a stopping place for people from all over southeastern Manitoba on their way to and from Winnipeg. Bob enjoyed meeting people and it was at the coffee bar that he developed the habit of talking and listening to people.

Banman credits his father with having taught him the work ethic, but also with showing him how to blend work with pleasure. His father had a reputation for being an avid hunter and if he got word, for example, that a farmer from Greenland was losing chickens to a coyote, he'd drop everything and take Bob coyote-hunting.

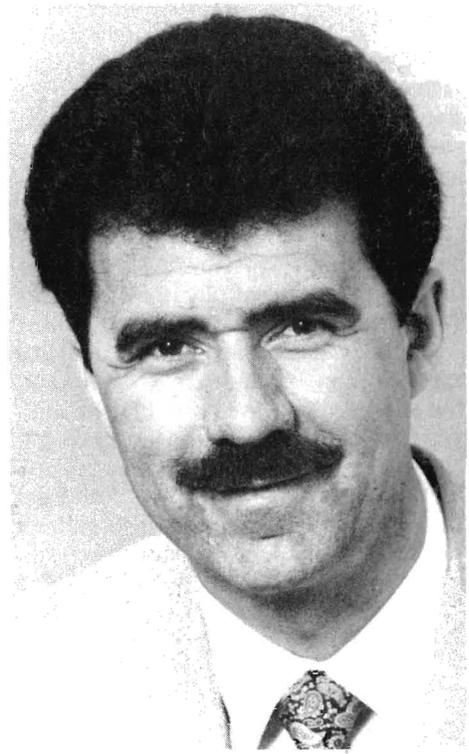
If Bob learned the work ethic and how

to deal with people from his father, he picked up an interest in politics and current events from his mother. His mother loved to read and saw to it that her children knew what was going on in the world. Bob remembers she had a map of Korea on the wall during the Korean War so that they could pinpoint the action, and when they went to the southern U.S. on holidays she would read up on the Civil War and take a special interest in historical landmarks.

Banman frankly preferred work to school and so after Grade 12 he chose to stay in Steinbach and work in his dad's business. His first taste of politics came when he sat on the Steinbach town council some years later. After two terms on council, a vacancy came open in the provincial riding of LaVerendrye in 1973 and several local businessmen suggested he run as a Conservative.

Banman was a relative newcomer to partisan politics, although he had worked on the Epp campaign in 1972. Moreover, the constituency had voted Liberal for the last forty years. However Jake Epp, who had sat together on council with Banman, had wrested the federal riding of Provencher away from the Liberals the year before, and now Banman decided to take his chances as well.

1969, the year the NDP was elected for the first time in Manitoba, was a watershed year for provincial politics. Until then philosophical differences between the Liberals and Conservatives had been lazy and it was sometimes



hard to tell who was who. The Liberals under D. L. Campbell in the 1950s were ultra-conservative, while the Conservatives under Duff Roblin in the 1960s with their program of increased government spending on health, education, and public works, including the Winnipeg floodway, were considered progressive and liberal.

The trend toward polarization that had begun in 1969 intensified in the 1973 election, and LaVerendrye swung solidly to the Conservatives, putting Bob Banman into the Legislature in the process. Although Banman won, the Conservatives lost, which meant that he spent his first term in opposition, a job whose importance he doesn't underestimate. Quoting the old adage that "a government is only as good as the opposition," he explains that if the opposition is on its toes the government has to be too. These years also served as an introduction to the legislative process as he gradually got used to seeing politicians lambaste each other in fiery debate and then go out for coffee together afterwards.

In 1977, however, the Conservatives came to power under Premier Sterling Lyon and over the next four years Banman served variously as minister of industry and commerce, tourism, fitness, recreation and sport, cooperative development, and cultural affairs. After the 1981 election Banman was once again in opposition, this time as a senior member of caucus. Though he was still one of the youngest PC caucus mem-

bers, by 1981 he was fifth in seniority.

As we talk we are deep in Conservative territory in the Legislature. Someone else is using Banman's office and as we go in search of an empty office we pass a door that has a sign saying — "Reagan-Bush" tucked behind the nameplate. The setting is appropriate because the conversation has turned to Conservative philosophy in general and Banman's in particular.

Although some might call him a right-winger because of his stance on the economy, he prefers to think of himself as a pragmatist following basic common sense, rather than being led by any particular philosophy. He feels strongly that the government should not be involved in business except for utilities like hydro and telephone and in fact one of the first things he did while in office was to sell off several crown-owned companies. He argues that companies run by the government just get bogged down in bureaucracy and don't have the flexibility to stay competitive, adding that he finds it extremely satisfying to see that the NDP has gradually come to much the same conclusion and is trying to sell Flyer and Manfor, the provincially-owned bus manufacturing and forestry companies.

Perception is almost everything in politics and Banman admits that on social issues there is a perception that the Conservatives don't care very much, that the Liberals care more and that the NDP care very much indeed. "When people come to me to complain about taxes," he says, "I ask them what they're willing to do without. If they need a catscan are they willing to wait for two months instead of two weeks? Everyone would like lower taxes but not at the expense of health and education," (which together account for 75 percent of government spending).

Banman again tries to separate perception from reality on the French language question. There was a perception that all Conservatives in the province were against bilingualism while all New Democrats were for it. In reality, he maintains, upwardly mobile Conservatives in areas like South Winnipeg supported the legislation because their children were in French immersion while NDP supporters in the North End, for example, were opposed to the legislation.

Nor was it a matter of bigotry against the French as the eastern media tried to argue. Banman cites the case of his own family. Though his grandmother speaks only German and his parents speak mostly Low German or High German at

home, he has moved his children from German into French at school. When this move is played out hundreds of times in Mennonite, Ukrainian, Icelandic, and Polish families and so on, it's a traumatic experience for the older generations who "think we're rejecting them and their culture. How do we explain to them that we're not?"

Furthermore, Banman argues, there is no way that the Conservative caucus acting on its own could have stopped passage of the legislation, bells or no bells. "We couldn't have rung the bells for one day let alone two weeks if public opinion hadn't been behind us." He feels that in the end, the NDP withdrew the legislation not because of the bells but because they realized they didn't have public opinion behind them.

In one final comment on the French issue Banman argues that if "we're going to have bilingualism, and eventually we will, it has to be brought in slowly and introduced early in the education system, so that everyone has an equal chance at the bilingual jobs." The way the system is now, he says, many 18-year-olds with good marks are out of the running for many jobs before they're even in the job-market simply because they don't have French. Above all, he feels, bilingualism should be implemented with a carrot approach instead of a stick approach.

It is clear that Bob Banman is still interested in political issues and still keenly partisan, so why is he resigning now at the age of 41? He gives a variety of reasons. One of them is not the fear of another term in the opposition. If anything, he is resigning because he is convinced the Conservatives will win the upcoming election. He explains that no government in Manitoba history has ever been re-elected after waiting for more than four years to call an election, and that he doesn't think the NDP will be able to shake the public perception, fueled in part by the French language issue, that they are not carrying out the public will.

And why is he quitting if he is so sure his party will win? Banman says in a sense it would be easier to stay on if he knew he would be in opposition. If the Conservatives did win he would likely sit in the Cabinet, and as he is well aware being a cabinet minister is an all-consuming task that leaves time for little else. Unlike most other jobs, one makes a four or five-year commitment in politics and Banman feels it is important that he spend more time with his family while his children David, 14, and Heidi, 11, are still at home, as well as taking a

more hands-on approach with his businesses.

Banman also feels he's leaving at a point where he's taken as much out of the system as he's put in, a good psychological standpoint from which to leave politics. Similarly, he feels positively about the British parliamentary system and its ability to allow the will of the people to be done. All too often, in his opinion, longtime politicians become cynical about the political process and he'd rather leave holding a healthy respect for it.

If Banman has no qualms about leaving political life, he doesn't have regrets about having entered it either. He credits his political life with expanding his horizons — mentally and socially — and says he has developed greater depth and insight as a person through this experience than he would have if he'd only stayed in his home community. He looks on these years as a rounding-off process and as an education. University didn't seem right for him when the opportunity was there, but he jokes that the Legislature has provided him with a degree in politics and human relations after all.

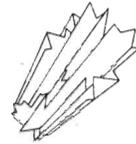
He comments that his wife Joanne has done more than her share, both in the home and in constituency work, and allows that as a former teacher she was probably a better speaker than he was ("at least in the beginning" — this with a laugh). "Politics is so much easier if a politician's home life is stable," he says, adding that the fact that he was able to commute on a daily basis also made his political life easier.

Asked if being a Mennonite has made a difference, he responds that while he hopes he treated all groups in his riding fairly, not just the Mennonites, it is probably good for Mennonites to be in the Legislature, representing as they do part of the Manitoba mosaic. He adds that one cannot help but reflect the values implanted in one at an early age, and that he has tried to voice these values in the Legislature on such issues as the legal drinking age, abortion, and the general conduct of members. One longtime NDP supporter and political observer confirms that latter point, noting that Banman was "a responsible and responsive member, not given to the gimmickry and cheap shots of some of his colleagues."

Appropriately for a politician, Banman doesn't rule out ever returning to politics but he clearly has no plans to do so.

