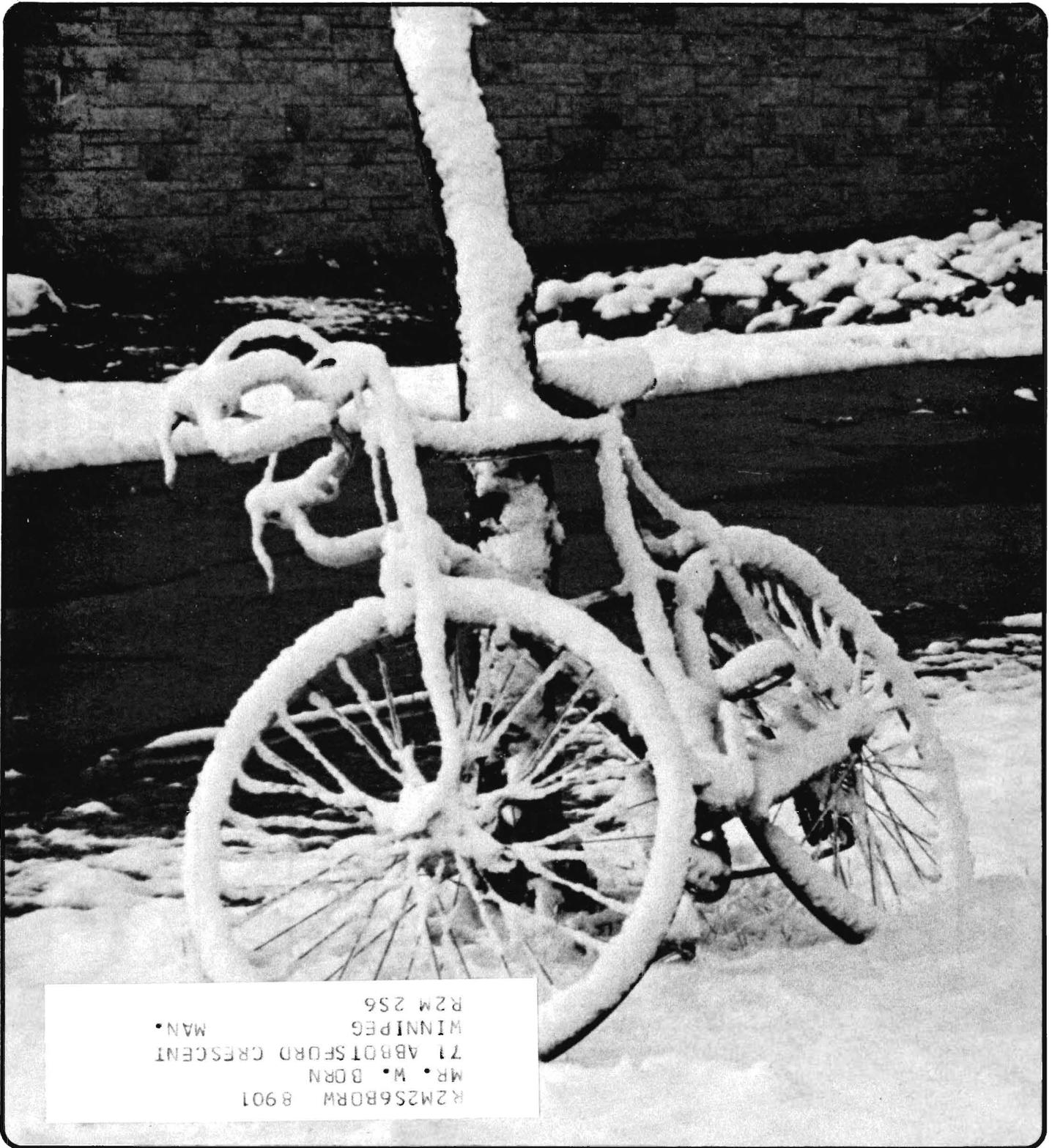


Mennonite Mirror

volume 16/number 7/march 1987



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ForeWord

In a time when children are bused to their classes, and high school students attend huge "comprehensive" schools, it is difficult to imagine schools in our province that lacked all but the most basic amenities. Indeed, even some basic amenities such as desks were in short supply in some schools in the 1930s, according to Victor Peters in Part One of a personal account of his beginnings as a teacher in this province. The scenes from the movie adaptation of W. O. Mitchell's *Please Don't Shoot the Teacher* are rather similar to the things Peters encountered as a fresh graduate from the Normal School.

Good literature survives not only because it is well-written, but because it describes or says something about the human experience that is universal, regardless of the language or the culture of its setting. Arnold Dyck's *Koop en Bua* stories are an example of literature that lives on. The second volume of the collected works of Arnold Dyck has just been published and is reviewed in this edition by Gerhard Ens. He says that 40 years after their first appearance, the Dyck stories have lost none of their charm.

In a short little essay, Reuben Epp reminds those who propose a "new" Low German orthography that it's not necessary to do again what has been done and argues that we should spend more time reading what's available than debating the way it should be written.

Many people dream of a "foreign assignment" with a relatively rich international organization, but rather few are fortunate enough to get one. Grant Barkman, a computer specialist, is spending a year with the Food and Agricultural Organization in Rome, where he learned there is much more to the country than one imagines. It is only when you live in one place on a day-to-day basis that you begin to notice and appreciate the subtleties of culture, he writes in this issue.

In his *Observed Along the Way*, Rog Vogt notes among other things that those Manitobans who did not "escape" the winter by going to warmer climates enjoyed an usually warm winter. He comments "occasionally, the poor do get rewarded" for staying home.

Again in this issue the centre pages are devoted to poetry, this time by Walfied Jansen and Tim Wiebe.

The political process is something that interests us all and fascinates a few enough to get involved. Carl Neustadter, currently a student at the University of Manitoba, joined the Liberal youth group on campus "out of curiosity" and ended up last year being one of Manitoba's delegates to the party's national convention. The experience opened his eyes to the party process as nothing else could have done.

Our German section this month includes a Low German piece by Jack Thiessen, and a *Zur Diskussion* item by Victor Doerksen.

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Lister east, 1938.



Trustee tells teacher he won't need more desks because attendance will never equal the enrollment

FRONTIER TEACHING IN MANITOBA: PART ONE

by Victor Peters

My first school had for its post office Barkfield. You will not find this place on most maps of Manitoba. It was the home of Wellm Priess. Newcomers sometimes went to his neighbour and brother, Jacob Priess, but he was *Fäasinja* Priess. *Postmeista* Priess was Wellm Priess. Priess received the mail by courier at noon every Wednesday. In those days many of the better-situated Canadian Mennonites not only read the *Steinbach Post* but also *Der Nordwesten* for its political content. Priess would not distribute the mail until he had read the more important news in the *Nordwesten*, while the people patiently sat around on the floor until he was finished. By the time I arrived, that is, after 4 o'clock, he had disposed of the mail and was ready to give his views on the world, running the full gamut from Hitler and Stalin to Mackenzie King.

I came on the scene as a teacher when most of our people had accepted that English was to be the language of instruction in school. Most people, but not all. Some of them still counselled their children, "*Jehorjcht däm Leara, oba jleeft am nuscht.*" Both of my first two schools were on the fringe of the

(Dr. Peters' amusing recollections of his early teaching career in Manitoba country schools in the 1930s were delivered as an enthusiastically received after-dinner speech at the annual meeting of the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society earlier this year. The second half of the address will appear in our April issue.)

East Reserve, outside the municipality of Hanover. My last rural school was Horndean, in the West Reserve, a settlement founded by Jacob Wiebe in 1913. He wanted to name it "Wiebe's Siding," but World War I broke out a year later and the government named it Horndean, for which Wiebe never forgave it. Wiebe took great pride in Horndean and used to say, "Chicago may have the highest sky-scrappers, but Horndean has the longest mud-scrappers."

The area north of Horndean was late in attracting settlers because of persistent flooding in spring. When I took E. K. Francis (the sociologist who wrote *In Search of Utopia*) out north to interview the resident pioneer, *Lange Jeat* Wiebe,

Francis asked him what the country had been like when he moved in. Wiebe's answer was, "*Daut wea aula enne . . .*," and he used the word we use in Low German for manure. Francis, whose native tongue was German, immediately understood the descriptive expletive.

I took my Normal School training in Winnipeg 50 years ago, in 1937. For years I had been a transient labourer performing either casual work in Winnipeg or working as a farm-hand. Contrary to my original plans, I decided on teaching, and have not regretted my decision.

The same year I also applied for Canadian citizenship, which was required for teaching in public schools. My widowed mother had become a Canadian through her second marriage, but according to the regulations my brother and I had to wait until we were 21 before becoming eligible to make applications. We still lived in a very Anglo-Saxon world in 1937. When I went to the RCMP headquarters on Portage Avenue, the "Mountie" who interrogated me refused to believe that I had come from Russia under the name of

"Peters," "Don't give me that," he said, "that's an English name." He dismissed me with forms on which two people, non-relatives, were to attest that they had known me as "Peters" for at least five years.

Here my past life caught up with me. We had come to Canada in 1928. My longest stay had been in Winkler, a little over two years. The rest of the time I had spent as an itinerant labourer. But I had friends in Winkler, the son and daughter of Police Chief Jack Felde, who readily signed that he had known me all my life. (I still don't know why he was called "Chief," as Winkler had only one constable, and Felde's main duty took place in spring when the flood floated away all the wooden sidewalks. It was Felde's duty to retrieve and replace them.) The other respondent was Rev. Benjamin Ewert. He did not know me, but knew my mother, and had no qualms about signing the required document.

The following story about Benjamin Ewert, serves to indicate how little interest there was in history in the province and among the Mennonites at that time. When E. K. Francis gave a report to the Manitoba Historical Society on his study of the Mennonites (years before the publication of his *In Search of Utopia*)

only about 15 to 20 people were in attendance in a room in the legislative building; and only four of them, as far as I know, were Mennonites — my wife, I, my brother-in-law and Rev. Ewert. At the end of the report, Margaret McWilliams, the wife of the then Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba and patron of the society, asked for an explanation as to why the Mennonites of Manitoba had been able so quickly to take to English democratic ways. Mrs. McWilliams was a formidable woman, and Dr. Francis hesitated for a moment with his answer. Then Benjamin Ewert got up, slowly and majestically, as was his way, and said, "The Mennonites did not learn democracy from the English. They practised elected municipal government long before anyone in this country had even heard of the Durham Report." Francis agreed, but I don't know whether Mrs. McWilliams believed Ewert.

I now had a teacher's certificate and was a regular Canadian, but had no school. In August, while working on a farm near Stony Mountain, I received a letter from my mother with an enclosed ad from the *Steinbach Post*. A teacher was required by Lister East school, located some distance south-east of

Gruenthal. The farmer I worked for, "Hamy" Nelson, offered to drive me down to make a personal application. Once we reached the area south of Gruenthal the roads turned into twisted trails and the driver had to navigate around the rocks that littered the road allowance.

We reached the place of Peter Funk, who was the chairman of the board, and he told me that I could see the other trustees, but that there would be no trouble getting the position as I was the only applicant and the school was to open shortly. I was prepared to look for a boarding place, but Funk said that was not necessary. Only Wassyl Bzovey, a Ukrainian farmer, had a house that could accommodate a roomer. The Bzoveys would be expecting me.

The day before school was to open I arrived at the Bzoveys. Mrs. Bzovey, an ample woman with a heart of gold as I was to discover, showed me my room. Bzovey had been the first settler in the area, which may be described as rocky bush country. The land had been surveyed, but the road allowances had not yet been marked. Bzovey had built some distance away from where he expected the road to run. Once the roads were marked, he found that he had built his house in the middle of the road allowance. The road now curved around the house right in front of my window.

The traffic, however, was no problem. As far as I remember there were only two cars in Lister East. One was owned by a Penner family, who were impoverished refugees from the West Reserve. Penner had cut a trail into the bush where he built his house. He had cut the trees low enough so that he could manoeuvre his Model-T, which had a high chassis, right up to his doorsteps. Most people did not have horses either. They walked.

Practically all the people in the district were Chortitzer who had recently returned from Paraguay. Indeed, to this day the area is known as the "Chaco." They were less than poor; they had nothing, except children. There were several Ukrainian families, and of them only the Bzoveys had a reasonably comfortable house, but like all the others, even the Bzoveys had no outhouse. Several miles north, in the municipality of Hanover, there were three regular Mennonite homesteads. Two of them belonged to William and Jacob Priess, and the third to a family named Klassen. The latter were somewhat misplaced in their surroundings. They were not only immigrants but also belonged to the MB church. Their son, Jake, was my pupil.

