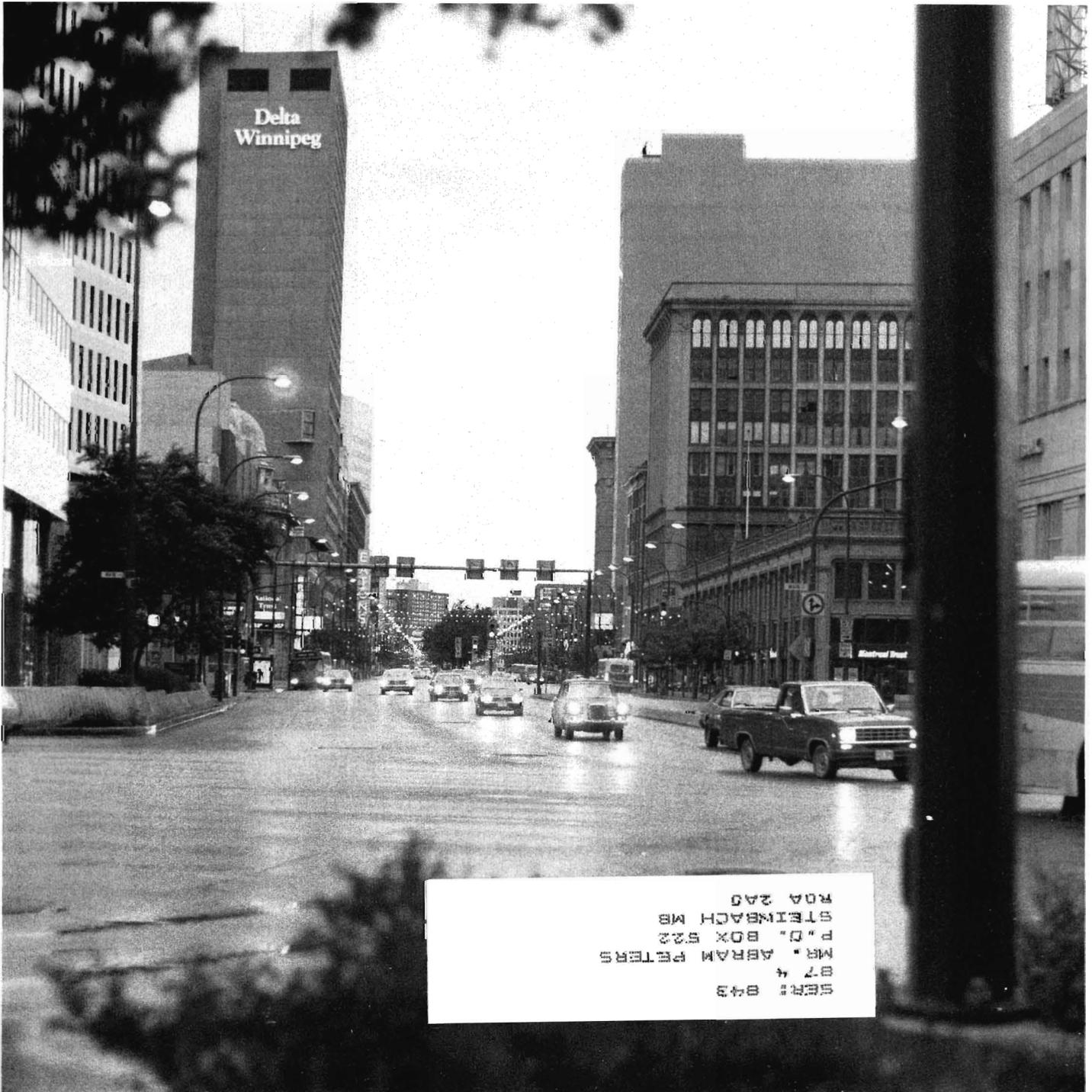
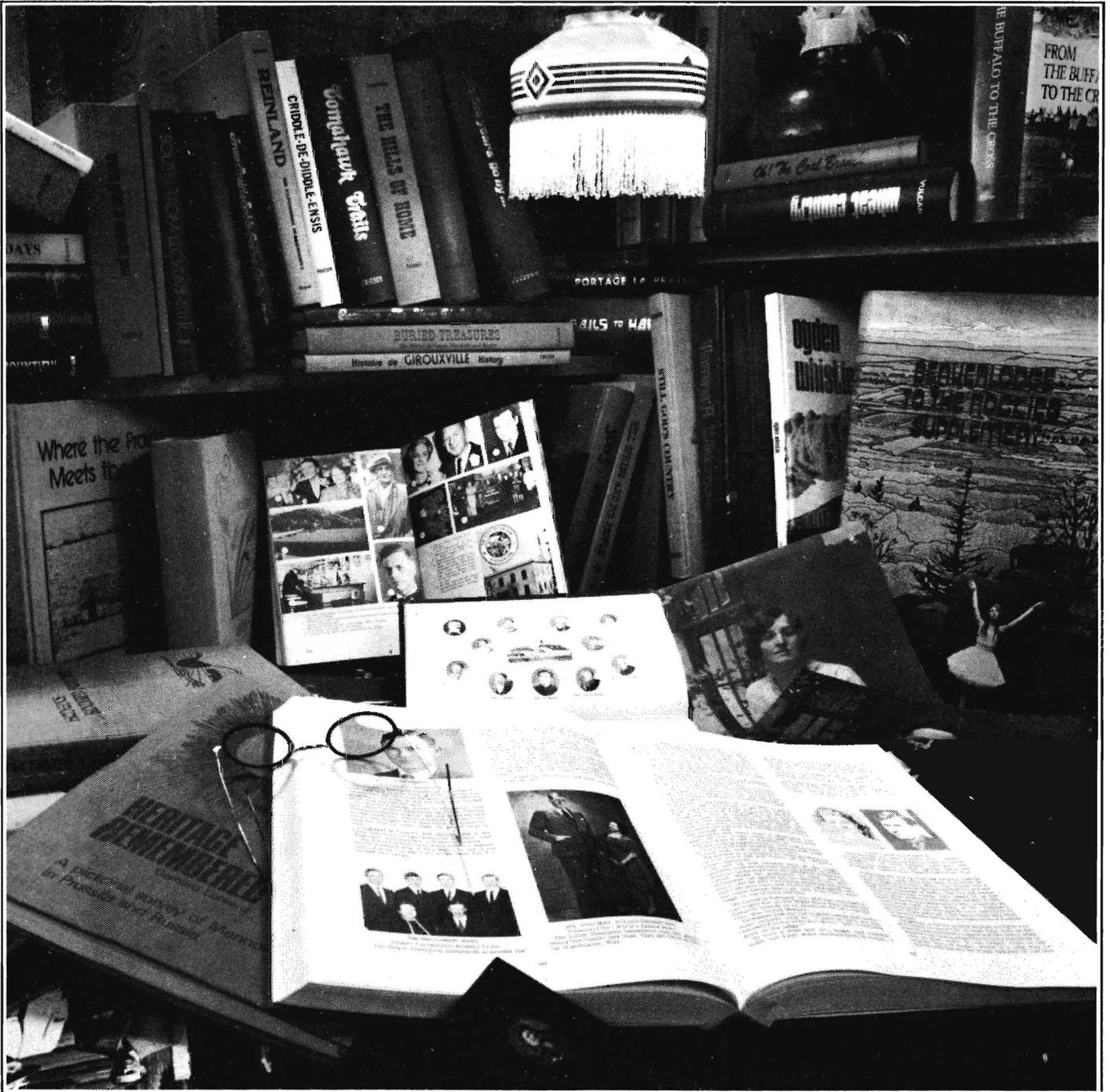