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## Taunte Jreeta: a prayer warrior and a driver the angels protected

by Marjorie Toews

My mother's Aunt Margaret — Taunte Jreeta to us, Mrs. J. T. Loewen to others — was an amazing woman. Perhaps she was no more unique than all the other elderly, navy-clad Mennonite women, survivors all, but surely she was the most colourful.

To begin with, Taunte Jreeta drove a battle-gray '58 Chevy that looked like a tank and was driven at a speed of less than 10 miles an hour in town, where bicycles passed her on the street, and about 30 miles an hour on the open highway. The Chevy was so distinctive that its majestic progress could be seen from a long way off, but Taunte Jreeta was so short that the only evidence of someone behind the wheel was a little navy hat and the sun reflecting off her spectacles. Presumably she could still see other drivers even when they couldn't see her.

There were other peculiarities of Taunte Jreeta's driving. When she rolled to a stop at a sign she would wait until every car in sight had crossed the intersection before resuming her stately procession, oblivious to the traffic backed up behind her (although traffic did not **always** back up in Steinbach). She also had a novel way of getting out of a parking spot that had somehow become tighter than she'd found it. She would put the Chevy into forward gear

until she hit the car in front of her, then into reverse until she hit the car behind her and so on, forward, applying might and main to the steering wheel until she had gained clearance.

She was probably best known, however, for once driving to Winnipeg on the wrong side of the Trans-Canada highway. Courteous Taunte Jreeta merely waved and honked back at all the people waving and honking at the unstoppable vehicle bearing down on them.

One would think her cronies might have hesitated before getting into the car with her but, on the contrary, her one-woman taxi service was in constant demand.

No, most women her age were widowed and had never learned to drive themselves and besides, Taunte Jreeta was good company. She loved driving and going to church equally, so each Sunday morning she would pack the Chevy with friends and relatives, bringing them all to church with her and naturally taking them all back home afterwards. The procedure would be repeated all over again for Sunday evening church. Wednesday evening prayer meeting, Thursday afternoon sewing circle and miscellaneous visits to the hospital and the old folks' home, not to mention those trips to Winnipeg she

managed to squeeze in. Taunte Jreeta, as you can see, was on the road frequently indeed.

Her driving career was almost terminated when the authorities got wind of her unconventional driving and asked her to come in to rewrite the driver's test. She was rather worried about the test, wondering how she and her friends would get around if she flunked it. But inspiration came in the form of her son, who argued that if she could memorize whole passages of the Bible she could surely memorize a little driver's handbook. She astounded the officials by passing the test with flying colours.

If there was anything Taunte Jreeta liked more than driving it was praying. Even by Mennonite standards she was exceptionally fond of praying. She was what is known in Christian circles as a prayer warrior (a delightfully macho term churches like to betstow on their frailest members). Actually, Taunte Jreeta was a general among warriors. There was no item too trivial to pray for and no occasion too trivial on which to pray. According to her granddaughter, when they were driving in the car together and came to a red light Taunte Jreeta would say, "Oh good! We can pray!" (This might also explain the traffic problems behind her.)

Taunte Jreeta probably needed every

second she could get to pray because she had an enormous prayer list to get through each week and she was extremely generous about adding new people to it. For example, one day her Gideon Bible contact arranged to drop off a shipment of Bibles at her house. (Taunte Jreeta had a finger in every imaginable evangelistic pie.) When he arrived later the same day he found that she had already paved the way, so to speak, for the new Bibles by praying for all of their unknown recipients.

Perhaps it was her praying, after all, which kept her safe on the road — undoubtedly she prayed for that too — for Taunte Jreeta never had a major accident and lived to the age of 80, driving her car right to the end. After her death in 1975 it fell to my mother to take care of her mail. It turned out that Taunte Jreeta had been receiving mail from over a hundred assorted mission, church and gospel organizations. I don't know if she sent them all money but I'm sure she prayed for all of them.

We should not really have been surprised because Taunte Jreeta could never say no to anyone in need. In fact she went out of her way to minister to needy souls and bodies. This last point was perfectly demonstrated by a message she had left years earlier for people who might come to the house after she and Uncle Jake had gone on a trip.

The charming message was characteristic of her steady and boundless generosity. Written on a chalkboard hanging outside next to the door (which was unlocked of course — the keys had been lost years ago) were the words: "Welcome. There is food in the freezer and linen in the cupboard. We will be back in three months." mm



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## review

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# Memories of a gracious lady

A review by G. K. Epp

This neatly bound little book will be a welcome addition to the memories section of private libraries and will be appreciated especially by the many friends and relatives of Helen Janzen. In her long teaching career of 44 years (1928–1972) the author met many interesting people and in this book they all find a prominent place, which introduces the reader to a good deal of Manitoba history with a Mennonite flavour. Only between the lines will the reader find that this author was a most popular teacher, tireless committee worker, and the *Bahnbrecher* (pioneer) of home economics education in Manitoba.

The *Memories* of Helen Janzen focus more on her many friends than on the author herself, and that is typical of Helen. In any other approach we would not have recognized her character. In her warm, unassuming way she takes us through all the stages of her career, which culminated in the position of home economics supervisor for the province. At the same time Helen Janzen was pursuing other careers. She became the first woman on the executive of the Mennonite Central Committee of Canada, was involved in the Student Christian Movement, the United Nations Association, in the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, and in almost any good cause you could suggest to her.

It is also much evident in this book that the author is proud of her heritage. Her description of the Janzen home, with mother and father as ideal Mennonite parents, is touching, and reveals a Mennonite character in her parents that we do well to remember as models of former times. "Father rarely used the word 'sin' or 'unchristian.' Some things were *very wrong*, such as holding oneself better than others . . . other things were *foolish* . . ." This simplicity of faith, where words had a strong meaning, although they lacked the theological ring that we are used to, evokes in some of us a nostalgia for the "naive times." What better testimony can you give to anybody than the one this author offers to her parents. "Mother personified sincerity, humility and love, while father seemed to typify integrity, a blunt honesty . . . the courage of his convictions."

Helen Janzen has also travelled much and most people will find her "road" diaries fascinating reading. Realizing this, the author offers to her friends a generous taste of her many journeys. Although this "Journal of Overseas Trips" is rather brief, the reader can readily identify with the author. True to her style, Helen usually makes the tour guide a central figure in the travel experience.

The last brief chapter of this book is in a way dedicated to some special friends of the author. She records reflections, meditations, incidents, comments, and brief presentations of people that have meant much to her. Helen Janzen never forgets to thank people for what they have contributed to her own development. Again a trait we might well learn from her. Most touching is the tribute she gives to her teacher Henry Ewert. "Young people need models," Helen Janzen says at one point in the book, and it is not difficult to see that Henry Ewert was the model she admired.

This book recommends itself to those who believe in their Mennonite heritage, simple Christian decency, and admire model educators.

*Helen Janzen, Memories. Printed by Friesen Printers, Altona, 1985. 122 pages, \$9.*

The Canadian Mennonite Bible College invites applications for a junior position in Music. The major focus of this position will be in children's music (possibly forming a model children's choir), youth music, and directing the CMBC ensemble (a choral group which does considerable congregational visitation). Auxiliary areas could be accompanying, music theory, music therapy, private instruction, basic conducting or drama and fine arts. A master's degree is preferred, but not essential. A less than full-time appointment might be possible. Applicants should be committed to the Christian faith and in sympathy with the goals of the college. Send applications and resumes to the Academic Dean, Canadian Mennonite Bible College, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, Manitoba by March 31, 1986.

# To the din of roosters, is added the spice of news

## Letter from Swaziland: 5 and 6

by Victor Peters

There is no homestead or habitation in Swaziland that is without chickens. In the entire teacher settlement everyone of the households has chickens, except Karl and the Belgian teacher, and half of the chickens are roosters. It is a myth that chicken-wire keeps chickens in or out. It controls and confines to a degree adult fowl but not the baby-chicks, and once they get through the meshing the mother hen finds a way to join them.

Because every household also has a garden everybody is engaged in chasing the neighbor's chickens. Even otherwise dignified people, like our neighbors from Ghana, Bamfo or his wife Angel, will snatch a broom or mop and give the birds a good chase. There is nothing worse to stunt the growth of a plant than a vigorous hen and her brood scratching in your garden.

The roosters with their crowing are even worse disturbers of the peace. There is an accepted fallacy that roosters only crow in the morning. The world here at Hluti is dark at 10, for at 9 p.m. the electricity is cut off. But I have heard spunky roosters crow at 10 at night, to be joined and reinforced by other roosters, bass, tenor and falsetto, like a Mozart opera performed by the Don Cossack choir. This goes on at intervals all night and well after dawn.

Henry Mhkwazi, a Swazi teacher, says that people who know their rooster know by his crowing what time of day or night it is. I have come to respect Henry's native wisdom, but this about the roosters functioning as chronometers has dented my faith in him.

However, it should not be assumed that all Swaziland is rural. The country lies between the Republic of South Africa, which is to the west, and Mozambique, which is to the east. Swaziland is a land-locked country with two major urban centers. There is Mbabane, the capital, with a population of about 35,000, and Manzini, the industrial centre, with approximately

the same population. The distance between these two cities is about 50 kilometers, and this stretch forms the heartland of the country. Here all decisions affecting government, economics and industry are made. It is also the hub of tourism and recreation. Lobamba, the seat of government, lies here, and some distance away is the international airport.