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He later became MCC director for Manitoba.

On the day school was to open I walked to the school and found it locked. I went to one of the neighbours, Jacob Wiebe, who was a trustee and lived only about half a mile away. He was puzzled that the school was locked because, he said, it was used as a way-station for pedestrians, providing shelter in summer against the rain and in winter against the cold. Luckily Wiebe carried a screwdriver; he undid the hinges, opened the door and replaced the hinges. It was that simple.

I went to the teacher's desk, where the previous teacher had left a list of the enrolled pupils. There were 56 names. I told Wiebe that we would need additional desks. He replied that I need not worry about that, there would be enough desks for all who would be present. He was right. In the fall and spring about one quarter of my pupils took turns digging Seneca roots, and in the winter many of them were setting snares. The Seneca roots were sold in Winnipeg, and the rabbits that were caught were either for food at home or were sold to fox-farms. This provided practically the only cash-flow in the local economy.

The teacher was regarded as somewhat of an outsider, which was not unusual. Only one man, Jacob Enns, was outright hostile. The school had opened two years before. Both of my predecessors had been *Russlenda*, and Enns thought that was the reason they were "pushing" English in school. They were good teachers, but for Lister East they also had some short-comings. They were Mennonite Brethren and did not smoke or play cards. Yet these activities constituted the main entertainment during the long winter evenings. I had no such handicaps.

I should mention that most of the homes were built out of clay and had only two rooms, the kitchen and the bedroom. One of my first visits was to the Enns homestead. Enns, together with his wife, immediately retreated to the bedroom. As a challenge to me, those in the kitchen — two sons, one of them my pupil, and two daughters — suggested we play cards. They were surprised when I asked which game they liked to play. After about 15 minutes Enns Senior, intrigued, appeared at the door, and young Jake, my pupil, called out to him, "*Diss Leara ess nijch domm!*"

The card game of *Durak*, which had been played in Russia, was also played in Canada. Enns looked at me sternly and asked whether I could play *Durak*, and when I said "yes," he and his wife and I played the game. After that young Jake Enns attended school fairly regularly, but I admit he was not much of a scholar.

In school I conducted regular classes. In the morning I taught German from 8:30 to 9, and from 3:30 to 4 in the afternoon *Biblische Geschichte* and *Katechismus*. I had excused the Ukrainian children from the religious period, but their parents objected: certainly their children should memorize the catechism, like all others. And so when I would ask catechism questions like, "*Wer hat alles erschaffen?*" Joe Orobko or Emily Bzovey would respond like any good Mennonite, "*Gott der Herr, am Anfang schuf er Himmel und Erde.*" They knew the attributes of the Deity without faltering once.

For the Christmas concert we had no tree, no decorations and no dialogues. I simply took the old Mennonite hymnary, assigned about three verses to every child, and they recited them, some individually others in unison. My grandmother used to sing *Gesangbuchlieder*, and so I knew many of them. In school we sang few Christmas carols; instead we sang from the section "*Weihnachtslieder*" out of the *Gesangbuch*. The result was that all parents, from the Klansens to the Ennses, attended the Christmas concert.

Practically no one in Lister East had a watch or a clock. People lived by the sun-dial or by their stomachs. One day the school inspector, A. A. Herriot, a veteran of the Boer war, appeared at my school looking rather disgruntled. He had visited a neighboring school near Sarto, where even the teacher had no watch. When Herriot had arrived at 2 o'clock, the teacher had already dismissed his classes. It was late spring, and so it is possible, said Herriot, that the teacher had started school at 7 in the morning, when he found most of his pupils present.

Continued next month

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Political scientist and previous tour leader, John Redekop, leads this year's tour to the Soviet Union, which he enhances with talks and background information. Tour cities include Moscow, Novosibirsk, Karaganda (now open for the first time in six years), Frunze, Alma Ata, Zaprozhie, Leningrad, and an evening in Helsinki, Finland, before returning. *April 17 to May 6.*

• JAPAN AND CHINA •

Economist Roy Vogt is heading this tour to the "far east" that begins with visits to Tokyo, Hiroshima, Kyota and Osaka, in Japan, and then continues with visits to the China cities of Shanghai, Souzhou, Hangzhou, Beijing, Xian, Guilin, Guangzhou, and ends with two days in Hong Kong. *August 11 to August 22.*

• GERMANY •

CMBC professors Waldemar Janzen, German, and Adolf Ens, history, will head a series of lectures and excursions exploring German language and culture in the college-sponsored trip that is based in Rothenburg, West Germany. *August 10 to September 3.*

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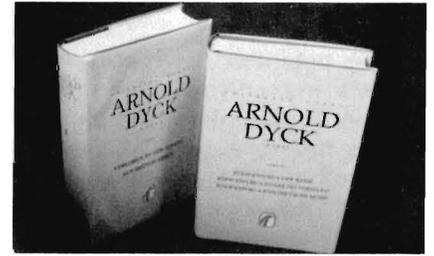
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Four Decades have not diminished any of the priceless humor of Arnold Dyck's *Koop enn Bua*

Reviewed by Gerhard Ens, Editor, *Der Bote*.

This reviewer made his first acquaintance with Arnold Dyck's *Koop enn Bua* when the first 96-page soft-cover booklet *Koop enn Bua opp Reise*, Part I, was published late in 1942. It was a marvellous antidote to the tensions that a young teacher was facing in his first school. It brought release in peals of spontaneous, liberating laughter. Many other readers experienced the same thing whenever the booklet was read by individuals or used as group entertainment. Today, after 45 years, the "opp Reise" booklets have lost none of their charm, their freshness and their priceless humour. Surely that is a sign of not only good humour but also of good literature.

That the *Koop enn Bua* volumes had all the hallmarks of good literature was

not realized by very many, who simply read them and succumbed to their inimitable charm, but discerning readers, like the late Jacob H. Janzen of Waterloo, Ontario (Jauntses Jasch fonn dee Staudt, waut soo heet auls daut Darp, woa Napoleon eenmol fonn dee Oomtjes Wellington enn Blichjat dee Betjse folljekloppt kjreajch) immediately realized that in *Koop enn Bua* there was more than met the eye. Seeing the four protagonists of the first volume of the *Koop enn Bua opus* — Koop, Bua, Wiens and Toews — as representing the basic temperaments into which the ancients classified all individuals, he ended his witty review of *Koop enn Bua* Vol. I in the *Bote* with the words: "Dyck's book helps one to love one's fellow human beings and it helps one to laugh, and those two things add pleasure to life." No mean writer himself, Janzen knew that writing real fiction is very hard work and that the ease with which Arnold Dyck could be read only concealed the painstaking craftsmanship of an accomplished writer.

Quickly *Koop enn Bua* became folk heroes among Mennonites of Low German tongue in Southern Manitoba, helped a good deal by Victor Peters' masterful renditions of *Koop enn Bua* selections on Radio CFAM. In spite of that Dyck was never able to market more than about 700 of each of the small booklets at the unbelievably low price of \$1. We Mennonites are not very good book buyers.

Thus over a period of some two decades the six slim volumes of the *Koop enn Bua* opus made their appearance. By now all of the first editions have become collectors' items. Only the first two volumes were ever reprinted by Derksen Printers, Steinbach, Manitoba. But in the last few years there has been a real revival of interest in Arnold Dyck in academic circles. The

Mennonite Chair at the University of Winnipeg and the German Department of the University of Manitoba conducted Arnold Dyck seminars and about three years ago the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society decided to publish the collected works of Arnold Dyck. Volume I of this series came out a year ago and contained his High German novel *Verloren in der Steppe* and his unpublished memoirs "Aus meinem Leben." Volume II, just published, contains the entire *Koop enn Bua* opus with the exception of the "Belauschte Gespräche" ("Overheard Conversations") which appeared in the 1930s in the *Steinbach Post* and the *Mennonitische Warte*. These, along with the rest of Dyck's Low German writings, will be included in Volume III of his Collected Works.

Volume II contains the full text of the original six *opp Reise* booklets in a critical edition footnoted, prefaced and commented on in proper scholarly method. Of the three titles the first one containing the two-part description of the Saskatchewan trip of Koop and Bua remains in the eyes of this reviewer the best one of the three. It contains some of the richest humour in the entire body of Mennonite literature. The Toronto and Germany stories still show enough flashes of the Dyck genius to make them well worth reading, but somehow the "Ilse" and "Gisela" characters in them don't seem to ring quite true. Furthermore, especially in the *Dietschlaund* volumes, even Koop and Bua have become too much like puppets, thereby reducing their narratives to a European travelogue, albeit several notches above the run-of-the-mill of this genre. However, by this time Dyck does not have to prove anything. He had shown his consummate art in his earlier *Koop enn Bua* volumes.

Fortunately for the lover of true visual

Arnold Dyck,
Collected Works
Volume II

Koop enn Bua opp Reise Parts I and II
Koop enn Bua foare no Toronto Parts I and II

Koop enn Bua enn Dietschlaund Parts I and II

Edited by Al Reimer, University of Winnipeg

Published by Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society

Printed and bound by D. W. Friesen & Sons, Altona, Manitoba
508 pp. Hard cover.

Available at Mennonite Book Club,
208-1317A Portage Avenue,
Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3G 0V3
Price \$25 plus 75c. postage.

art, the publishers have also included Dyck's marvellous pen-and-ink sketches in this edition. Visual art was Dyck's first love which he exploited very well in the first two original volumes of the *Koop enn Bua* opus. To the casual observer these sketches seem almost haphazardly drawn, but the trained observer will see endless delights in them where every line and every shading has significance.

Al Reimer has edited and annotated this critical edition with a great deal of insight and skill. His knowledge of English and world literature easily gives him the wider perspective to evaluate this small segment of Low German literature. As such, he sees in the *Koop enn Bua* opus not only a good example of ethnic writing but, in fact, literature of universal appeal. One need not necessarily agree with all of his observations to appreciate his sense of judgment and his editing skills. It is also worth remembering that Reimer grew up in Steinbach where the *Koop* and *Bua* characters originated (he can, in fact, identify some of the prototypes) and where he learned to know the author and his family. As a youngster Reimer even belonged to a story-writing club organized by Arnold Dyck for the benefit of the readers of his monthly magazine *Mennonitische Warte*.

Something could be said in favour of retaining the author's original orthography for Low German writing. However, since Dyck himself was not entirely consistent in this regard and since a group of Low German writers some years ago decided to attempt a standardized, unified orthography, Reimer and his committee have decided to use that system with the, albeit reluctant, agreement of the family of the author. While this reviewer finds some consonant fusions of this orthography a bit strange, he is of opinion that the use of a unified system outweighs any small inconveniences which the system presents to the various "shades" of Low German readers.

As was Volume I this present volume is a beauty. Binding, paper and printing are truly first class. The book is a prize edition from every point of view. Publishers and readers surely owe a debt of gratitude to the printers who practically donated the cost of printing to the Society as well as to the Canadian government which provided a publishing grant. It is to be hoped that many readers will avail themselves of this opportunity to obtain a copy of this limited edition of the *Koop enn Bua* opus. **MM**

A new respect for historic Low German

by Reuben Epp

The letter from Cornelius Buhler of Sarasota, Florida, in the May, 1986, issue of MM basically asks the question as to how we can make a new language (orthography?) useable and ensure its continued use. In answer he suggests a new alphabet of fifty letters and symbols with which one could write *Plautdietsch* completely phonetically. He states that it would be easier for our children to use and that his conclusions as to orthography derive from some fifty years of language research during which time he has become somewhat of a language expert. He calls himself "*een haulwa Sproakentjenstla*" (not his spelling). Buhler's letter deserves a reply.

Those who are interested in a new Low German orthography, especially Mr. Buhler, should be reminded that this particular *wheel* was already invented quite some time ago. It is performing rather well. Mennonite Low German orthographers need not embark on anything *new*.

Even when we totally disregard the centuries during which the Nether-Saxon Low German language was the spoken and written language of the Hanseatic League, during which time it grew to become the language of commerce, authority, administration, recorded history, devotion and literature in several countries and over large areas of northern Europe, there still remains a more recent history of written Low German literature that is at least 135 years old.

During those 135 years there have been literally hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Low German publications, among them some excellent literature from a literary, moral and christian point of view. This literature is written in that same Nether-Saxon Low German language that is the mother language of the Low German Mennonites. Of course, we now speak *Plautdietsch* which is a dialect somewhat different from the dialects in which most Low German literature is written. But at one time our Netherlandic forefathers spoke the Low

German of the geographic Netherlands which includes East Friesian in which there is an abundance of good literature. One of the greatest Low German Mennonite authors of our time wrote extensively in that dialect—one of our erstwhile mother dialects.

I wonder how many of our people realize that Menno Simons himself wrote quite extensively in Low German. Many of his messages to the church were written in the Low German dialect of Groningen and/or East Friesland and subsequently he wrote and translated many more of his writings in and into the Low German dialect of Holstein.

A study of a number of major Low German dialects—major in terms of existent literature and numbers of speakers—reveals remarkable similarity to our *Plautdietsch* dialect and a remarkably standardized orthography in spite of the fact that no standardized Low German language exists. Since some of the differences between the major dialects appear to be as great as those between them and *Plautdietsch*, there is no great problem in adapting current orthography to *Plautdietsch* use.

The fact that written *Plautdietsch* began some sixty years after writers such as Groth, Reuter and Brinckmann initiated a renewed literary era in Low German (after two centuries of literary silence) and appears to be even farther behind in further literary development, is not sufficient reason to slam the door on our Netherlandic Low German heritage. This is what would happen if we were to embark on a new phonetic tangent that totally diverges from the orthography of our mother language to the extent that it would forever remove from our people and their children the ability to read the rich Low German literature that exists in an already-accepted North German orthography.

In conclusion, let us recognize that the *wheel* and Low German orthography are already invented. But we cannot recognize this if we never see a *wheel* nor ever read existing Low German literature. For starters let me suggest *Keerlke* by Wilhelmine Siefkes, *De General Reeder* by John Brinckmann and *Dat Hus sünner Lucht* by Fritz Lottmann. The reading of these works may generate a new respect for existing Low German literature. And the way they are written determines what we must learn in order to facilitate the literature of our mother language, and in turn may determine how to write our *Plautdietsch* mother tongue. It is easier and eminently more worthwhile than **something new.** **mm**

Rome assignment reveals the vigor of Italy, its people and its historic culture



Today not all roads lead to Rome as they once did, but fortunately for us, ours did! That road began when the software company where I am employed landed a substantial contract with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, more commonly referred to as FAO, for obvious reasons.

As with many other aspects of the computer industry, my wife and I were given short (three weeks) notice of our impending departure. Within that space of time we managed to move out of our apartment, scramble to put our paperwork in order, pack our belongings and say farewell to friends and family.

Leaving Regina on a cool spring morning we were in high spirits, our spirits dampened only by the hesitation we felt about the recent European and global tragedies which we were about to become a part of. (Our departure coincided closely with the TWA bombing, the Chernobyl disaster, the American bombing of Libya, and the recent attack at Rome's Leonardo da Vinci Airport.) To "calm" our fears we were treated to a transatlantic film entitled *Target*, which was a depiction of terrorist attacks in Europe.

We arrived in Rome with little more than we could carry between us and one simple instruction: "Turn left after customs." After hesitantly doing so, we

were met with a warm smile and a friendly handshake from a fellow employee. Someone in this world actually cared we were alive. Arriving on the Saturday allowed us one day to recuperate before plunging into the work ahead and we took full advantage of it by sleeping off the effects of a now almost forgotten fear of overseas travel. Neither my wife nor I had been to Europe before.

Monday morning found us up early, as the local dog pound was barely half a block from our hotel room, and we stepped into the bright sunshine of a May morning in Rome. If we had anticipated anything, it was that morning rush hour would be something like a skeet shoot with pedestrians being used as unwilling targets. Rome did not disappoint us! Arriving finally at our destination, we sought refuge behind the impressive concrete facade of the FAO complex.

The UN organization has a highly visible presence in Rome, with three separate and yet interrelated agencies: IFAD, The International Fund for Agricultural Development; WFP, The World Food Program; and the flagship organization, FAO. Combined, these three organizations represent a contingency of 158 countries, have annual budgets in excess of 437 million dollars U.S. and employ over 8,000 people. The main thrust of FAO, along with IFAD and WFP, is the administration of UN policy regarding the acquisition, management and distribution of food stuffs worldwide. The particular emphasis is on underdeveloped Third World countries and their desperate need to feed the growing millions. FAO, in particular,

continues to be a world leader in funding research and development efforts aimed at producing superior cereal grains through genetic engineering, experimentations on improved nutrition, new agricultural techniques and irrigation methods. Much of the current budgets are directed to research centers in Europe, North America, Asia and the Middle East.

In every sense of the word, FAO is truly a humanitarian organization. However grandiose in its outward appearance, FAO is not without its own brand of politics and administrative complexities. These internal problems, I soon came to realize, required considerable attention if we were to provide sound solutions to their computerization requirements.

Having been introduced to the task at hand, my wife and I began the rather arduous process of becoming "Italians." One of the first matters of business a foreigner needs to attend to, having arrived in Italy, is to apply for a "*Permesso di Soggiorno*," permission to stay. This is particularly difficult since the authorities apparently don't know and often don't care if you do stay. At times it even appears as if they deliberately attempt to hinder the processing of these forms, likely due to the large number of African and Asian immigrants arriving daily. Our personal experience of spending three hours in lines was a breeze compared to the experience of friends who were asked to return four times and spent in excess of 11 hours waiting to be granted permission, which in the end is a mere formality. The second piece of business which needs to be taken care of is to obtain residency sta-

by Grant Barkman

tus. This, along with a tax number, allows foreigners to purchase goods and services that are outside of "normal" tourist activities, i.e. purchasing furniture, a car, a television set, etc. Obtaining this form is accomplished by getting in touch with Charles, "the fixer," a retired FAO employee who operates out of a local coffee bar. With the help of Charles and a little bit of bureaucratic greasing, a temporary certificate can be issued on the same day. (The permanent one arrives in the mail approximately four weeks later. Why? Because it's computer generated.)

Having completed the business of normalization into the Italian lifestyle we began to seek out the adventure of living in Europe. One of our first major adventures, inspired by riding overcrowded boxcars that are called trains, was to rent a car and attempt to conquer the Roman Grand-Prix. As with any competitive sport, one must first learn the basic rules of the game, which are:

- yield to your left (you have a mirror on the left and shoulder checking before turning right isn't required);
- honk your horn (a) as soon as you think the light should be green, (b) when pedestrians impede your progress, and (c) whenever you feel inclined;
- ignore all lines painted on the road (this is due to the fact that three million cars exist in Rome and apparently all compete for the same space at the same time). After a few near whiplash cases, 400 kms of hunting for "a place to turn off and look at the map" we arrived back in Rome and in fine Italian style completed the weekend by parking half on and half off the sidewalk. The adventure had only just begun; two weeks later we purchased our own car.

The coming of the fall season coincided with our having spent our first six months in Rome. The summer had drifted by in a haze of memorable experiences and we now felt renewed interest in becoming more involved. Our first leap found us enrolling in Italian classes. At first we learned such practical expressions as "the TV doesn't work!" ("*il televisore non funziona*") and "the dog is still sitting on the antennae" ("*il cane e rimasto sul l'antenna*"). Needless to say, at that point we only practiced on friends and would-be enemies. Since that time, however, we have become considerably more "fluent" and now feel quite secure in actually ordering something from a menu without having to cross our fingers.

Learning something of the language was the key to begin to fully appreciate the tremendously rich culture that we

had become a part of. Certainly there were the attractions that made Rome famous — the Colosseum, the Forum, Circus Maximus, Vatican City, the Appian Way, the Baths of Caracalla and so on — but there was something else that did not give up its secrets to the hordes of tourists cruising through town in air-conditioned comfort. That special something was to be found in the people themselves — in their vigor, their talents and their pride.

This attitude could be found in almost all Romans, from the vendor on the street to the business executive. A friend of ours, recently returned from a two-week vacation, was startled to find her friendly neighborhood butcher cold and off-handed. The reason for this about-face apparently was due to her "oversight" in not forewarning him of her travel plans. In her absence, he assumed she had patronized a competitor. His pride hurt at not having been able to provide superior service and casual conversation enough to retain her business, he felt unable to offer his usual courtesies. Not speaking the language fluently enough to explain the reality of the situation, she was eventually forced to bring in her vacation pictures to patch the wound.

I, too, have discovered this attitude. Our local rose peddler, who works the corner that I pass each day, becomes truly saddened when I decline to purchase my weekly allotment of roses. At one point he began turning away upon seeing me approach so as to avoid my friendly greetings of "ciao." Since then I have redeemed myself by purchasing the occasional treat for him and by always keeping fresh roses in the apartment. My wife is delighted!

In the nine months we have now spent living and working in the Eternal City, our lives have been enriched by the exquisite beauty of the art surrounding us, by the vast ornateness of the Vatican and the significance of what it represents, by the past echoes of the Colosseum and so many other time-enriched artifacts, as well as by the people themselves.

As they say in Rome: "Throw two coins in the Trevi Fountain, one for good luck, the other, to return someday." Perhaps sometime in the future, after completing my one-year posting here, I may again find myself on that road. . . .

(Grant Barkman is a computer programmer with the international company of Systemhouse and a brother of MM staff writer Mavis Reimer.)

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observed along the way



by Roy Vogt

• We are now well into 1987, with auto insurance payments behind us, and tax payments looming on the horizon. What a pleasant way to mark the progress of time! I felt sorry in January for those who spent a lot of money going south to escape the usual cold of that month. Those of us who were forced to stay behind enjoyed unusually mild weather at much less cost. Occasionally the poor do get rewarded.

• On a Sunday afternoon in late January we take off for Neepawa to join friends there for dinner. While there we are given a tour of the house in which the noted Canadian writer, Margaret Laurence, used to live. We are deeply moved by this experience. We consider Laurence one of the most profound writers that this country has produced and we hope that many will support the restoration of her home in her memory (see the appeal for support elsewhere in this issue). It always amazes me that this most moral of writers should have been condemned by some during her lifetime for immoral writing. *The Stone Angel* may very well be regarded with time as one of the two or three best novels ever written in Canada.

• A Saturday evening during that same time takes us to the Mennonite Brethren Bible College in Winnipeg, for the annual meeting of the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society and a talk by Victor Peters on pioneer teaching in Manitoba. The Society is sponsoring a number of good ventures, including the publication of the works of Arnold Dyck and the Mennonite Book Club. It is groups like this that help to give life and color to the Mennonite community. The talk by Peters gives color to our past. His description of schools in Lister, Landmark, and Horndean in the 1930s is

extremely funny, but it also makes us more grateful for the comfortable conditions of today. My mother used to say that she would gladly have been a pioneer in the very first years of settlement in Manitoba, but that is one enthusiasm I never shared with her. Mind you, I too have romantic memories of waking up in the house in mid-winter, with no heat, the water frozen in the glass next to the bed, and me reluctant to leave the cosy warmth of the thick quilt. But I have no romantic memories of the cords and cords of wood that had to be sawn and piled, and the trips to the cold outhouse. I'll take gas heat any day.

• During these cold winter nights I am reminded that under the many roofs that shelter us, there are artists who spend their time spinning dreams for us. I am thinking now of two books that we received recently: Peter Pauls' translation of *Agatchen, A Russian Mennonite Mother's Story*, and a small book of poetry by a young woman from the Steinbach area, Audrey Poetker, entitled *I Sing for My Dead in German*. I read the shorter poetry book first, and am astonished, and very pleasantly surprised, at the freedom and sensitivity with which this young woman expressed her feelings about death, love, and (as we used to say), the whole ball of wax. I am looking forward to Pauls' book next.

• On one of the coldest nights this winter we take part in one of its warmest events — the 70th birthday celebration of a close friend. About 40 guests are gathered for the occasion, including the grandchildren who perform delightfully for the proud Oma. The life of this whole family is an inspiration to us.

On another evening we are invited to dinner in a liberated household, where the husband makes the dinner, and on

this occasion serves us his delicious borscht and apple pie. Homes are happy in different ways these days.

• On the Chinese New Year in February we are invited by Chinese friends to a special dinner in the Good World Restaurant (formerly the New Nanking). The 200 participants are mostly from mainland China studying at the university. There is some concern among them about recent changes in the Chinese communist leadership. They worry that some of the liberalization trends may be reversed. The twelve-course dinner, however, dispels such concerns for the moment. The food is, of course, delicious, and we find that it tastes even better with chopsticks. (When I look around my plate at the end of the meal I discover that once again I just happened to sit at the spot where the table cloth was messiest.)