The main street of Mbabane is the Allister Miller Boulevard. Towering over it on a steep hill is the Tavern Hotel. It resembles an English country estate, and indeed in its halls are the pictures of the British monarchs from the time of Henry VIII (including Anne Boleyn) to our own Prince Charles and Princess Di. The dining room is panelled in severe dark brown. Karl and I, when we check in, usually take a poolside room. Around the pool is light lawn furniture and refreshment service practically around the clock. The hotel is a great favorite of foreign diplomats and trade commissions. Every morning, when you go to your car in the parking lot, the car is washed by men or boys who want to earn a little extra money.

About 50 kilometers away, at the far end of Manzini, stands another hotel, The George. Like the Tavern Hotel it is a reminder of the glories of Empire. Its dining room has large, arched windows, the atmosphere is Victorian neoclassic, waitresses with wide red sashes look like royalty and informal, English-type landscape surrounds the outdoor pool. Swaziland is a black country ruled by blacks, but at the Tavern as well as at The George, a sign at the main entrance reads "Right of Admission Reserved." I suppose that is to keep out the riffraff, black or white.

Between Mbabane and Manzini lies the Ezulwini Valley. Translated the name means "Valley of Heaven," and it deserves it. As if the magnificent scenery were not enough, the tourist industry

provides for the visitor hotels, spas and casinos with swimming pools, golf courses, and pastimes such as roulette, black-jack and one-armed bandits. There is also a natural park with a high waterfall and a wildlife sanctuary. The Ezulwini Valley also has the Royal Kraal where all the widows of the late King Sobhuza II live out their lives never to marry again.

The Valley of Heaven lies between two mountain ranges. From The Swazi Inn, another first-class hotel, you can see two mountain peaks in close proximity. They are known as "Sheba's Breasts." Beyond them is the steep Executioner's Mountain, from which in years gone by criminals were pushed off the edge. Even in Swaziland life meanwhile has grown kinder to offenders.

When I am in Hluti, where I stay during the week, I don't get a paper. On week-ends, which I usually spend in Mbabane, the capital, I take turns reading one or the other of the country's dailies, *The Times of Swaziland* or *The Swazi Observer*. There are other papers, in Swazi, but my Swazi has not progressed much beyond "Sowubona" (Good Day) and "Niyabonga" (Thank you).

The papers mentioned resemble the English tabloids, in other words they have a touch of the American *Enquirer*. An important story headed "Pik Jets in for Talks" (a reference to South African Foreign Minister Pik Botha) gets front-page coverage, but is dwarfed by a screaming headline: "Mother insists my boy is BACK FROM DEAD!"

What one appreciates also is the Swazi sense of humor, which they have in abundance. Here is a typical story that made the front page under the heading, "Close encounter with a beast":

"Three men riding at the back of a bakkie (truck) had a brief encounter with death which had hair, hooves and horns. The three were shocked out of their wits when the bakkie rammed into a cow which flew into the air, and landed at the back of the bakkie, almost on top of the passengers. Men and beast stared at each other in shock for some moments, before the beast collected its senses, and fled into the black night. This accident happened along the Lozitha road near Ngonini on Thursday night. 'We were shocked,' one passenger said, 'we could not move until the cow got up and disappeared.'

"The bakkie was badly damaged. The front was knocked in and the roof had fallen in, and all the windows and

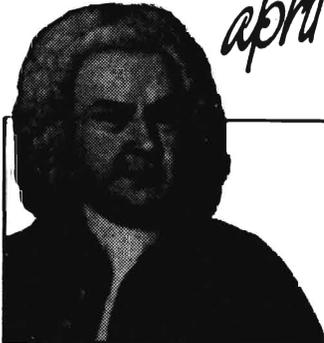
windscreen were shattered. When passersby and occupants of the bakkie saw the condition of the car, all wondered how the cow managed to walk away."

Another story has the heading "Man hid goat in bed court hears." The story gives an account how a man found one of his goats missing. He suspects a neighbor and visits the same. But the neighbor quickly goes into his hut and slips under the covers. The visitor follows into the hut, sees the culprit in bed and strongly suspects that next to him under the blanket is not his wife but his slaughtered goat. The outline under the cover confirms his suspicion, but he could not very well pull off the blanket. He still won the case in court when neighbors of the thief admitted they had received goat meat from him, even though he had no goats of his own.

The letters to the editor are also spicy. One writer, Buyi Dlamini, attacks the popular traditional belief in muti. Muti is a charm possessed by men or powers which have the power to influence supernatural forces. Muti can keep evil spirits away. Karl told me that once, when he was travelling on a bus on a hazardous road, a charmer used muti to keep demons out of the bus, and it had worked. No demons had put in an appearance. Muti can accelerate healing, provides people with strength against enemies, finds fortunes for its clients or restores stolen articles (cars, money, etc.), it can even charm beautiful women to fall in love with ugly old men. If muti has such great power, asks the disenchanted by Buyi Dlamini, how come men who say they have the charm sometimes have such ugly wives, or look so sickly, and are themselves poor. Would they not employ such charms on their own behalf, he asks dramatically. Good questions, but tradition is strong, and the same paper carries a story, "Jilted wife in search of muti." As for me, I have grown quite addicted to reading Swazi papers.

Newspapers aside, traditional ways dominate the everyday life of the average Swazi. Swaziland is a warm country and most white males, young or old, wear short pants. Not the Swazis. There is one exception — the Swazi police. The reason is that the British, when they were the colonial masters here, had their men and the native police wear short khaki pants, and this practice has been retained. As for native Swazi women, you never see them in slacks, except now and then in the city, and everyone knows the occupation of women like that. Such are the traditions of Swaziland. mm

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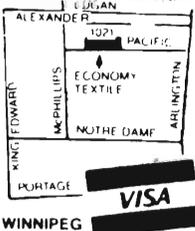
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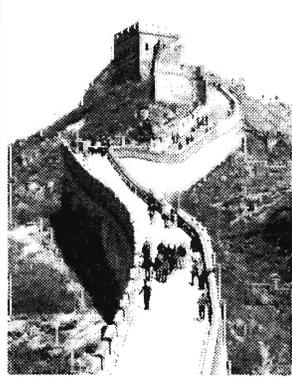
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## A tribute to a man of integrity and energy: Gerhard Lohrenz

by George K. Epp

On February 10, Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church had a full house, and the night before Klassen's Funeral Home was overcrowded. . . . On every mourner's face one could read an unspoken question: Is it really true? — Yes, yes, he was 86, but Gerhard Lohrenz seemed indestructible. . . . Tall, erect, never tired, cranking out a dozen books after his retirement at 70 (in between some 40 tours which he led during that period); teaching, preaching, addressing issues of our day, admonishing the church and all of us, and educating us with his numerous articles in *Der Bote*. No, he was not an old man — he had been around for many years, but his experiences, when he related them to us, were fresh and vivid. He had an incredible memory, and he was the unchallenged dean of Russian-Mennonite historians — he was a living encyclopedia of that history.

All of his books were published after his retirement, and written in haste, because he felt, like Solzhenitsyn about Russian history, that he had to record this Mennonite story before his time was up. Some day the wealth of information that he has given us will become part of a comprehensive history of the Russian-Mennonites. When I started collecting material on the experience of Russian-Mennonites during this century, he said: "That's what I always wanted to do." I urged him to go ahead because there would be enough work for both of us. But he did not have time for this project — grandfather's clock stopped.

Born in Sagradovka on December 27, 1899, Gerhard Lohrenz experienced the turbulent years of the Russian Revolution, the Civil War, and the terror of the Anarchist period. He was drafted into the Red Army, then became an administrator during the early Soviet period. But he concluded that for conscience sake he had to leave that position. He was the youngest delegate at the last Mennonite Conference in Moscow in

1925, and in the same year found a new home in Canada.

He tried farming but soon opted for the teaching profession. With a teaching certificate, and later a BA from the University of Manitoba, he became one of our best qualified teachers of the 1930s. He taught at Springstein, became principal of the MBCI, and then was called to the newly-established Canadian Mennonite Bible College. In 1959, Rev. Lohrenz accepted the call to the leadership of the Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. Here he continued his teaching career in a new setting. He became a most successful counselor to many young and older people.

In the conference he was known for his strong convictions. That kind of personality is not always easy to live with, but when we disagreed with him we always knew that Gerhard Lohrenz was a man of integrity. He simply did not believe that everybody was right all the time — there was a right and wrong. This basic conviction never changed with Gerhard Lohrenz, and although he melted over the last two decades, he never became a compromiser. His influence in the Canadian Mennonite Conference was significant. He considered the program committee to be the most powerful in the conference and on that committee he served many years.

While he systematically started to resign in recent years from all committees and responsibilities, there were several he never resigned from. He continued on the East-West Advisory Committee of MCC where his expert advice was needed and appreciated. Right now it seems that we will never find a replacement for Gerhard Lohrenz on this committee.