• Several times in the past few months we have visited with teachers from schools both inside and outside of Winnipeg. What strikes us is the frequency of "burnout" that one encounters among them. The task of inspiring and disciplining restless young people produces exhaustion and frustration in its wake. I suppose it has always been so. On looking back I marvel that any of our Grade 9 or Grade 10 teachers kept their sanity after putting up with us for a year. One bright young woman, fresh out of "Normal School," decided to perk up our Grade 10 English class by having us read aloud to each other. Unfortunately, the first person she chose to read was Hilton F., who proceeded to stutter dramatically, but convincingly, over each word. We burst into laughter, because we knew he was faking the stutter, but she got furious at us because she thought we were laughing cold heartedly at a genuine disability. A few

sessions like that and she decided to leave Steinbach in mid-term. I hope she found greener pastures, but I would like to meet her sometime just to apologize. Kids are probably the same today as yesterday, but many parents seem to have changed, and this makes it even more difficult for the teacher. We could never play parents against teachers. We sometimes accused our parents of blindly defending every teacher, but wisely they ignored such accusations. They knew that no teacher was wilfully out to get their child, and that children are gifted in nothing so much as finding excuses for not getting work done. Teacher burnouts will continue, but some of them might be diminished by more mature parents.

- Personal burnout is also prevented by other interesting events of this winter season. A few evenings are spent at the theatre, with dinner before in one case and after in another. We thoroughly enjoy both *Schedules* at the PTE and *Mirandolina* at the MTC. The latter was severely criticized in the press, but perhaps because we go expecting little (and also because the acting is superb) this evening of farcical theatre leaves us in buoyant spirits. The good dinner and company at La Vieille Gare only heighten this mood.

- I also enjoy giving a lecture on comparative economic systems in a class that David Schroeder is teaching at CMBC, and a discussion on leisure and stewardship at Bethel Mennonite Church. People must be getting the impression from this column that I enjoy plenty of leisure and do badly at stewardship. Maybe they are right. I should resolve to take all of this a lot more seriously.

- We spend a fascinating evening in our own home with the members of my wife's adult evening class. The 17 students in this class come from all over the world and we enjoy a meal with them and the celebration of their completion of Grade XII English. For entertainment we show them a virtually silent movie by Charlie Chaplin, *Modern Times*. They seem to enjoy it immensely. The feisty little character who defies all odds to get a job during the Depression (and makes fun of big business at the same time) obviously appeals to their own experience. I have now seen this picture three times and never get tired of it.

- Something else that we never get tired of is the annual week-end trek to Hecla Island, for cross-country skiing and relaxing. I hope to report on this, without broken bones, in the next issue.

mm

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AUG. 3

SEPT. 17

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German Language Contest Winners

The Manitoba German Language Contest of 1987 recently held at University College of the University of Manitoba was the largest ever, with over a thousand participants, over a hundred finalists, and a host of valuable prizes for the many winners, who were congratulated by the Minister for Culture, Heritage and Recreation, the Hon. Judy Wasylycia-Leis. The winners are:

Senior Grand Prize: Gerhard Krämer (German Saturday School); *2nd prize:* Andreas Krämer (German Saturday School); *3rd prize:* Krista Neustaedter (Westgate Collegiate).

Senior B Grand Prize: Wendy Friesen (Green Valley Collegiate); *2nd prize:* Carla Funk (Niverville Collegiate); *3rd prize:* Pauline Dueck (Morris School).

Senior C Grand Prize: Janna Larsen (Westgate Collegiate); *2nd prize:* Masa'd Greenaway (Landmark Collegiate); *3rd prize:* Kim Gusto (Westgate Collegiate).

Intermediate A Grand Prize: Christine Neufeld (Westgate); *2nd prize:* Dunja Lotz (German Saturday School); *3rd prize:* Linda Ens (MCI, Gretna).

Intermediate B Grand Prize: Faith Loewen (Rosenort School); *2nd prize:* Roseanne Reimer (Garden Valley Collegiate); *3rd prize:* Anne Martens (Garden Valley Collegiate).

Intermediate C Grand Prize: Carmel Debreuil (Garden Valley); *2nd prize:* Allison Molloy (Niverville Collegiate); *3rd prize:* Melody McKnight (Niverville Collegiate).

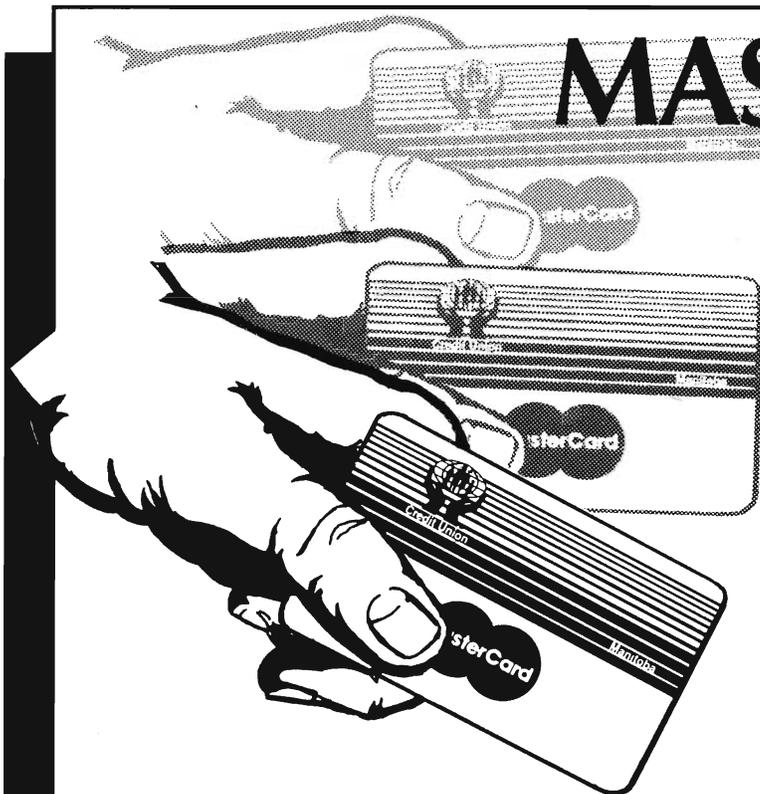
Junior A Grand Prize: Christian Schlosser (Green Valley School); *2nd prize:* Oliver Lotz (Gordon Bell Saturday School); *3rd prize:* Kurt Jansen (Gordon Bell Saturday School).

Junior B Grand Prize: Edward Wiebe (Green Valley School); *2nd prize:* Rachel Wiens (Kleefeld School); *3rd prize:* Anna Friesen (Winkler Elementary).

Junior C Grand Prize: Karen Paquin (Westgate Collegiate); *2nd prize:* Sherri Kuntz (Morris School); *3rd prize:* Jennifer Suess (Steinbach Junior High).

Among the prizes were study trips to Germany, Apple Computers, stereos, books and plaques. Our congratulations to all the winners and to the German Teachers who have made this a major annual event!

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poet's word

— Walfried Jansen

AS THE SEASON'S

as the season's
last leaves linger
beyond september
azure blue turns
somber grey.

people retreat along
blacktop ribbons
to intricate mazes.

soon ice like
eyelids snow-covered
will calm the lake
into winter's healing sleep.

next spring
with pregnant buds swelling
i will be waiting.

THE BEACH

sunrise ripples
soothe white sand
with a lover's gentle
touch.

seagulls fly
unhurried,
sandpipers search the
shore.

soon a thousand feet
will churn the sand
and all the voices
drown the seagulls'
cry.

Beyond This Blue Sphere

Beyond this blue sphere,
into the eternal frontier;
past satellites that spin
and clutter the void
like the first twig of reason
from some forgotten soul.
Past that silent silver moon
and through the universe
my spirit shall soar,
to a home untouched by war.

Sea Waves

Hurricane winds
lift the sea
to a devil's hellish fury.
With the might of
Thor's hammer
waves break against the shore.

Persistence wears
immovable cliffs
to crystals of sand,
washed about the beach,
soft beneath my feet.
Seaspray clears the fog:
we are but a grain of sand
on the shore of the universe.

I'm Not Bound

I'm not bound
by narrow ribbons
of concrete
or clusters of steel and glass.
I've travelled
forgotten highways,
the land my own,
to stare in awe
of nameless falls
by light
of gold and yellow morning.
As tendrils of mist
turned spider webs
to lace,
a breeze against my face
whispered names
of the ancients
before me.

— by Tim Wiebe

Ambivalence

The sun streams through
clean stained glass
to flood my idle pew
with tranquility.

Warmth, community . . . a good night's rest
four essential vitamins
I feel like a pampered cat
stretching lazily
in the light.

The same brightness is filtered
through dense foliage
of steaming jungles where
weary men grip rifles
in grimy hands;
Squint — furtively — against the glare
for sign of the enemy.

Hunger, hatred and pain
are constant companions —
preaching justification
to a captive audience
for the ideologies of war.

I am shaken
by these images Spectres
clawing at my peace of mind Knowing
luxuriating in my well-fed Christianity
that I am the enemy
for whom they search.

Hiking Through Autumn

Hues of change have been flung
at a waiting world,
and the brilliance of transition
accosts my senses.

I shiver as we begin to wind, slowly,
along the wooded valley.
An hour later, I will have my jacket folded,
neatly, under an arm,
and wipe the sweat from my brow,
as we rest on a scoured rock shelf.

Conversation
is as rambling
as the path we follow —
patterns of interaction shifting
in mood, tone and color,
as the order of the line alternates.

Nearing home,
I seize an instant
to pluck a few finely wrought momentos,
daubed with love's variety.

Later, the stages of our journey
will be pressed into a favorite volume,
and studied, with tenderness,
when brittle ruins,
crumbling underfoot

Signal
the onset
of another season of change.

in response to
the film *Platoon*.

Words and Wiebe

Observing that "words can get you into trouble," Canadian novelist of Mennonite background, Rudy Wiebe, described the genesis of his first novel and reviewed the controversy that "exploded" when the Mennonite constituency read the book and found out what was in it.

Wiebe, whose lecture carried the title, *The Skull in the Swamp — A 25-Year Retrospective of Peace Shall Destroy Many*, provided an affectionate description of how the novel emerged from his student writing classes and also gave a sympathetic insight into the controversy it generated.

The lecture was given February 6 at St. John's College, University of Manitoba, where he was this year's Marjorie Ward lecturer.

Early in his lecture, Wiebe observed that once the writer's work is published the words cannot be changed or recalled, and the writer "can do nothing about what they do in people's minds." Accordingly, the hostility of Mennonites, especially from within his own Mennonite Brethren community, came as an unpleasant surprise.

While most people remember the controversy, Wiebe instead remembered how he worked with his mentor, the late Prof. R. W. Salter of the University of Alberta, to refine his writing, and how countless others told him quietly how his novel had spoken to them.

In the latter half of the 1950s, Wiebe was a student at the University of Alberta where parts of *Peace Shall Destroy Many* first saw the light of day as short stories written for his creative writing classes. Wiebe recalls how Salter's pointed comments, written in a "spidery hand" around the edges of his manuscripts, questioned and coaxed him into countless revisions.

Wiebe said Prof. Salter then presented him with the "poisonous temptation of the possibilities of fiction" when Salter urged him to write a novel as his master's thesis instead of doing an analytical dissertation on some other writer, such as Shakespeare. The short stories were re-formulated into a novel, and in March, 1960, it passed his master's review committee.

Salter was impressed with the work

and wrote to Jack McClelland, then president of McClelland and Stewart, recommending that the firm publish Wiebe's work. Wiebe said Salter's endorsement was crucial; Salter had made similar recommendations on behalf of other new authors and had seen their work published as a result.

Over the next three years Wiebe worked with McClelland and Stewart editors, and in late 1962 *Peace Shall Destroy Many* was published.

Wiebe says he was "incredibly naive" in not expecting the "inevitable explosion" that followed. By the end of that year he was no longer welcome in the pulpits of MB churches (and would not be for more than a decade); by the end of March he had resigned as editor of the *MB Herald*, and by September he had accepted a teaching appointment in the U.S.

In general he was castigated within the Mennonite community for writing about things he should not even have been thinking. The fact that the characters in the novel appeared to resemble real people and participate in real incidents added to the intensity of the conflict. It quickly became obvious that his position as editor of the church paper was untenable, and he resigned.

In addition to the hostility, there was support; it came from a wide range of sources and was not nearly so vocal, but it was welcome. Mennonite women wrote to say that they identified with the way the leading men treated their women in the novel; others wrote to encourage him to not become defensive or bitter; while others said they would be willing to provide even more "damning" insights into the dark sides of the Mennonite past. Wiebe recalls that his parents became the targets of some hostility, and added that his father appears to eventually have taken a perverse pride in his son who was able to cause such a stir among the church leaders.

Following his resignation from the *Herald* editorship, Wiebe accepted an appointment to teach English at Goshen College; the book "that cost him one job got him another," he said, because the people at Goshen liked the novel.

The title of the lecture, *The Skull in the Swamp*, comes from a scene in *Peace Shall Destroy Many*, where one of two youths cutting hay at the edge of a swamp steps on a hard object in the muck, and on investigation pulls up a buffalo skull. In talking about it, the skull is the only evidence they have of the mighty beast it once was; the skull also provides enough evidence for them to imagine what it once was. The skull may be an artifact, but part of the reality of an artifact is what we let our imaginations do with the evidence it presents.

— Ed Unrau

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Curiosity about Politics Propels U Student To National Liberal Convention

by Carl Neustaedter

As our plane flew to Ottawa, enroute to the National Liberal party convention, I had to wonder: How did I end up as a delegate? I don't really consider myself "political." My decision to join the Liberal Party in 1985 was not part of some master plan to become a politician or anything of the sort. It just happened. During a membership drive, a friend approached me to join. Out of curiosity, I agreed. I was interested in the political process, and the Liberal Party seemed to be in line with my own vague political outlook at the time. (Mainly, it wasn't Progressive Conservative, the party of my MP, Dan Mackenzie, who, for many reasons, including his partisan defense of Apartheid, I abhor.)

My curiosity continued to propel me into situations which I had never even thought of entering. In the spring of 1986, another Liberal friend asked me to stand for election (usually acclamation) to the executive of the University of Manitoba Young Liberals. As the elections were set for the following day, I barely had time to think before I had become the new director of communications. Besides looking good on a resumé, I thought, this position had the potential to open up a lot of opportunities, including the responsibility of putting together a newsletter, which I looked forward to.

As I became more involved, I learned more about how a political party functions. What I had seen so far was new and exciting, and there seemed to be room for real input because of recent reforms within the party.

So when the opportunity arose to become a delegate to the national convention in November, my curiosity, and by now an inkling of determination, emerged. Despite the bad timing (right before Christmas exams), and the prohibitive cost, I rationalized that experiencing a political convention would be a learning experience in many ways more valuable than reading about the Jacksonian era of U.S. history. So, I dumped my textbooks for a policy resolution book and went to Ottawa.

It's hard to have preconceptions about an event which I never would

have thought I'd be attending only six months ago. When I got to Ottawa, as a result, I was quite unprepared for the atmosphere I encountered. Everything was so political. For four days I breathed, ate, talked, and celebrated politics. Even our airport bus driver bore a striking resemblance to John Turner (was he moonlighting, we wondered? Was he really doing that poorly?!) This environment was in marked contrast to the University of Manitoba, dubbed by many as the most apathetic campus on earth.

This convention had two main tasks: to vote on a myriad of policy issues ranging from acid rain to the PLO, and to decide whether or not to hold a leadership convention. Obviously, the latter gained most of the attention. I got a behind-the-scenes view of how the media operates. It seems always to go for controversy, often to the exclusion of real issues. Cases in point: the Young Liberals luncheon. When a small group of John Turner supporters destroyed a banner advocating a leadership review, the news showed mainly this incident. Kept to a minimum was coverage of Mr. Turner's speech and the opinions of those in the majority who were disgusted with the behaviour of these few, overzealous conventioners.

The poster, scarf, and button industry was the big winner at this convention. With a leadership review and a large slate of officials to be elected, walls, lapels, hats, and even freebie newspapers were plastered with "propaganda," as we called it. The manipulation at the convention bothered and disillusioned me. Even as youth delegates celebrated together at a Hull nightspot, candidates took the opportunity to shake hands and distribute pins. All this was expected, but I went away wondering if, on the humane level, I had made any friends, or if I simply helped some strangers get elected. Such is politics, I soon realized. To get some real things done one must accept such shenanigans.

The real business of the convention was policy, and for three days we worked hard in lengthy sessions after very little sleep. This was very rewarding

because the "grassroots" reform in the party allowed our small delegation from the U of M to have one of its own policy resolutions adopted as national party policy. Our resolution dealt with funding for post-secondary education, which has reached crisis levels in cut-backs. On the political and personal levels, therefore, it felt great to have our ideas listened to!

To make a decision on the leadership question was not at all easy. I had come to Ottawa undecided, but leaning towards supporting Turner. Determined not to make a decision based on all the hype, I decided I needed more information. I visited a number of locales; first, the "Friends of John Turner" party; then the "Reviewiste" camp at the Chateau Laurier, where I found plenty of debate, and finally to the lobby of the Westin Hotel for more debate, this time an impromptu session with some non-conventioners. By 3:30 am I decided to sleep on it, but found that my roommate was ripe for more debate. By the time I had to vote, I felt I was making my decision more or less on solid issues. How did I vote? I voted for John Turner based on his good ideas, the fact that he had rebuilt the party, and also because he was obviously going to win the review anyway. This last reason bothered me because I felt that a leader should be judged on his or her abilities, not because a 73 percent majority would look better than a 60 percent majority. But because of the concept of "leadership review" set up by the party, one was forced to take this into account.

The NDP has a better system, in which a leader only faces a vote if challenged by another candidate. This system reduces the threat of "hopping on the bandwagon."

When I come right down to it, this could have been any party's convention. It demonstrated the basic nature of politics — compromise. That is, put up with manipulation to get policies through that are important, such as ours on education. Put up with the media because it is the link to the voters, without whom all of these policies would never be implemented. Democracy is a system with some drawbacks, but because it maintains accountability and has the potential for real input from all people, it keeps the government in touch with the people who comprise the nation. The political process is the link to government, and, as I saw at this convention, it can be successfully utilized.

Carl Neustaedter is a Third-year arts Student at the University of Manitoba.

your word

VALUED MIRROR

My monthly *Mirror* is most important to me. Your efforts and good results are much appreciated "down east." Wish-ing you continued success for 1987.

Vern Riediger
Toronto

THE WINKLER ARTICLE

... would also like to say I really enjoyed the story about peace in Winkler by Victor Peters, in the January 87, issue. . .

Ruth Wood
Vancouver, B.C.

INTERESTING MIRROR

I enjoy the *Mirror*. Roy Vogt's articles are always interesting, and I also enjoy the *Plautdietsch* parts. It would make the reading easier if everyone could adopt Arnold Dyck's spelling; to my mind he comes closest to the real sounds. That poem in the December issue was really moving.

Harry A. Wiens

INTRIGUING QUESTION OF FEMININE METAPHOR

In her intriguing guest editorial in the November 1986 issue of the *Mirror*, Di Brandt correctly points out that the metaphorical language of the Biblical writers, frequently laden with hierarchical and family oriented terminology, eventually manifests itself concretely and visibly in the world of sensation and experience. That men have used this to perpetuate their domination within the church in unchristian ways is also clear. I would like her to be less abstract and more specific about the direction she sees the church moving.

What does she see happening when "the feminine in this metaphorical construct" becomes real, or when "the feminine . . . (is) made manifest in the Incarnation." What possibilities for better understanding Christ's work among men and women can she offer us in relating sexuality and the feminine concretely to God's presence within humanity?

I see some possibilities in the fact that the church is described as a feminine entity. If the church herself is essentially feminine is that not reason enough for women to be centrally involved in its leadership?

Furthermore it is not clear what Ms. Brandt's allusions to Jesus as the lover who meets you in the garden at night, the marriage feast and the virgins preparing to meet the bridegroom, mean. For many centuries men and women have struggled with the challenge of describing the awesome love God has for us. Sometimes they used parental and conjugal imagery in order to give a personal and emotional content to that divine love.

Those of us familiar with medieval spirituality are reminded of writers such as the 12th Century abbot, Bernard of Clairvaux, the 14th century writers, Margery Kempe, Julian of Norwich and a monk of Farne, as well as a 16th century Protestant, Katherine Schützen. In describing their devotion for Christ they often used family and conjugal imagery in its most intimate sense. Bernard wrote: "But you, Jesus, good lord, are you not also a mother who like a hen, collects her chickens under her wings? Truly, master you are a mother . . . For by your gentleness, those who are hurt are comforted; by your perfume, the despairing are reformed. Your warmth resuscitates the dead; your touch justifies sinners. . ."

The late fourteenth century monk of Farne wrote:

... it is the greatest delight to me to suck the breast of the king, who has been *my hope from the bosom of my mother, and upon whom I was cast from the womb* (Is. 49:1; 23; Ps. 21:10-11) But I also need to enter again into the womb of my Lord and be reborn unto eternal life, if I am to be amongst the members of the church whose names are in the book of life. (C. W. Bynum, *Jesus as Mother* (Los Angeles, 1982).

The motif of Jesus as lover can be seen in the imaginary spiritual marriages which both men and women of the fourteenth century claimed to have with saints. The English mystic Margary Kempe and mother of fourteen children, claimed that God had instructed her how to express her devotion in the following words: "There I must needs be homely with thee, and lie in bed with thee, Daughter . . . when thou art in bed, take Me to thee as thy wedded husband . . . Boldly take me in the arms of thy soul and kiss My Mouth, My head, and My feet, as sweetly as thou wilt." (D. Herlihy, *Medieval Households* (1986)

Not all men are made nervous by articulate women in the Church speaking out. I, for one, am curious to know what Ms. Brandt has in mind and look

forward to hearing what she has to say about the place of the feminine as metaphor and experience in the Church. Sincerely,
John Klassen,
Professor of History
Trinity Western University
Langley, B.C.

FIRST MENNONITE HISTORY CLARIFIED

May I make a few corrections to inaccuracies and false impressions left by the article on First Mennonite Church in your December issue. The errors, I realize, are unintentional and the result of relying on previously published material.

To begin with, thanks to several original sources consulted recently, 1928 appears to be the founding date of First Mennonite, then the Winnipeg group of the Schoenwieser Church (*Gemeinde*). To date, whether rightly or wrongly, 1926, the founding date of the Schoenwieser church in Starbuck, Manitoba, has been celebrated by First Mennonite, perhaps because the first Aeltester of the Schoenwieser Church, J. P. Klassen, made Winnipeg his base as early as 1929. Further, other members of the now disbanded Schoenwieser Church,

whose founding dates are documented, use founding dates other than 1926.

Secondly, the Mädchenheim was founded in 1926 at the request of Gerhard Peters, who ministered to a group of Mennonites meeting at the then Zion Reformed Church on Alexander Avenue. David Toews, Canadian representative of the American-based Conference of Mennonites, then in charge of inner missions, administered funding for both the church and the Girls' Home.

Thirdly, Concordia, was a joint venture of Mennonites from the Winnipeg group of the Schoenwieser Church, other General Conference groups, and members of the Mennonite Brethren churches.

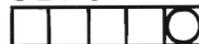
Bethania too was a joint venture, drawing members from the General Conference church, or more correctly, a venture of the Mennonite Benevolent Society formed in 1945. Sunset House, however, is First Mennonite-funded and owned, while Arlington House is owned by MHRC. The Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, however, contracted with First Mennonite for the management of it. Autumn House, though always having had a board with a number of members from First Mennonite, also has board members from other Conference churches. It too is a venture of the Mennonite Benevolent Society, which owns it. Much of the funding of Autumn House came from Canada Mortgage and Housing.

Lastly, may I add that the J. H. Enns paper on Hans Denk was presented to a study group for clergymen and was not available to the general public.

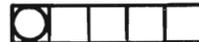
Respectfully yours,
H. Matsuo
Archivist, First Mennonite

mirror mix-up

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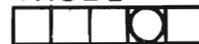
DARTE



REPAS



TASEL



When angry, count four;
when very angry



Mark Twain

In this edition we announce the winner of the November contest: R. Schellenberg, of Winnipeg, who was chosen from among 65 entries.

Answers are hale, alive, sense, wealth, health, heaven.

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 23, 1987.

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Manitoba news

The International Coalition for Land/Water Stewardship in the Red River Basin recently presented **D. K. Friesen**, the Red River Basin Perspective Award at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks at the Fourth Annual International Land and Water Summit Conference. Friesen was recognized for his devotion and energy spent shaping a regional perspective of water needs for a large portion of Southern Manitoba. His efforts helped form the the Lower Red River Valley Water Commission, and served as Secretary-Treasurer of this body from 1958 until 1981.

The Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba is sponsoring **Mary Lou Driedger** to assist church congregations in teaching peace to children. Driedger, an elementary school teacher, has developed a children's peace curriculum for use in the public schools. She has adapted many of her ideas for creative use in the church setting. She can be contacted at Box 3027, Steinbach, Man. R0A 2A0.

Dr. Paul Peters, after 25 years of medical practice in Steinbach, is taking a six-month "sabbatical." He is spending two months in China under a program sponsored by China Educational Exchange. He will lecture at the Lu-Zhon Medical College in Sichuan, a city of about 300,000 people. In addition to lecturing at the college, Peters, together with his wife, Dorothy, will travel to other points in China as well as visit Hong Kong and Taiwan.