At 86 Gerhard Lohrenz was still a man with dreams for his community. In 1977 he was one of the prime movers in the establishment of the chair in Mennonite studies at the University of Winnipeg. In 1979, when Dr. David Friesen invited a

number of Mennonite businessmen and educators for discussions on the future of Mennonite education, Dr. Lohrenz, Dr. Frank H. Epp, and Dr. Henry Krahn were deeply involved (all three now gone from our midst). He was an ecumenist and would have liked to see a strong inter-Mennonite effort in education. He also remained on the advisory board of the new Mennonite Studies Centre at the University of Winnipeg, and continued to be a strong voice on that board right to the last meeting at the end of 1985. He looked into the future, and with Dr. Frank Epp he was a strong proponent of Menno Simons College, which eventually would reach out, he believed, to the international Mennonite community. The future of this larger Mennonite community was on his mind to the last days of his life.

The presence of a good number of young people at the funeral of this 86-year-old man was indicative of his relationship with the younger generation. A group of Sargent Avenue Mennonite young people asked to be permitted to sing two songs for Rev. Lohrenz, and we were all touched by this gesture. But for people in the Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church this was not really surprising. Gerhard Lohrenz had become one of the favorite speakers at many events, including youth retreats. Gerhard Lohrenz's time ran out, but he never grew old.

And what about death? Those of us who had the privilege of many conversations with him also talked about that fact, and he would say: "If it were not for my Anna, I would be ready to go today." At the same time he did not stop planning his days and weeks. And when one of his younger friends asked him, "And what about eternity?" Gerhard Lohrenz said: "You see, I will go through a door, and you will not see me, but I will remember you." Dear friend, we too will remember you! The large Mennonite family will miss you! **mm**



The three Friesens of the firm: Ted, D.K., and Ray

# A printing company makes a firm impression in town and in its work

by Kirsten Roger

Some months ago a Winnipeg newspaper columnist observed that there is one large business firm in Canada where, if you want to be promoted from a branch office to headquarters, you may have to move from Toronto to Altona, Manitoba. He discovered what many have known for a long time: that in a small town of Altona a major business has been growing quietly but steadily over the past decades. One more example of big oaks growing from little acorns.

It all started in 1907 when D. W. Friesen bought a confectionary store in Altona which included a post office and a Bell Telephone agency. By 1930 one of his four sons, D.K., expanded the business by opening a school supplies office through which they could serve all the one-room schools in the area. Soon after, the first printing machine was purchased and one of D.W.'s friends received \$3 a week to work it! This small handfed Gordon was installed in the basement of the Main Street shop and was to become their river to success.

Printing proved to be quite difficult at first. Each morning a fire had to be made to heat up the ink which, however, was not soft enough to use until noon. Despite such technological problems, the printing business grew and even

when the depression came it continued to be one of the most prosperous parts of the Friesen business.

The *Altona Echo* (now the *Red River Valley Echo*) was started in 1941 and because D. W. Friesen did his travelling during the day he worked on the newspaper in the evenings. Eventually, the Winkler Flyer and the Morris Herald were also purchased but they have now united with other prairie papers.

When D. W. Friesen took the store under his wing in 1907 he had little idea that this little enterprise would someday expand to 85,000 square feet with over 350 employees. Illustrating their present progress are the 20,000 items being sold through Edmonton and Winnipeg stores; not to mention Calgary, Vancouver, Regina, Saskatoon, Kelowna, Toronto and the Maritimes, which all have stores selling Friesen's items.

All in all seven divisions comprise the Friesen's plant: printing, wholesale, stationery, yearbook printing, publishing, packaging and business machines.

Because D. W. Friesen's is people oriented they go out of their way to treat their customers well. If people have come in from another city to see the final proofs on their book, Friesen's lets them stay at a private apartment in the town. Sometimes the proofs are ready to be checked at 3 a.m. so that the apartment proves more accessible than any hotel

and obviously preferred by the authors. Ray Friesen recalls how one photographer came in and personally watched over every photo that was developed for his book to see that the quality of the color was perfect.

Not only does Friesen serve those who are printing a book but also those who have dreamed of seeing their own "bestseller" on the market. Guidebooks on everything from the actual writing to how to advertise and sell a book have been printed for those wishing to write their own cookbooks or history books. Approximately 600 titles are printed every year, with everything from kid's books to hard cover fancy photography books. The quantity of paper used for these books is unbelievable—80 tons of paper are moved into the plant every day and of these, four tons are recycled daily!

In 1982 D. W. Friesen's was honored with a silver medal as the "best managed printing company in North America." In 1984 D. W. Friesen's was honored with a Gold Award as the "best managed printing company in North America." There were over 300 entrants in this category and over 30,000 competitors with directly related businesses. The award included criteria such as financial stability, performance, quality, safety, and staff concerns.

The growth of D. W. Friesen's since

1907 can largely be attributed to the three sons of D.W., who were inspired to continue and build up the original business. Though D.K. and Ted have "officially" retired, they still take part in much that happens in the plant. Ray is now in the leading position as president. (A fourth son, John, lives in Vancouver having pursued a successful career in education.) A new generation is assuming new leadership positions. At the same time Friesens maintains that without its workers the business could not exist and because of this it has generated mutual respect. D. K. Friesen feels that "slow and methodical" progression has given the company its stability. He also adds that he "cannot overemphasize that whatever has been achieved could not have been done without the support of our loyal and dedicated staff of employees."

In fact, Friesens is acclaimed as one of the companies that best takes care of its employees. They began developing a life insurance and pension plan which developed into a complete health, dental, and disability insurance package. Employees are provided with a 96-page booklet, called *Working With Friesens*, which provides full information on their benefits. The word "with" rather than "for" was deliberately chosen in the title. Employees are also allowed to buy shares in the company which thus encourages their sensitivity to quality and the cost of their own work. As one employee puts it, "We appreciate that this was initiated by the Friesens and was not asked for by the employees! You feel like you are really a part of the company and you feel the responsibility and worth as an employee."

This overwhelming sense of respect works both ways — from and to the employer. This was D. W. Friesen's main thrust when he started the company. In a memoir written by one of his sons the following is said of D. W. Friesen's character: "We knew our father as a man of integrity. There was an authenticity and genuineness about him. I would describe it as strength of character. I believe it resulted from his view of life as wholistic, that is mind, body, and soul as a unity." It is recalled that he led a life resembling that of a spartan. For 35 years he worked as a deacon in the Bergthaler church and he led his family with the kind of quiet, determined strength which also helped his business to prosper. The New Testament rule "do unto others" was maintained within his family and business and still holds an important part in their lives today."

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For noon we have a delicious Dim Sum in Kowloon. Part of the afternoon is spent with a professor of economics at the Chinese University in Hong Kong, through whom I establish contacts with economists in China. Maggie, our guide, brings us back to our hotel in the evening, tired but satisfied. We are sure that we have seen at least a million Chinese in our first full day in Hong Kong.

- That same evening we have a joyful reunion with our teacher friends from mainland China, Ed and Norilynn Epp. They have just spent a few weeks backpacking throughout China and are full of interesting stories about their travels and their teaching assignments. We are glad that we can spend another three days with them, sightseeing, eating, and talking. Then they leave for their teaching posts in a remote Chinese city, for another five months of teaching before they return to Winnipeg this summer. We admire their ability to cope with pretty primitive living conditions, and their philosophy of service. Our only fear is that the Chinese will come to believe that all Canadians are as good as they.
- One day of our trip takes us to Shenzhen, a rapidly-growing industrial city in the People's Republic of China, just across the border from Hong Kong. This city has been designated a Special Economic Zone (SEZ), to serve as an example of the modernization that the new leadership in China is promoting. I am especially interested in seeing how this works, and our earnest young guide is able to answer many of our questions. Through a system of special tax concessions and shared ownership, Shenzhen is deliberately attracting foreign capital into its area, building up its industry with foreign funds, capital, and technical expertise. A tremendous amount of building is in progress, highlighted by a new 53 storey trade center topped by a

The senior choir of the **First Mennonite Church** will present the St. John Passion by J. S. Bach with orchestra on Friday, March 28, 1986 at 7 p.m. Soloists will be John Martens, Mark Watson, Shelley Peattie, Betty Hicks-Haberl, James Fast and Victor Engbrecht. Conductor will be Rudy Schellenberg. The performance will be held at the First Mennonite Church, 922 Notre Dame Avenue; a collection will be taken.

revolving restaurant (the revolving restaurant being a newly imported sign of success). We are shown expensive new homes built by farmers, we are told, who are becoming rich by producing for the market. A huge open market in the centre of the city features a wide range of farm products, including dogs, cats, snakes, and very good cuts of beef and ham. The smell is overwhelming. Outside of Shenzhen, still in China, is a large reservoir from which Hong Kong gets most of its drinking water. Talk about dependence on a foreign power! We are also taken to an art gallery which features extremely interesting art by students of Canton University. This modern work appeals to me much more than the older, very stylized Chinese art that we have seen in numerous shops in Hong Kong.

- You can't go to Hong Kong without doing some shopping. There must be at least a thousand camera shops, and almost as many ladies' clothing stores. We buy a Mao cap for myself, and a silk dress for my wife. While she is trying it on, in a shop owned by a man and a woman from Quebec, I suddenly find myself being asked by the other female customers, who keep popping in and out of the changing rooms, whether I like the dresses they are trying on. To my astonishment they accept my judgment — I who have never had any particular taste for clothing! But I do enjoy making snap decisions for others.
- We leave Hong Kong very reluctantly. It is certainly one of the most interesting cities I have ever seen, and we are now more pleased than ever that it will be part of our tour next year.
- The return trip to Winnipeg is broken by a two-day rest in Hawaii, which is not hard to take. What an incredible climate and scenery here! We enjoy several dinner visits with my aunt and uncle from Steinbach, and a visit to the memorial at Pearl Harbour. A sidewalk artist produces the self-portrait used with this column, implying that all the writing is done for the high salaries paid by the Mirror.
- Unfortunately there is still a lot of snow on the ground when we return to Winnipeg. However, this ten-day interlude in the winter of 1986 will be remembered for a long time. We hope you will enjoy equally good fortune in the future, if you haven't already.

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## mirror mix-up

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Now that "the winter of our discontent" is almost over, let's

'SPRING' to life!

This edition we announce the winner of the January puzzle and from among the 53 entries, E. Rempel, of Winnipeg, was selected winner.

Answers to the January puzzle are: solar, fiery, space, cosmic, planet, and comet.

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 April 21, 1986.**

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curriculum, students, residence, public relations, sports, music and staffing.

The **Mediation Services** of MCC (Manitoba) had experienced a 50 per cent increase in September, 1985, in the number of criminal court diversion referrals received over the same period in 1984. Mediation services has a staff equivalent of five people, and also has over 30 trained volunteers who do a significant amount of the mediating. The program has the support of the Winnipeg police and the attorney-general of Manitoba.

Members of the **Steinbach Credit Union** were informed at the annual meeting in January that the Credit Union had experienced its largest growth over last year, as assets rose by nearly 17 per cent to over \$220 million. A new building has just been opened, and major computer purchases have been made.

The annual benefit dinner for the **Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School** will be held Friday, March 21, 1986 at 6:30 p.m. at the Portage Avenue Mennonite Brethren Church, 1420 Portage Avenue. Tickets are \$12 per person, available at the school (885-1032).

German became the language of communication as 20 young adults entered the grounds of Camp Koinonia for a retreat on January 3-5, 1986. The weekend was for young adults, by young adults, was in German, and was fun! The retreat focused on the stereotypes and roles of males and females in our society under the theme of Frau and Man: Stereotype oder Naturfaktum? The weekend included panel discussions, role playing, and films, as well as other indoor and outdoor activities such as showshoeing, cross-country skiing, skating, broomball, table games, and German folk songs and games. **German Fun Weekend** was co-sponsored by the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and Manitoba Parents for German Education.

Not long ago, women were excluded, for the most part, from the higher levels of decision-making in Mennonite institutions. "The last 10 to 15 years have seen real ferment," observes **Emily Will**, Mennonite Central Committee women's concern coordinator, "as men and women have recaptured the vision of partnership encapsulated in Galatians 3:28 and have examined the underlying thoughts and attitudes denying women access to decision-making roles." But what changes has this ferment brought? Are more Mennonite women seated at the top levels in Mennonite institutions

today? Will examines these two questions in the most recent issue of *Report*, the bimonthly publication of the MCC Committee on Women's Concerns. For a copy Women and Decision-Making in Mennonite Institutions, contact Emily Will, MCC, Box M, Akron, PA 17501, or Peggy Regehr, MCC Canada, 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C8.

The *Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre* is once again participating in the Manitoba Multicultural Festival by presenting Oscar Wilde's comedy *Lady Windermere's Fan* in the Playhouse Theatre on March 21 and 22 at 8:05 p.m. This production will be directed by Alfred Wiebe, who directed the major productions of *The Emigrants* and *The Imaginary Invalid*. The cast includes Kathy Krueger as Lady Windermere, Gerhard Wiebe as Lord Windermere, Walter Kampen as Lord Darlington and Selma Enns as the Duchess of Berwick. Oscar Wilde had a natural talent for stagecraft and theatrical effects, and most importantly, a true gift for farce. *Lady Windermere's Fan* is one of his most distinctive and engaging creations, characterized by an adroitly contrived plot and remarkably witty dialogue reminiscent of the 17th-century comedy of manners and is a delight to any audience. Tickets are available at all Crosstown Credit Union locations as well as from Heinz Janzen, telephone: 783-5912.

The **Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society** held its annual meeting at CMBC, Winnipeg, Saturday, January 18,

with about 50 members in attendance. The morning session was reserved for various business matters and the election of directors. **Adolf Ens** was elected as President for 1986 and **Delbert Plett** as chairman. The membership passed a resolution thanking Eugene Derksen of Steinbach for his gracious patronage of the society. The Board also adopted the

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Oberschulz Jacob Peters research project and appointed John Dyck of Winnipeg to do the preliminary work. The afternoon portion of the meeting was favoured with the presentation of four research papers, namely; "The Kleefeld kleine Gemeinde" by Henry Fast; "Manitoba/Oregon Migration — 1890" by John Dyck; "Rudnerweide/EMMC History Project" by Henry Dueck; and "District Schetches of the R.M. of Rhineland" by J. C. Fehr. Plans for 1986 include a radio drama, directed by Wilmer Penner, lecture and workshop programs in genealogy and local his-

tory, and publication of volume two of the Arnold Dyck series.

A Christian children's home in Chad, whose resources have been stretched to the limit by Africa's drought crisis, will be the beneficiary of \$4,285 (U.S.) from last year's **Mennonite World Conference offering** in Strasbourg, France, announced *Mennonitische Tschad Hilfe* (MTH — Mennonite Chad Relief Committee), following a November 14 meeting in Neuwied. European Mennonite workers have long been a part of the staff of the children's home at Abeche, run by the Sudan United Mission,

**Elisabeth Elliot**, missionary and writer, will be the featured speaker at the women's conference of the Mennonite Brethren Church of Manitoba, at the Portage Avenue Mennonite Brethren Church, from 10 a.m., Saturday, April 19. For information call the church at 774 4414.

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## **A national view of Mennonite history**

Since the major project of the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada is nearing completion, the society's annual meeting, held at the Mennonite Brethren Bible College, January 4, was a time of reassessment.

Eighteen years ago, the only intent of the national society was to join the two provincial, Ontario and Manitoba, historical societies into the common task of supporting Frank H. Epp in his project to write the history of Mennonites in Canada. But it soon became apparent that one volume wouldn't be enough. In 1975 a second volume beginning with the period after 1920 was begun and in 1982 Volume II was published and a third volume beginning with 1940 was begun. It was hoped that Volume III of *Mennonites in Canada* might be ready to coincide with the commemoration of the Canadian Mennonite Bicentennial in July of this year. Unfortunately, author Frank H. Epp, was seriously ill since August and was not able to work on the project. He died in January. His research associate and daughter, Marlene Epp, is continuing the work.

But since Volume III completion is in sight the question at the annual meeting was, does the national Mennonite society have a future role to play.

One consideration is that even though the provincial organizations have been successful in initiating and completing local research projects, they often have difficulty funding the projects. On the other hand the national organization has been more successful with soliciting funds but more limited in the number of projects it has taken on. Using a paper of future proposals prepared by Frank Epp as a basis, the society formed a task force to look into new reasons for existence.

A function of the historical society has been to be the liaison between the four provincial societies and archivists. The British Columbia Historical Society, represented by G. I. Peters at the annual meeting reported that they now have 900 artifacts and are negotiating with Fraser Valley municipalities for land to start building a place to house them.

Another provincial development has been the separation of the Saskatchewan-Alberta Society. Henry Goerzen of Carstairs, will be forming a new Albertan chapter in spring. Goerzen says, "I'm finding that there is an interest in Alberta. Some history books have been written, but they haven't been in any way comprehensive."

The archives reported an overwhelming response to the article written by Sam Steiner published in Mennonite papers, requesting letters from Russia to be donated to various archives. To date they estimate receiving 5,000 letters. The three archives, Conrad Grebel College Archives, Mennonite Heritage Centre Archives and the Centre of Mennonite Brethren Studies have produced an entertaining slide show "It's News to Me."

Concern was expressed that the archival collections are becoming frag-

mented. With Alberta starting their collection, Evangelical Mennonite Conference having theirs and the possibility of the University of Winnipeg beginning one in conjunction with the recently established Mennonite Studies Centre, the collection of Mennonite original material will be spread across the country making it difficult for researchers.

*By Wilma Derksen, western office,  
Mennonite Reporter.*

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## review

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# The Russian Holocaust seen in the diary of a Mennonite woman

A review by Al Reimer

*Diary of Anna Baerg: 1916–1924, translated and edited by Gerald Peters (CMBC Publications, Winnipeg, 1985), 158 pp.*

The spate of diaries, journals and personal memoirs written by survivors of the Mennonite holocaust during the Revolution and published in recent years shows no sign of abating. The tragic story of the Russian Mennonites holds an almost sacred fascination not only for the survivors but for those of us Mennonites who can only relive the events vicariously. At a safe remove in history we read the eye-witness accounts that make us shudder with horror, swell with outrage over the atrocities committed against our own, dissolve with pity and compassion for the hapless victims who were ground in a crucible of violence and suffering beyond their wildest imaginings.