The Steinbach Chamber of Commerce has honored former mayor **A. D. Penner** with an honorary life membership given in recognition of outstanding contributions to Steinbach's civic, economic and social development. In 1937 he opened the Southeast's first Dodge dealership, and in 1957 he started advertising Steinbach as "the automobile city." He also started a road-building construction firm, helped his brother from Penner Tire and Rubber company, was the chairman of the village committee when Steinbach was incorporated in 1946, served as a town councillor for 11 years and mayor for 10 years, was a founding member of the golf club and was instrumental in Steinbach's getting a fly-in air field. At 76, Penner is president of Penner's Construction and Kay's Construction.

Kenneth G. Bauman, recently elected president of the General Conference Mennonite Church, died suddenly on December 21, 1986, of complications following surgery for cancer. At the time of his death, he was senior pastor at First Mennonite Church in Berne, Indiana. Vice-President Florence Driedger, from Regina, Sask., is carrying out the duties of president since Bauman's death.

Leo and Darlene Drieger, on sabbatical leave, are presently in Boston, where Leo has an appointment at the Centre for International Affairs, Harvard University. Before Christmas they travelled extensively in Asia and the Middle East, visiting MCC projects in several countries.

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Len Siemens, most recently of Ros-thern, Sask., has begun serving an assignment with Mennonite Central Committee Canada's Personnel Services. Siemens will be involved in recruiting and processing applicants for voluntary service in MCC's programs around the world. Siemens served with MCC in Egypt from 1982 to 1985, teaching English at the Coptic Evangelical Seminary in Cairo. During the past year he has been a high school teacher in Martensville, Sask. His home church is the Rosthern Mennonite Fellowship. Siemens studied at Canadian Mennonite Bible College and the University of Edmonton, earning a Bachelor's degree in English. His parents are Ruben and Tina Siemens of Boissevain, Man.

Westgate Mennonite Collegiate is concluding the first part of two semesters of the 1986-87 school year. The school year has progressed well up to this point. Enrolment has been at maximum for the last several years. Westgate offers the "00" academic program at the high school level. It emphasizes religion, music, languages, and student involvement in school related activities (sports, clubs, choirs, student council, yearbook, etc.). The staff has the mandate to develop the educational program from a Christian perspective. Parental involvement is vital to the success of the school. Constituency interest and encouragement is a vital dimension of the total program.

The Canadian Conference of Mennonites is sponsoring **Ernest Enns** to work in music with the "Umsiedler" Mennonite Congregations in Germany. He and his wife Irene left January 15, for Neuwied, Germany. Their initial posting is for six months. Ernest Enns, retired vice-president of Monarch Industries Ltd., has had a life long vocational interest in music. He has been a member of the senior choir at the First Mennonite Church since his high school days and for 20 years, conductor of this choir; a member of the Philharmonic Choir of Winnipeg for 30 years; a member of the Winnipeg Men's Music Club (which sponsors the annual music festivals); a past member of the board of directors of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra. He has also served the Mennonite Fellowship and broader community in other ways. Mr. Enns said he was looking forward to the challenge of assisting choir directors and enriching musical libraries in "Umsiedler" congregations.

TRAINEX OPENS IN WINKLER

Trainex Lifeskills, a new employment preparation program, has recently been established in Winkler. Lifeskills will share facilities with Trainex Industries and operate under the auspices of Eden Mental Health Centre. The new program is funded by Canada Employment and Immigration and is an expansion of the ongoing program at Trainex Industries.

Bernie Loeppky, executive director of Eden Mental Health Centre, commented on the new program, "The Lifeskills program moves the Trainex

concept one more step along the way by providing additional and different training modules. We are excited about the potential of the two programs working together."

Kerry Swanson will act as project director for Trainex Lifeskills. Swanson commented, "Trainex Lifeskills' purpose is to compliment other vocational rehabilitation programs that operate in this area. It is another step in the continuum of regional employment services for the employment disadvantaged."

The purpose of the Lifeskills program is to help people who have traditionally found it difficult to fit into the work force by equipping them with the social and personal skills they need in order to experience success in the work place. Participants are expected to enter the program from a variety of backgrounds and with a variety of needs. As much as possible the program will be tailored to

Madeleine Enns a member of Charleswood Mennonite Church, spent a few months in Winnipeg for medical care during the Christmas season, and has now returned to her teaching position in Sichuan, China, where she is teaching English under the sponsorship of China Educational Exchange.

Eleanor Loewen of Charleswood Church has accepted a teaching assignment in India under the sponsorship of the General Conference Commission on Overseas Missions, for June 15 to September 15, 1987.

COMING EVENTS

May 21 and 23: Die Wildschütz (the Poacher), an opera by Albert Lortzing, by the Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre; at the Playhouse Theatre.



Ernest Enns, (centre) seen here at a breakfast meeting at The 8Shove a few days before his departure for Germany. With him are Prof. Henry Engbrecht, School of Music University of Manitoba, Rudy Schellenberg, director of choral and vocal activities, Steinbach Bible

College, Franz Neufeld, school inspector and former choirmaster of North Kildonan Mennonite Church, Bernie Neufeld, minister of music, Sargeant Mennonite Church, and Dr. George Wiebe, professor of music at CMBC.

meet the specific needs of the individual participants.

In order to qualify for the program, applicants must be eligible to work in Canada. In addition, they must demonstrate sufficient English language skills to be able to benefit from the program.

Individuals will be referred to Trainex Lifeskills from a variety of community agencies. Interested persons may apply directly to Trainex Lifeskills Box 435, Winkler, Manitoba R0G 2X0.

CHACO SETTLEMENT TOPIC OF BOOK

The story of the first Mennonite settlers in Paraguay's Chaco, told by one of the participants in that 1920s adventure, is recounted in the new German book *Neue Heimat in der Chacowildnis* (New Home in the Chaco Wilderness) by Martin W. Friesen.

The author was born in the East Reserve in Manitoba in 1912, and at the time of the emigration to Paraguay he was 15 years old. His father was Martin C. Friesen, a spiritual leader of the Canadians who left their prosperous farms for what was then one of the most inhospitable areas of the world.

The book focuses specifically on the

years 1926-29, telling of the decision to migrate, the journey and the first years of settlement. Friesen, who still lives in Paraguay, has long taken an interest in historical research surrounding those events.

The book of about 200 pages includes 32 photos, plus maps, tables and sketches. It is available in North America in hardcover for \$19.95 (Canadian) and in softcover for \$14.95 (Canadian) from D. W. Friesen & Sons Ltd., P. O. Box 720, Altona, Manitoba R0G 0B0.

Mennonite Leader Receives Paraguay Order of Merit

Kornelius Walde of Asunción, a long-time leader among the Mennonites of Paraguay, received an "Order of Merit" award from the national government in a December ceremony, according to a report in *Mennoblatt*, the publication of Fernheim Colony.

The award was given for Walde's achievements in the colonization and development of the Chaco. He now serves as business director for the council of administrators of Fernheim, Menno, Neuland, Friesland and Volendam colonies, the first three in Paraguay's Chaco and the last two in East Paraguay.

"To honor Kornelius Walde is to honor the Mennonite colonies," said Dr. Delfin Ugarte Centurion, Paraguay's minister of industry and commerce, during the award ceremony. He reported that 21,572 Mennonites live in 63 settlements in the nation.

LAURENCE HOUSE IS NEEPAWA PROJECT

Margaret Laurence's grandfather's house is being restored by a group of Neepawa's citizens who wish to preserve the house as an historical site and, especially, to honour its famous author.

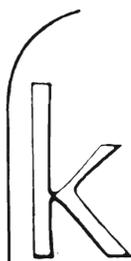
Margaret Laurence was a writer of truly international stature, one of Canada's best known. Her novels include *The Stone Angel*, *A Jest of God*, and *The Diviners* — all part of her 'Manawaka Series' — plus *A Bird in the House*, short stories based on her Grandfather Simpson's house. Her wonderful African works, her 'Vancouver' novel, *The Fire Dwellers*, her beloved children's stories have ensured that her stature as one of Canada's truly great writers is secure and most deserved.

The house was purchased for \$40,000 and it is anticipated that to restore it to its 1895 splendor will require \$55,000 for the exterior, \$25,000 for the interior. Artists, artisans, and cultural groups will use it; an historic house and famous house will be saved; tourists will finally be able to actually visit "The Laurence House."

Many volunteers are donating time and energy to this worthwhile project. People and businesses in the town are being canvassed for support. All funds will go to capital expenditure and restoration. Tax receipts will be available.

For information contact: Laurence Committee, Box 1146, Neepawa, R0J 1H0.

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Christian servants are needed who can show the face of love

by John Peters

The aim of Mennonite Central Committee is service "in the name of Christ." That's a motto that suggests MCC's ongoing need for Christian servants — servants who will not only identify the face of poverty in our suffering world, but also present the face of Christian love to the poor.

MCC's workers in 52 countries around the globe serve so that because of their work people may praise God, as the apostle writes in II Cor. 9:12-13. "This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everybody else."

But organizing people for service in today's world brings new challenges. We at MCC Canada would like to bring before you one point of tension, one question of approach, and one possible projection.

An ongoing, but hopefully healthy, tension exists in the way MCC works at developing service programs in many areas of need both in Canada and overseas.

Should MCC simply identify the places where there is the greatest need and then search for the right people to meet those needs? Or should we be mindful of the people who are available and adjust MCC programs accordingly?

MCC program planners try to be both responsive to the needs in our society and sensitive to the kinds of gifts and abilities that are being offered by willing applicants. But the onus is also on the folks in the pews, whose task is to encourage one other to develop gifts that meet today's needs. Let's each examine whether we have gifts to offer that will fulfill our Christian mandate to serve.

Today we're bombarded by high-

powered advertising appeals demanding we make a choice. Radio and TV ministries, nondenominational missions and philanthropic agencies are competing ever more forcefully for our donations and our people. We may begin to wonder: is MCC's low-key approach to recruiting workers adequate?

I'd say a pressured advertising attack should never replace two other styles of generating interest in service, styles I call "preparing the soil" and "shoulder-tapping."

Zero-tillage is a farming method in which seeds are planted without preparing the soil. It may be an advisable agricultural technique under certain conditions, but when it comes to preparing the seed-bed for service in the hearts of Christians, zero-tillage is not the answer. "Preparing the soil" can be done by raising the level of awareness among our members, by telling our stories of service, by developing service themes, encouraging people to volunteer locally, by welcoming reports by returned workers in our churches and by raising issues related to Christian service.

One applicant, in answer to where she found out about MCC, responded that she thought it had been "in her blood" when she was born. Let's continue to make Christian service, in MCC and elsewhere, an integral part of our spiritual heritage.

A gentle tap on someone's shoulder about his or her potential involvement in service can do wonders. The person receiving a heartfelt, personal reminder to possibly consider Christian service through MCC does not need to be on the defensive. Instead, he or she may well see it as a vote of confidence and an encouragement.

It is quite in order for Christians, now and then, to unapologetically, unassumingly and unobtrusively tap a brother or sister on the shoulder and support them in their walk of faith by mentioning Christian service opportunities.

The percentage of MCC workers who are returning for second and third terms of service is steadily rising. Thank God for willing workers. However, will we rely increasingly on alumni to the neglect of "new" candidates? Hopefully not.

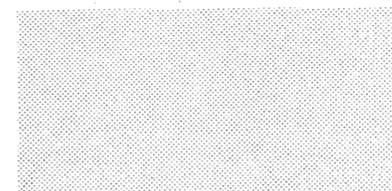
As some have suggested, we may need a human resource inventory of our congregations so that when someone with a particular set of gifts and talents is required we can more easily identify that person. But no system can substitute for the personal commitment of believers and their own initiative to come forward and declare themselves ready and willing to serve.

These are some of the ongoing tensions within MCC. There may be strategies to choose and trends to analyze. But God's kingdom has room for each of His children to serve others "in the name of Christ" and to His glory. Let's unite as servants, as congregations, as pastors, and as Christian workers to seek creative, redemptive, loving service opportunities.

John Peters is personnel services of MCC Canada. This article is adapted on request from a speech made to the MCC Ontario annual meeting, November, 1985.

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Lay Witness weekend substitutes enthusiasm for scripture basis

The Morden Bergthaler Church last fall hosted a Lay Witness Mission weekend. Team members arrived Friday afternoon from Nebraska, Minnesota, Kansas, and from various Manitoba towns, including Winnipeg. Thirty-nine adults and nine children were matched with 18 congregational families. The coordinator for the weekend was Adolf Neufeld from Inman, Kansas.