As an inveterate reader of these personal accounts, I still find them moving beyond words, often noble and inspiring, always poignant as I contemplate the meaning of that lost world. Most of them were written by men — men full of righteous indignation, bitterness and bewilderment. They were usually written in a simple, down-to-earth style and with the parochial outlook of people close to the land who had neither the time nor the insight to place their personal experience in a broader perspective or to analyze its human significance.

*The Diary of Anna Baerg* stands out from most of the other accounts like a shining beacon. Not only was this diary kept by a female (an inexperienced girl at first), but by a young woman whose naiveté and inexperience were offset by a naturally discerning mind, a delicacy

of feeling and by a genuine flair for writing — that is, for finding a meaningful expression and form for the daily experiences upon which she drew.

Anna Baerg began her diary in 1916, in the middle of the Great War, when she was a shy, introverted girl of nineteen. She had a modest hope for her diary. "A tiny mirror is what it should be, reflecting a little of the life that passes by." Little did she know that her mirror would soon become clouded and at times come perilously close to being shattered by the murderous upheaval that would soon rock her little world in the Molochnaya.

She had a natural facility with words and soon became known locally for her little German poems. And in her diary she displays a poet's sensitivity to the physical world around her — to the serene beauty and peacefulness of the estate Apanlee where her father was an overseer. She is attuned to the changing seasons, to the changing kaleidoscope of the land. She has a prim sense of station: she knows her family are servants, and the owners of the estate, the Dicks, masters. In 1918 she records that for the first time in twelve years Mr. and Mrs. Dick came to visit them and had coffee with them. A telling admission of the rigid class system practised by the Mennonites of old Russia.

Anna Baerg comes to maturity during the turbulence of the Revolution. She is appalled by what is happening, but her eye and mind remain clear and calm as she records the increasing insanity that threatens her once-safe little world. In the spring of 1919 the Baergs are forced to flee Apanlee and move to the village of Alexanderkrone nearby. Things get worse. Father Baerg dies of typhoid and the wealthy Dicks are gruesomely murdered on their estate. Mother Baerg is left almost destitute with eight children, some still infants.

Anna finds an island of hope and purpose in her beloved Concordia Choir. Neither violence, destruction nor famine can dampen her enthusiasm for the choir and the warm fellowship she finds there. She also goes back to school and secretly dreams of becoming a teacher.

And then she falls in love with a young teacher who is boarding with the Baergs. How sad to realize that this sensitive, loving young woman cannot look forward to a normal consummation of her love in marriage and a family of her own. Her health won't allow it; she is in fact crippled with a spinal condition. Bravely, she tried to rationalize her love and yearning into a pure, platonic friendship with her Mr. Harder. Only to her uncondemning diary does she confess the awful truth of her heart that she is powerless to change: "I am happy to see Harder again; but along with this happiness I feel a quivering fear. It's the secret intimacy that's lurking inside. I cannot escape the thought that there is something unseemly, even dangerous about it, something which does not belong to a friendship."

She is equally honest with herself about other matters too, although she is quick to confess her confusion about some things. She can't bring herself to condemn the *Selbstschutz*, but she is disturbed by the Mennonite call to arms. "Are we not pacifists? Is not pacifism the whole idea behind Christianity?" With her sharp, analytical mind she sees the faults and hypocrisy in others, then accuses herself of being too critical and judgmental.

Anna also proves to be a survivor who refuses to despair and who accepts the conditions of life even at their worst. This published diary ends in Canada in 1924, at the point where Anna and her family have just arrived and are on the brink of a new life. She is as plucky and decisive as ever. "The English language

sounds so harsh and foreign. I don't think I will ever learn to like it. Still it's time for bed . . . And who knows what tomorrow will bring."

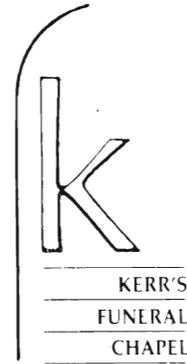
Gerald Peters has done a creditable job of translating and editing down this fascinating account from a much longer diary. His introductory historical sections are concise and reasonably accurate, occasionally a trifle too general, even misleading. I would also have preferred more glosses of place names, local references, etc. I also appreciated the Epilogue, which tells us what happened to individual members of the Baerg family in Canada.

Reading this book brought back to mind a summer during World War II when my father arranged for me to work on the Baerg farm near Dominion City in order to get me out of a town atmosphere and hopefully have me learn some useful skills on the farm. Anna Baerg was then a middle-aged lady, alert and hard-working, who listened carefully to the war news on the radio upstairs and then recapitulated the events at the breakfast or dinner table. I never guessed then that this crippled but active and somewhat bossy "old maid" had been keeping a diary whose vivid descriptions, joy in life and insights would someday make exciting reading for many others, including a rebellious teenager who nursed his own sensitive private feelings and dreamed of someday becoming a writer. And writing a novel about Anna Baerg's own world. How much he could have learned from her had he known. mm

## CHRISTIAN LEADERS TALK

The chance for dialogue with leaders of other **major Christian denominations**, drew some 35 people, including Mennonite World Conference Executive Secretary Paul Kraybill, to Windsor Castle in England in November for three days of meetings. Hosted this year by the Anglicans, the annual Secretaries of Christian World Communions sessions bring together representatives from such bodies as the Baptist World Alliance, World Alliance of Reformed Churches, World Evangelical Fellowship, Lutheran World Federation and others. "We want to be in touch with other denominations, compare notes and see what is happening," commented Kraybill, who noted that the sessions provide "a chance to work ecumenically without being part of the so-called 'Ecumenical Movement.'" Meetings took place in St. George's Chapel on the Windsor Castle grounds, and included a reception hosted by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Participants all offered brief reports on their own denominations, with Kraybill speaking for the Mennonites. Each year organizers choose a special topic for discussion, with the focus this time on legal issues relating to religious freedom.

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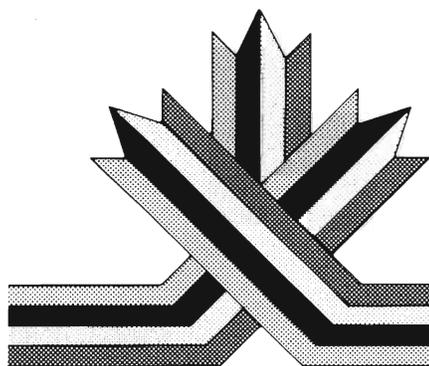
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# Mennoniten und ein Abschnitt ihrer Geschichte

von Harry Loewen

Als Mennoniten sind wir oft sehr empfindlich, wenn wir, wenn unsere Tradition und Geschichte kritisiert werden, besonders wenn diese Kritik von aussen her kommt. Doch ist Kritik nicht notwendigerweise negative und zerstörend. Sie kann und sollte zu Geschichtsbesinnung führen und zu bestimmten Entschlüssen veranlassen, Fehler und Ausschreitungen der Vergangenheit nicht wieder zu begehen.

Vor einem Jahr als ich in Deutschland war fiel mir ein Buch in die Augen, das besonders deutschen Christen viel zu sagen hat. *Und Wenn die Welt voll Teufel Wär: Luthers Glaube und seine Erben* (Hamburg: Rowohlt Verlag, 1982) von Barbara Beuys, einer jungen Historikerin aus Hamburg, verfasst, ist ein wichtiges Buch. Frau Beuys behandelt hier Martin Luthers Glaube und zeigt dann wie des Reformators geistliches Erbgut durch die Jahrhunderte von den evangelischen Kirchen in Europa verstanden und gelebt wurde.

Nach diesem Buch wurden die Kirchen besonders in der dreissiger Jahren und während des zweiten Weltkrieges auf die Probe gestellt. Die Kirchen in Norwegen und Dänemark bestanden zum Teil diese Probe. In ihrem Widerstand gegen Hitler und in ihrem Versuch den Juden zu helfen, beriefen sich die Norweger auf Luther: ‚Wenn die weltlichen Behörden in das geistliche Regiment eingreifen wollen und das Gewissen gefangennehmen, wo Gott allein sitzen und regieren will, dann soll man ihnen nicht gehorchen‘ (Beuys, S. 562). Dietrich Bonhoeffer, ein evangelischer Geistlicher, musste mit seinem Leben büssen, weil er den Nazis widerstand.

Von bedeutenden Ausnahmen abgesehen, versagten die Kirchen in Deutschland, als es darauf ankam, nach christlichen Prinzipien zu handeln. Als die Juden verfolgt wurden und der Rassenwahn überhand nahm, kam es nur zu einzelnen Protesten gegen Hitlers Machthaber. ‚Die neuen braunen Herren schienen auch in der evangelischen Kirche auf der ganzen Linie gesiegt zu haben. Ohne spürbaren Widerstand waren in wenigen Monaten die traditionellen Strukturen der Kirche zerschlagen worden. NS-treue Deutsche

Christen sassen an den Schalthebeln der Kirchlichen Macht‘ (Beuys, S. 532).

Wie verhielten sich die Mennoniten im neuen Deutschland? Diether Götz Lichdi, in seinem Buch *Mennoniten im Dritten Reich* (Weierhof/Pfalz: Mennonitischer Geschichtsverein, 1977), hat diese Frage zum Teil dokumentarisch und deutend beantwortet. Frau Barbara Beuys hat das Folgende, ohne jeglichen Vorwurf, über die Mennoniten in Danzig und Hamburg zu sagen:

‚Nicht nur die lutherischen Kirchen waren überzeugt, eine neue, gute Zeit sei angebrochen. Selbst jene christlichen Aussenseiter, die jeder staatlichen Macht von ihrem Ursprung her feindlich gegenüberstanden, die nach dem Glauben ihrer Väter und Mütter Eid und Kriegsdienst verweigerten, begrüßten die braunen Machthaber mit einem Vertrauensvorschuss, opferten ihnen geheiligte Prinzipien und telegrafierten Hitler im September 1933: «Die heute zu Tiegenghagen im Freistaate Danzig tagende Konferenz der Ost- und Westpreussischen Mennoniten empfindet mit tiefer Dankbarkeit die gewaltige Erhebung, die Gott durch Ihre Tatkraft unserm Volk geschenkt hat, und gelobt auch ihrerseits freudige Mitarbeit am Aufbau unseres Vaterlandes aus den Kräften des Evangeliums heraus, getreu dem Wahlspruch unserer Väter: Einen andern Grund kann niemand legen ausser dem, der gelegt ist, welcher ist Jesus Christus.» Unsere Väter: das ist eine lange Kette von Wiedertäufern, gemartert, gefoltert, getötet, weil sie dem Anspruch des Staates widerstanden. Weil sie fern von allem weltlichen Getriebe als kleine auserwählte Schar ihrem Gott diesen wollten. 1933 sahen die zeitgenössischen Wiedertäufer, die Mennoniten — Erben des Menno Simons —, wie ihre evangelischen und pietistischen Glaubensgenossen im «staatsvernichtenden gottlosen Kommunismus» das Böse schlechthin. So wurde ihnen der Nationalsozialismus ein selbstverständlicher Bundesgenosse — den sie schliesslich über den Wahlspruch ihrer Väter stellten.

‚In Hamburg veranstalteten die Mennoniten eine musikalische Feierstunde für die SA. In anderen Orten wurden Gottesdienste zur feierlichen Eröffnung

des neuen Reichstages, dem Tag von Potsdam, gehalten. Auf der Danziger Konferenz plädierte der Landrat Andres-Tiegenhof, Mennonit, Parteigenosse und später stellvertretender Gauleiter, dafür, den wichtigsten Grundsatz der Väter aufzugeben: «In der Frage der Wehrlosigkeit, wie sie noch von einem Teil der Mitglieder vertreten wird, wird man bei den Nationalsozialisten nicht mehr auf Verständnis rechnen können.» Dieser Mennonit ging noch weiter: «Unsere mennonitische Jugend selbst, die von der nationalsozialistischen Bewegung tiefinnerlich ergriffen ist, hat dafür heute kein Verständnis mehr. Sie hat sich in grosser Zahl unseren nationalen Verbänden angeschlossen und trägt mit Stolz das braune Kleid als Symbol ihrer Verbundenheit mit der Scholle. Für diese heimische Scholle mit Gut und Blut einzustehen und sie auch gegebenenfalls mit der Waffe zu verteidigen, ist ihr eine selbstverständliche Ehrenpflicht.» Auch die Eidesverweigerung gab man auf. Als ihnen das Kriegsministerium zubilligte, beim Fahneid statt «Ich schwöre» zu sagen «Ich gelobe», gingen die Mennoniten freudig auf diesen faulen Kompromiss ein. Als Hitlers Soldaten Europa eroberten, gab es in den «Mennonitischen Blättern» jubelnde Berichterstattung. Der Täufer spaltete sich in eine öffentliche Person, die dem NS-Staat ohne Abstriche diene, und in ein frommes privates Wesen, das seinem Gott im stillen Kämmerlein gehorsam war.‘ (Beuys, S. 528–529)

Wie sich kanadische Mennoniten in der dreissiger Jahren Deutschland gegenüber verhielten, ist zur Genüge dokumentarisch belegt worden. Ich verweise den Leser auf die folgenden Studien. Frank H. Epp, „An Analysis of Germanism and National Socialism in the Immigrant Newspaper of a Canadian Minority Group, the Mennonites, in the 1930s“ (Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Minnesota, 1965); Lita-Rose Betcherman, *The Swastika and the Maple Leaf: Fascist Movements in Canada in the Thirties* (Toronto/Montreal/Winnipeg/Vancouver; Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1975); Jonathan Wagner, *Brothers Beyond the Sea: National Socialism in Canada* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1981). Letzteres Buch ist von George K. Epp im *Mennonite Mirror* (Okt. 1982, S. 22–23) rezensiert worden.

Auch als Mennoniten müssen wir uns immer wieder sagen lassen: Niemand kann zwei Herren dienen . . . und Wir müssen Gott mehr gehorchen als den Menschen! mm

# Eashta Pries

fonn Jack Thiessen

Daut fonk aul sea scheen enn aulewäje no Fieaowent too ritje, aus'et mett eemol heet: "Komt kjitje, oba komt blooss aula fuats kjitje; lot aules stone enn lidje, enn komt oppe Städ blooss schwind kjitje!", enn wie läde fonn aule Siede Medde August omm klock sass tseowents nu looss, enn donn kjiticht wie, enn donn kjiticht wie noch dolla enn donn staund wie. Eena reet daut Mul op, de aundrea schobbd sijch hiea enn doa, de dredda läd dän Kopp oppe Sied enn säd, "Wäa haud daut jedocht?", enn Foda säd, "Uck nich bäta aus enn Russlaund," enn Mutta säd, "Enn dee schäme sitj nijch eemol, soo medden emm halijchten Dach . . ." Na, waut wea? Jo, dee Kjeaj weare no Hus jekome, enn daut wea soo grulijch heet enn dreajch (jo, jie ha 'et aul jerode, daut wea aune sassendartijch), daut see sijch unjre Eatje hanläde. Enn an dretjcht de Maltj soo sea, daut see wada oppstunde enn feeabeensch enn breetbeensch doa stunde. Bie Bossy dreppeld de Maltj ute Strijcha enn bie de Rootbunte enn Langbeen kaum de Maltj soo's een Spannjewäw fien rutjestrilt, gauns dentjes rutjetocke.

Enn dee Maltjdretjarie haude onse Foatjel woll uck spets jetjraje, enn see stunde nu unjre Kjeaj enn lutschte enn schmatste Maltj, daut de Schum fluach.

Enn wie haude ons noch nijch saut jestaunt enn ütjewundat, aus mett eemol fonne aundre Sied noch een jrätret Wunda ennschluach. Waut wea passead? Jo, ons Noba Saubotta Koop haud sijch eene niee Koa jekoft, enn nu kauma fonn hinjre Sommatjätj äwrem hulpajen Wajch aunjestottat. Enn donn dretjcht hee oppet Bloshuarn daudet "Ah Uh, Ah Uh," säd, enn donn sprunk hee ute Koa, sad sienen schwoaten Hoot trajcht, jintj en Schräd fea tridj, stuak de Henj tweschne Droagbenja fonn siene Owerauls enn donn äwre Brost, dreid sijch omm enn betjijticht fonn doa ons Thiesses enn uck siene niee Koa! Enn weppt opp en dol opp siene schwoate School!

Foda wea woll daut easchte Mol enn Kanada feblefft enn nu säd hee, "Kjiticht junt mol schmock dän Onkel aun, Kjinja, dauts een Kulak!" Enn miene Mutta, daut heet onse Mutta? See stund doa enn kjitjt enn kjitjt enn äre Uage sage mett eemol soo's een Photoalbum, enn etj kunn doabenne Bilda ut Russlaund enn eene groote oppjeriemde Wirtschaufft enn een jeräjeldet Läwe seene, jo . . . Enn weet jie waut etj noch bie Mutta enne Uage sach? (oba daut kunn etj never nijch opp ludes saje, wiels see dann "Domms," jesajcht haud enn wea een bät kurrich jeworde) oba etj laus doa eenen Sauts fonn eene Sproak enn diss Sauts säd, "Eajentlijch jehea etj enn dee Koa nenn!" . . . oba waut säd seeopp ludes? See säd, "Na, na Oomtje Koop, fonn nu aun mott wie je woll meist een bät Elias too an saje, nijch?" Oba Oomtje Koop stund doa enn freid sijch, säd nuscht enn freid sijch äwa ons enn siene Koa omtsacht enn toojlitj.