What is Lay Witness Mission? A brochure, *Lay Witness Mission*, published by Lay Renewal Ministries defines it as "a weekend experience enabling men and women to share with each other the reality of Christ in their daily lives." Who are the witnesses? "They are growing Christians who are learning how to witness, how to pray, how to find ministry and meaning in small groups, and how to put their faith to work in the vital issues of life."

The booklet, *A Road to Renewal*, explains the Lay Witness Program and some historical background. Ben Johnson, the pastor of a small church in Phenix City, Alabama, had an overwhelming desire to see the laity of his church come alive and to see the church develop spiritual vitality. In October 1961 the first Lay Witness Mission was held at the Summerville United Methodist Church in Phenix City. Johnson found the effect of lay people talking together was so powerful, that many nominal Christians made deeper commitments to Christ. To maintain the new life that was generated, he started a small prayer/sharing group emphasis in which many people were able to share deeply about their struggles and problems. (p.18)

Nine major denominations have endorsed the lay witness approach as a "valid instrument of renewal:" the United Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church U.S., the Reformed Church in America, the Disciples of Christ, the Episcopal Church, the

Church of God, the Society of Friends, the Church of the Brethren, and the Southern Baptists.

Supporting the Lay Witness Mission ministry is the Institute of Church Renewal, founded in 1965, a nonprofit foundation, interdenominational in character. After "the effectiveness of a given program or resource has been demonstrated," the ICR makes it available to churches and groups of all denominations. (p.19-20)

The schedule for the weekend is given in the same booklet, as well as in the brochure *Lay Witness Mission*: "The mission begins on Friday evening with a congregational dinner, followed by a general meeting, and small group meetings. Coffee groups are held Saturday morning in the homes, followed by luncheons for men and women. Saturday evening another congregational meeting is held, concluding with small group meetings. Sunday morning the team members speak in church school classes, and the coordinator witnesses during the worship service. The team members return home Sunday afternoon, while Sunday evening the local people hold an evaluation session which often is one of the most meaningful times of the weekend."

Our evaluation session opened with Pastor Abe Hiebert's response. He commented that when he looked at the aims for the weekend, he felt encouraged. Friday evening the study groups gathered and these aims were shared: 1) for us to learn to know each other better, 2) for all members to become more active in our church, and 3) to have a group of people who will desire to study the Bible. Pastor Abe said this was one way we could ask ourselves "Where are we? What stage are we?" It is a weekend we can cherish and use to the greater glory of Christ our Saviour, he concluded.

Many members of our church responded positively. "If tears can

cleanse the soul, then my soul has been cleansed this weekend," proclaimed one member. Another member, who had visited relatives in Russia, commented that he was reminded of the fellowship of believers there. It was like the early church, he said. Tym Elias, the youth pastor, asked what it said about us if outsiders had to come in to help us share. Another member cautioned that emotions were unstable. We needed to continue sharing based on the Bible.

The writer of this report found some aspects of the Lay Witness Mission disturbing. Our coordinator, Adolf Neufeld and his wife, Wanda, stated frequently that the lay witnesses were not professional. They were people just like us. Is there something doubtful about "professional" people? The whole weekend was programmed as if to sell a product. Can renewal or commitment to Christ be packaged and sold like any product? Where is the Christ who cautioned would-be followers to count the cost?

The Lay Witness Mission approach does not stress Bible study. In all the study group sessions, we were not given any scripture text for discussion. In the sermon given Sunday morning by our coordinator, we were not read or quoted any scripture. The preparation booklet, *The Great Discovery*, distributed to the membership before the weekend, nowhere advocates Bible study. Ben Johnson writes in the preparation booklet, "If we intend to develop an effective life of prayer, there are some commitments that we must make: First, we will commit ourselves to a time and place of prayer; Second, a commitment to study (nine books about prayer are suggested, but not the Bible); Third, the commitment to honesty." (p.13-14)

Sharing is the basis of the Lay Witness Mission approach. Is it sound doctrine to assume that sharing leads to renewal or a "deeper commitment to Christ" (p.18 *A Road to Renewal*), as the founder of the Lay Witness Mission ministry believes? During our weekend, witnesses were not told when they would be asked to "share." As a result, some people shared repeatedly, while some team members were not asked at all. Does hearing someone's difficulties a second time dull the listener's responsiveness? Was the pain experienced becoming an obsession for some witnesses? Rather than "share" pain that is still very real, should we, as the Psalmist says, "Be still, and Know that I am God"?

— Evelyn Hoepfner

“Maybe we can't go overseas to work, but it's a great satisfaction to know that here I am at home supporting those who are working out there in the thick of it.”

— Mary Frances Drudge
Markham, Ontario

Down's syndrome hasn't stopped Carl Drudge from serving others. Carl weaves rag rugs from unsaleable clothes donated to the Care & Share Shoppe in Stouffville, Ont. His sister Mary Frances washes and cuts the fabric and ties the finished rugs. The rugs are sold at the shop and proceeds go to MCC. Carl and Mary Frances also worked for many years selling MCC SELFHELP Crafts. They are among the thousands who volunteer for MCC at home.

Everyone can be an MCC volunteer.



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Royalties, Bitte

fonn Jack Thiessen

Fleijcht woat mie kjeena nijch jleewe, waut mie latst dreeme deed, oba dauts je uck eendoot, wiels de Mensche jleewe je soowesoo aulahaund Domms waut goanijch soo senne kaun, enn see jleewe nijch waut fleijcht derjchut soo ess. Aulsoo ess de Jleewarie kjeen Moatstock nijch, enn biem Dreeme aul lang nijch.

Na aulsoo: Wann mie no dreeme ess, weet etj noch fonn dee Doag opp'e Foarm woo eena daut aum basten aunjait. Eena lat sijch toom Schwien-schlachte ennlode, enn schleit sijch dän Buck too Meddach brieditj foll mett Kotlette fonn fresch jeschlachte Brood-säaje, enn tseowents at Eena dann noch rum een Pund Rebspäa mett schoopen Samp opp, enn doatoo uck noch een haulwet Kulla fresche Lāwaworscht. Dann jeit Eena noch soo een bätje bieaun enne Reatjakoma nenn wann'et aul diesta ess, enn sajcht, "Etj mott noch en bät nom Rejchtjen kjitje," enn nemmt daut Kjnippsmassa mett enn schnitt sitj soo enn tian Tsoll Ruak-worscht auf, omm notooseene aus dee uck rejchtijch derjch jereatjat ess, enn Eena doaf dann uck nijch fejäte, dee mett eene Tsippel, soo groot aus eene haulwe Japsfoll, toop too feniele. Enn wann eena dann enne Bocht jeit enn fejat en poa Braundwien hinjaraun too jeete — jo eenfach fejat, wiels Eena fleicht too jietsijch ess — dann kaun Eena eene schreftljiche Garantie jäwe, daut eenem de Nacht de Roode hinjaraun senne woare, daut heet, daut Eena sea dreeme woat. De Rewlutsjoon emm Buck späld sitj dann uck emm Droom-Incubator auf, enn daut's fe damn sure, soo's jana säd.

Na jo, waut weet etj woaromm etj latst soonen interessaunten Droom haud; etj fe mien Deel weet blooss, daut etj eenen haud, enn waut mie aum measchten oppräajd ess daut etj jleew, daut dee gaunsa Droom uck woarschientlijch wertlijch soo ess.

Aulsoo mie dreemd, daut etj wacka wea enn nijch schlope kunn. Etj saut doa hinja Jrientol, woa de Mensche daut nijch soo schratlijch drock habe aus emm Mennonite Studies Center, enn woa Eena noch Tiet enn Lost haud too dreeme, enn woa dee Kjoatje enn de Foarmarie eenem nijch aule Krauft enn

Freid aune Dreemarie fedorwe. Enn wäa kaun mie emm Droom beseatje? Jo, stalt junt blooss fäa, wäa mie doa beseatje kaun . . . Kjeen aundra aus de leewe Jesus. Yessirie, doa wear'a mett eemol ferr mie enn sad sitj oppen Jrientholschen Steen dol, räd Plautdietsch mett een bät Jüdsch doamank, oba sonst fein festendlich. Hee meend soo bieaun, daut am daut en bätje stiead, daut de Mensche daut soo drock haude, daut hee enn sien Foda daut mett dee Opp-sejcht feare aule Henj foll too doone haude, enn daut see selwst goanijch sorajcht too äare eajne Oabeid kaume.

Etj wull am jrods biefljichte, oba donn haud hee noch waut "aundret mett mie too beräde," säd'a. "Na waut?" fruach etj. "Daut woa etj die mau fetale, wann Du mie fespratjchst, daut Du mie Diene eajne Meening too daut Gaunse jäwe woascht." "Sejcha," säd etj. "Daut docht etj mie aul, wiels daut haft sitj aul en bätje bie ons doa bowe rommjeräd, daut du nijch mett diene Meening lang schlure wurscht. Dann aulsoo looss."

Wie drunke en bätje (waut wie drunke woa etj junt nijch fetale, wiels daut wudd jie fleijcht de Sommafelda, oba de aundre fe sure nijch — mie any-ways nich — jleewe), enn donn lād hee looss. "Weetst uck waut," säd'a, "etj well je uck nijch gromsauje, oba eenem woat daut maunjchmol doch meist too domm. Stall die doch mol fäa, waut mett mienem Nome blooss fe Jeld jemoakt woat; nä, nijch Dusende, nijch Milljoone, oba Dusende Billjoone ooda Milljarde, mienetshaulwe. Enn emma mea, enn dee Jeldtretjta blift emma lādijch." Donn word hee stell enn bedajchtijch enn donn lād hee wada looss, "Soo's etj aul säd, etj well enn woa uck nijch gromsauje, oba daut woat mie doch langsomm een bätje too groff mett de Mensche. Oba waut etj mau mett die beräde well, ess waut aundret. Kjitj mol waut de Mensche jedone habe. Du weetst, etj sie aus gaunss oamet Gottes-tjind jesorwe, oba etj lāw wieda enn Jedanke enn emm Hoat fonn dee Mensche, waut sitj Tiet näme, sitj Tiet lote. Oba de Mensche ranne sitj meist doot, enn saje, see doone daut enn mienem Nome. Enn dann fedeene se noch Jeld äwa Jeld mett äare dusselje Rosarie enn mienem Nome. Enn dee

Ruchularie nemmt kjeen Enj." Dann naum wie noch een Schlucktje, enn dann kaun de groote Äwarauschung. "Enn nu ess'et febie mett daut Gaunse, wiels miene Jeduld ess too Enj. Enn Du saust bitte no dree Audwekote gone, enn an foljendet bestale: Saj an, daut etj een Deel, jo, blooss mien Deel fonn daut Jeld, woont de Mensche enn mienem Nome jemoakt habe enn waut mie toosteit, bett Enj '87 habe well. De Mensche weete kratjt woo fäl daut ess; städwies een poa Dolasch, städwies een poa Moatj, hiea enn doa enn Huptje Rubeltjes, enn meist aulewäje Klompes Schekels, oba STAEDWIES UCK MILL-JARDE DOLASCH aun suafedeendet Jeld! Etj well uck mau blooss daut waut mie toosteit aun Royalties aune Bieble, aun Missjoonsjelda enn een Tiandel fonn daut Tiandel waut de Kjoatje sitj ennjefuppadau. Aule Kjoatje." Donn wort'et stell, sea stell . . . Saut doa hinja Jrienthol opp eenem Steen, een schmocka, groota Kjeadel wear'a, haud haulf langet Hoa, eenen schmocken Boat, earnste Uage, dee fäl Leew speajelde, enn wea earnst, sea earnst enn besorjd. Enn donn: "Hiea sent de Nomes fonn dee dree Audwekote, woone daut Jeld fe mie enndriewe selle. See ha een Joa Tiet. Enn wann se daut gaunse Jeld waut de Mensche mie schuldijch sent opp dit Konto deponieat habe (Hee gauf mie nu Numma enn Adress, gaunss dietlijch, uck de Adress fonn de dree Audwekote, een amerikaunscha, een kathoolischa Fetaljāna utem Wautikaun, enn eenen Mennist ut-no foolin-ut Steinbach) dann kom etj tridj enn woa Sache aunstale, waut kjeena nijch jleewe ooda fote kaun. Dee Sproak, woone etj dann räde woa, woare de measchte Kjoatjegangsters niemols nijch festone! Enn dauts nijch mea lang han. Waut meest, oola Kjeadel?" fruach'a. "Etj halp jearen too-schlone enn een bät opprieme," fusheld etj lieseltjes. Daut freid am enn donn stunt'a opp, enn donn gauf'a mie de Haund toom Aufscheed, enn donn dretjt'a mie sea enn earnst de Finjasch . . . enn donn? Jo, enn donn wear'a uck aul wajch. Enn etj? Etj wea wacka, oba sea!