Enn aus wie ons endlijch saut jetjijt haude, säd Oomtje Koop, "Etj jab junt noch waut mettjebrocht, kjitjt!" enn donn hold hee twee jewaultje Arbuse fonn unjre Datj oppe hinjaschte Sett fäa, enn uck noch drie jäle Meloone. Wie kunne fe luta Staune kjeen Woat rutbrinje, easchtens wiels wie noch niemols soone groote Berstandeplästasch jeseene haude enn tweedens, wiels ons de Kjwiell emm Mul soo sea tooprannd, daut wie goanijch räde kunne. "Wäa haud daut jedocht?" säd Foda. Enn de Froag stalld hee fea bett fiefmol dän Dach, oba nu bleef se nijch one Auntwuat enn de Auntwuat wea, "Kjeena haud daut jedocht," wiels, jo wiels wie niemols nich Saubotta Koope ären Goade jeseene haude; wie foare nijch no an spetseare. . . . Jo, Koope weare je uck opp ne Oat Menniste, wiels see fein Plautdietsch räde, oba oppne Oat weare see uck nijch menisch, wiels see aum Sinnowend dän gaunsen Dach äwa recess haude, enn wie aum Sinn Dach aules aufschitste enn

Oomtje Koop dann sienen Kjätel rätre leet. Enn soo wort daut ut de Spetseararie nuscht . . . Enn soo wisst wie blooss, daut Koope fäl saundjen Boddem enn eenen Äwaransborrem haude, aulso mea Wota aus de Nobasch, enn sest wist wie weiniich fonn an ooda nuscht. Oba een bätje wundre must etj mie, enn daut wea wiels de leewe Gott bie de Saubotta soone groote Arbuse wause leet; daut kaum mie nijch gauns fair fäa.

Oba dauts noch lang nijch aules, waut'et too fetale gauf, wiels? Jo, wiels Foda leet ons de Arbuse goanijch fuats oppäte, enn doabie haud wie ons doch aul soo sea, oba soo sea opp dee jewaultje Arbuse jespetst. Enn woaromm leet hee ons nijch aun daut Obraumtje doabenne mett'e Läpeltjes naun? Jo, doawäajen wiels hee dän Kopp folla secret plans haud, soo's . . . ?

Wie muste de Arbuse enn Meloone opp Stroo ennet Woagtje laje enn nu jintj'ett däm lestjala opptoo. Enn doa emm Schaute emm Soagespoon wea les enn doa fekleiwt wie dee groota Plästasch, wiels? Jo, wiels aum nächsten Sinnowend wea groote Üstalinj (de Ellre nannde daut 'Bezoa') enn Jrienthol. . . .

Dee nächsta Sinnowend wea aul jekome enn nu jintj'et mett Traila enn Stroo enn Datje enn Arbuse enn Meloone doabowe no Jrienthol opptoo.

Ujjejujejujeju! wautet doa aules gauf. De Lied haude Heenaklotjes dobbeld jestald enn dee mett graue enn mett griewe Datje bedatjcht enn mett witte Loakes bespreed enn doabowe stunde: Schmaund, enn Gloms, enn Eia, enn Pei, enn Kuckeruzz-Oare enn prautsje, roode Boklezhane mett een poa kolde Wotadrepptjes doabowe, enn ditje Tsipple, enn Jalmäare mett Krut. Enn donn gaufet enjemoakde Jläsa bie de Duts mett koasche Kjoasche enn frintelje Kjrebauppeltjes enn Suregurtje waut doa enne Jläsa noch aulatoop klijene parties haude, soo dijcht enn maklijch lage se doa.

Daut wea kjeen siekreet, daut Onkel

Wellm soo mea aule first enn second priese äwre Joare oppkliene deed. Enn hee wea uck fondoag soo iewrijch bie de Sach, daut eena am daut lenjdhan aansach, daut he uck fondoag sowaut fäahaud. He schibbeld soo pienijch romm, wist fondoag soo's uck aul emma kratjt wauta wull, gauf een bät Rot, enn siene Feetjes säde biem schibble emma, "no surprises, no surprises, easchta pries, easchta pries."

Well, wie läde nu uck "onse" Arbuse enn Meloone nu soo een bätje no hinje han. Wie haude de Mestkoa blank jeschieet enn doa schmock Hei enn Aulfaulfa mett Blejsels nennjelajcht enn doa lach nu de jratste Arbus schmock oppem Ridje mett däm ditjen Buck no bowe, enn de aundre Arbus tsield fonn hinje schmock jrall no de spectators. Krajcht ea de judges febie kaume — enn

weens hundad Lied aul jesajcht haude, "Dusend Moss, soon'e Arbuse, woo deist Du daut blooss, Thiesse?" enn Foda mau soo bieaun, meend hee haud "daut Sotijch noch ut Elloag mett-jebrocht" — donn säd Foda, "Du kaust bätä englisch aus etj; räd Du mau mett dee Onkels!" Enn donn spunjd Foda dee hinjaschte Arbus aun, enn schneet eene ditje Schnäd enn fea Deel enn läd dee Stetja schmock opp eene Schiew nopp, enn wajch wear'a.

Well, nu kaume uck aul de judges aun; enn waut ferre judges! — daut wea je Sinnwend enn see weare oba sinn-doagsch aunjetrocke enn dee wull nu weete, wua eena blooss soone Arbuse häatreajch enne Prairie. "From the Sab-bathers across the crick," säd etj. "No false modesty, me boy, we know better," säd een englische Onkel enn donn

nauma twee Stetja, enn sien Poatna, dee mett däm gonestock, naum de aundre twee. Donn schmatjchte see dee tooenj enn spaide "First Prize" oppe ditjbuckje enn "Second Prize" opp de aunjeschnädne, enn noch mol dree priese fe de jäle Meloone. Enn etj saut doa enn staund, wautet emm Läwe doch nijch aules gauf!

No twee Stund aus de Mensche sijch langsomm fetrocke enn daut aulatoop wietleftja word, kaum meteentst uck Foda tridj enn hee wees mie hinjre Klotjes alf Dola, woone "hee jewonne" haud. Alf Dola opp eenem Klompe! Soo waut haud etj mett miene sass Joa noch never nijch ferhää jeseene. Donn säd Foda, "Wacht mau en bätje," enn donn jintj'a enn hold mie miene easchten Ejs-criem fe fief cent, enn dän durf etj gauns auleen oppäte!

## Gedichte von Jakob Friesen

Mit einem Leserbrief hat uns Jakob Friesen (Clearbrook, B.C.) eine Anzahl Gedichte zugeschickt, wovon wir hier ein paar Beispiele geben.

### Der Andere, Nebenan

Wer ist der Andere, nebenan?  
Wo kommt er her, wo geht er hin?  
Ob mir das jemand sagen kann,  
Weiss niemand etwas über ihn?

Was will er wohl, was macht er hier?  
Ob es an etwas ihm gebricht?  
Man spricht so viel, als wolle er  
Uns bringen aus dem Gleichgewicht.

Er ist ein Fremdling, wie es scheint,  
Hat keinen, dem er sich vertraut.  
Wer ist bereit zu sein ihm Freund,  
Ein Halt ihm sein, wenn er in Not?

Wer ist der Andere, nebenan?  
Erkenn ich in ihm Gottes Sohn?  
Ist er vielleicht ein Wandersmann,  
Ist er vielleicht sogar mein Sohn?

Mein Nächster ist wohl überall;  
Er ist der Andere, den ich meine,  
Das Schaf, das in den Brunnen fiel,  
Der Irrende in der Gemeinde.

Der Andere scheint oft weltweit —  
Und manchmal trennt uns nur ein Zaun.  
Bin ich zu helfen da bereit,  
Nicht fragen wo und wie und wann?

Der Andere, nun, das bin auch ich,  
Grad so, wie mich mein Nächster sieht.  
Möcht, dass sich jemand müht um mich,  
Denn trostlos ist die Einsamkeit.

### Jantsied

Daut sennt aundre Mensche, mett dee hab wie soo nuscht too doone,  
Dee läwe aundasch enn doone aundatweajents woane.  
Daut sennt opp kjeenen Faul waut fonn onse Lied,  
Donn etj head säje, daut dee kaume fonn "jantsied."

Jantsiedsche, dee feare sitj nijch opp soo aus wie daut doone,  
Dee laje Jewijcht opp Sache, woone wie nijch feschoane.  
Dee kaume loata, senn moderna jeworde,  
Enn nane ons ooltmoodsch, mett felunste Koddre.

Waut eenem dann noch besondasch de Gaul kjisat enn oppwoamt,  
Es, daut dee ons "jantsiedsch" nanne, woo wie noch "ditsiedsch" sennt.  
Dän ess eefach nuscht jescheidet enntodietsche;  
Fepriejle sull maun dän enn noch goot derjchpitsche!

Wann maun nijch mea weet, wää too ditsied ooda jantsied jeheat,  
Woo well maun dann noch unjascheede, mett wäm maun jroats fetjeat?  
Waut saul daut woatje "jantsied" dann uck noch bediede,  
Wann maun "jantsied" enn "ditsied" nijch kaun unjascheede?

Feleijcht sull daut Wuatje "jantsied" uck gauns waut aundred meene:  
Wann ons Läwe hea to enj enn wie emm Himmel nennkoame.  
Daut wudd daut rejchtje "jantsied" fe ons bediede,  
Wua feschwinje wudde aule unjaschiede.

Doa senn wie aula jlity, wan wie hia Gott fonn Hoate deende,  
Doa kjenn wie ons enne Uage kjitje aus eene Jemaende,  
Doa senn wie aula, Brooda enn Sesta jemeent,  
Donn waut wie doa sennt, hab wie aula nijch fedeent.

So ess daut "jantsied" doch noch en goodet enn weatfollet Wuat,  
Enn soo aus wie ditsiedsch jeläwd, bestemmt, auf daut ess ons Oat.  
Dromm well wie ons aula breedalijch fedroage,  
Enn dän Wajch noam Himmel aula toop nu woage!





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