mm

zur diskussion

Martin Luther King Jr. und Wir

Ich sitze hier an diesem Amerikanischen Feiertag und überlege, wie ich meiner Abendklasse, die deutsche Literatur des 19. Jahrhunderts liest, etwas zum Thema: Martin Luther King, jr. aufstischen kann, und ich komme auf ein starkes Gedicht von Heinrich Heine: „Das Sklavenschiff“, dessen letzte Strophen so lauten:

„Um Christi Willen verschone, o Herr,
Das Leben der schwarzen Sünder!
Erzürnten sie dich, so weisst du ja,
Sie sind so dumm wie die Rinder.
Verschone ihr Leben um Christi willn,
Der für uns alle gestorben!
Denn bleiben mir nicht dreihundert Stück,
So ist mein Geschäft verdorben.“

Es handelt sich im Gedicht um eine Beschreibung eines Schiffes, das Schwarze aus Afrika nach Amerika verfrachtet, um das Anfang der Trauergeschichte also, in der King eine entscheidende Rolle gespielt hat. Heines Gedicht zeigt, wie dieselbe Gesellschaft, die den Rassismus als ökonomisches Mittel einsetzt, ihn auch religiös rationalisiert. Gestern und heute ist der Rassismus in der Vereinigten Staaten und natürlich auch sonst, bei uns zum Beispiel, eine Tatsache. Das musste ich an demselben Tag mit meiner Tagespost erleben, denn ein freundlicher Leser hatte mir aus einer Zeitung, die ich lieber nicht nennen möchte ein Ausschnitt zugeschickt, mit dem Titel: „Nelson Mandela — ein falscher Freiheitsheld.“

Darin werden die ANC (African National Congress) und ihr Leiter, der seit 23 Jahren verhaftete Nelson Mandela, als radikale, terroristische Kommunisten abgetan. Zum Schluss steht der wohl wahre Satz: „Was die Regierung Südafrikas und die ANC daran hindert, in ein Friedensgespräch zu kommen und eine friedliche Lösung auszuhandeln, ist vor allem die glaubwürdige Angst der Weissen, im Meer der schwarzen Mehrheit unterzugehen, sobald der Damm bricht.“

Die Weissen, d.h. wir Weissen, haben sicher etwas zu fürchten, „sobald der Damm bricht.“ Ich will hier nicht Schuld verteilen und mit dem Finger auf alte und neue Täter zeigen. Wir müssen uns aber Gedanken darüber machen, dass diese lange Leidensgeschichte der Schwarzen, in Afrika, in Amerika und sonst, noch lange nicht zu Ende ist, und dass es unter uns manche gibt, die noch immer glauben, dass sie es besser wissen als unsere schwarzen Brüder und Schwestern.

Martin Luther King jr und heute Bischof Tutu z. B. haben die Aufgabe auf sich genommen, **ohne Gewalt** gegen diese gesellschaftliche Ungerechtigkeit zu wirken. Mandela hat sich nicht der Gewaltlosigkeit verschrieben, aber er kann sich auch so auf eine ehrwürdige Tradition der Freiheitskämpfer beziehen. Die Sache der Schwarzen in Südafrika ist gerecht, ob auch verschiedene Mittel, manche besser als andere, angewandt werden.

Aber schon Heine hat die „christliche“ Unehrllichkeit der reichen, westlichen Industrielwelt entlarvt, die ihre Sklavenschiffe sogar mit Namen wie „Jesus“ tarnten, um sich einbilden zu können, sie täten ihren schwarzen „Kindern“ etwas Gutes. Heines bittere Ironie sollte auch die unsrige sein; wieviel mehr hätten wir schon aus der Geschichte lernen sollen! Das gilt natürlich auch für unsere eigene einheimischen Mitbürger und für andere Minderheiten um uns herum, die wir besonders gut verstehen sollten (der Unterschied besteht zumeist darin, dass sie eine benachteiligte, wir aber eine bevorzugte Minderheit sind).

Als Mennonitenchristen sollten wir uns der bunten Schar zugesellen, die auf den Tag zuarbeitet, wenn, wie King es ausdrückte, alle Gotteskinder in dem einfachen Negerlied einstimmen:

“Free at last, free at last,
Praise God Almighty,
I'm free at last!”

Ob wir das könnten?

VGD

our word

Merchants and Ministers: who shall be master of the Lord's Day

Sunday shopping is an issue the politicians would like to avoid because there is no compromise that will satisfy all sides.

On one side of the issue are the merchants who argue that "the people" want Sunday shopping and as evidence point to the number of people who are already shopping Sundays despite the restrictive laws.

On the other side are those who want to preserve Sunday as a "day of rest." The largest body within this camp is the Christian community which believes that the original Lord's Day Act was an entirely appropriate way to protect Sunday. Another group within this camp is organized labor which sees Sunday commerce as an erosion of its hard-won efforts to build "rest days" into the system.

As unresolved as the issue is, it is clear that one loser is the Christian community. Where its viewpoint was once pervasive enough to find its expression in the Lord's Day Act, any new Sunday shopping legislation will be written in phrases that carefully avoid any reference to religion. Indeed, the Christian lobby recognizes its fall from influence when it asks that Sunday shopping be curtailed to provide a common rest day so families can do things together. Its hidden agenda is still to preserve Sunday as the Lord's Day, but it has secularized the demand.

People on both sides of the issue are trying hard to persuade the legislators to see it their way. The merchants are willing to break the law to make their point, while the anti-shopping lobby wants the current laws retained and upheld. (The behavior of the merchants is surprising in that most executives belittle people who resort to "civil disobedience" in order to establish principles of social justice, yet on the issue of Sunday shopping they are willing to defy the law.)

The church lobby is letting the politicians know through congregational resolutions and petitions what it wants. At one large Winnipeg MB church, a proponent of a petition there said it would only take the MBs of Manitoba to "turn this thing around" if they exerted united political pressure.

But resolving the Sunday shopping issue should not be a matter of which side has the most political muscle. In that kind of confrontation there are only winners and losers, and the decision is based on power, not on what is right.

One reason why Sunday shopping is so difficult to resolve is that both sides are right. It all depends on the point of view, and therein lies the dilemma for the politician who must choose one of the two "rights."

For the Christian community, will it really make a difference if there is wide-open Sunday shopping?

For those individuals and congregations that have clearly defined standards for Lord's Day observance, Sunday shopping will make no difference to their behavior — they simply will not participate.

The implicit fear may be that open Sundays will empty the churches; but this is open to question because one can assume that those who will shop on Sundays will be those who rarely, if ever, darken the aisles of churches now. A related concern is that with Sunday shopping, Sunday will no longer be "special," it will be just another day. But this, too, is open to scrutiny because there are religions that designate another week day for religious observance.

Christian church leaders should be aware, however, that Sunday shopping may force their young people to work on the Lord's Day, and it is here where they will have to teach and help youth to make the "tough decision" of whether to accept employment that includes Sunday shifts. Further, Christian businessmen who value Sunday as the Lord's Day will have to be courageous and say "as for me and my employees, we will close," even if it appears as if the decision affects business.

Young people may well be both winners and losers in a decision to open stores on Sundays. People aged 25 or less will be winners, especially if they are students, because Sunday shopping will provide them with new opportunities to earn money. At the same time these young people will be losers because as relative newcomers to the workforce they are in no position to refuse work shifts because they happen to fall on Sunday.

While the Christian community may lament the loss of the "Lord's Day" as it once knew it, it must nevertheless recognize that in some things it is a consensus within society that will decide how holidays and "rest days" are defined and observed. This consensus has shifted and has undermined the concept of Sunday as the Lord's Day. The pressure for Sunday commerce is a symptom that any Christian consensus there once was is fast fading.

Further, the Christian church must recognize that Sunday shopping does not affect its ability to minister to society, it only changes the context. And for this reason they should not exert too much energy in the political arena opposing Sunday shopping, but set priorities that continue set the Christian church as an example that is indeed "the Light of the World."

— Ed Unrau

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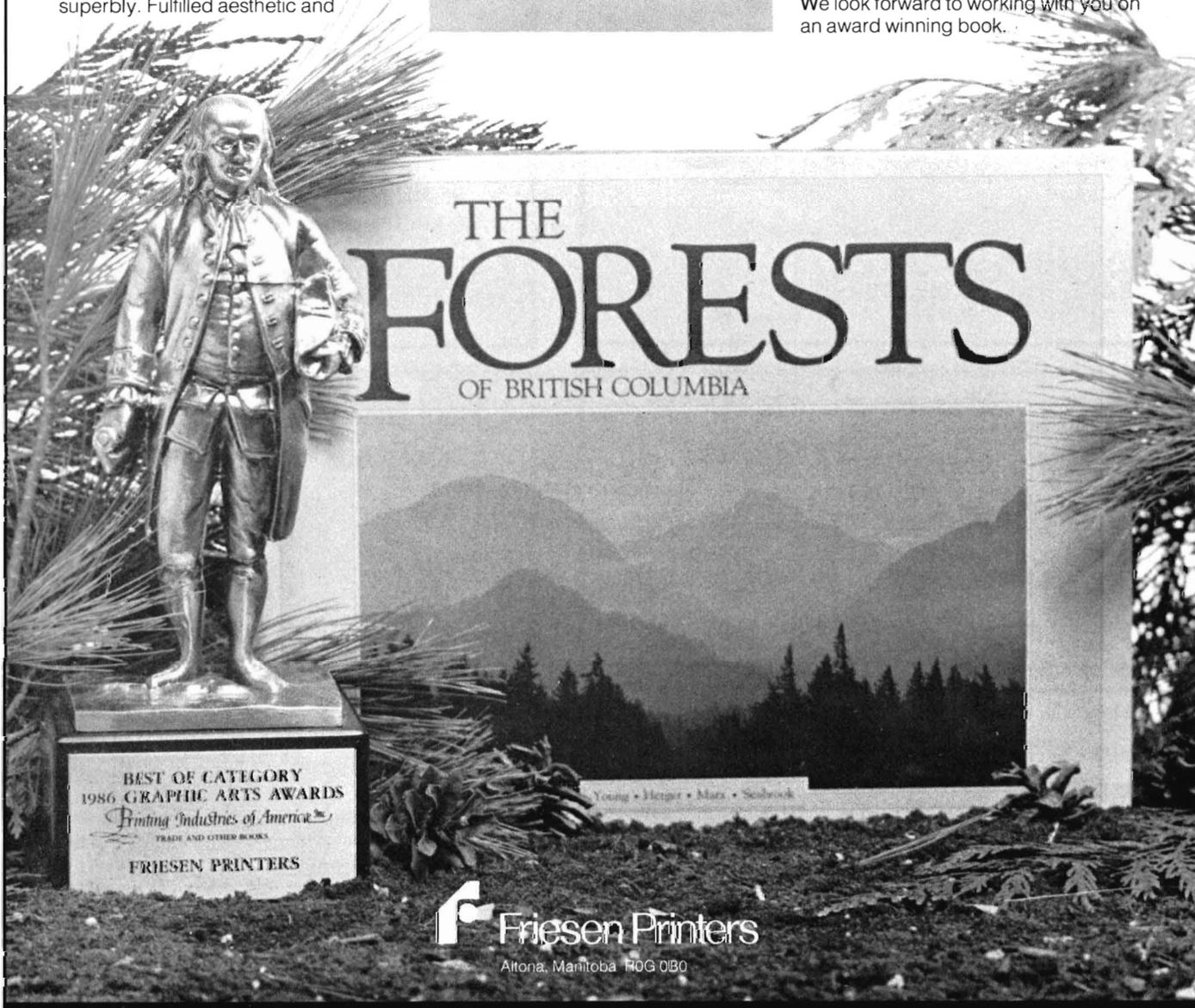
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We are proud to announce that our firm was chosen as a Best of Category winner in the recent PIA Graphic Arts Award competition.

The winning book was **The Forests of British Columbia** published by Whitecap Books of Vancouver. The judges described the winning book in the following words: "Superb design and superb execution of printing and binding. Beautiful photos reproduced superbly. Fulfilled aesthetic and



intellectual promise of the text and photos. The printing is clean and sharp, excellent typography." In addition, Friesen Printers received Awards of Merit for the book titled **Carl Rungius, Painter of the Western Wilderness** (published by Douglas & McIntyre) and **The Nutcracker** published by McClelland & Stewart. Friesen Printers has been a winner in this competition for the past six years. We look forward to working with you on an award winning book.



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