Mennonite MIRROR

volume 18 / number 9 / may-june, 1989





MORE AND MORE BOOKS HAVE ONE THING IN COMMON...

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ForeWord

This year we are "adjusting" our publishing schedule a little. While we are still planning to have 10 issues a year, their arrangement on the calendar is going to change. This May/June will be the last for this year, while an early August/September edition will be the first of next season's publishing schedule. While the publishing dates have changed, our commitment to bringing you relevant Mennonite reading material continues.

Many Manitobans, whether they admit it or not, listened to Ollie Penner on the radio. She had a unique ability to make a "connection" across the airwaves to those who tuned in to her programs. Although "retired" from the air, Mrs. Penner has not run out of things to do. In this edition, Mary Lou Driedger gives us an insight into Aunt Ollie.

Those who pay any attention to public health issues in Manitoba have heard the name of Margaret Fast, the director of communicable disease control for Manitoba. Dr. Fast was born and educated in Manitoba, and the seeds of her professional career were sown in her family home where farm work and reading blended to lay the foundation for her work today. Agnes Wall tells us about Dr. Fast.

Dora Maendel, whose work has been published here before, contributes another short story. In *Run With Patience*, she explores the joy of being allowed to enter her grandmothers garden for the first time.

Al Reimer pays tribute to the late Peter A. Vogt, a Steinbach man who affected his life. Mr. Vogt was a storeowner who had time for opera on a busy Saturday afternoon, and who exerted a "civilizing" influence on those who came into regular contact with his home.

Mennonites have had a long standing tradition of involvement in health care, including mental health. A short piece in this issue describes the Mennonite role in mental health in Manitoba and elsewhere in Canada. Four guys "batching" in their own home is not usually worthy of much comment, but when the four come with a variety of handicaps and an unquenchable zest for life then there is a story. Dana Mohr captures that zest following a visit to a home created by four buddies.

Anyone who has passed age 40, or so, will identify with the thoughts and observations of the article by Dora Dueck. Growing old is something we avoid thinking about, and we may even feel we are the same at 40 as we were at 20. But, try as we might, it eventually captures our attention. In her article, Mrs. Dueck laces the seriousness of aging with the humor that's needed to take the edge off the change.

There's another installment of Wilder Honig in High German, a Low German piece by Agnes Wall. The columns by Roy Vogt, Vic Penner, a couple of reviews, and letters to the editor are also scattered through this, dare we say it, another fine issue. Judge for yourself, by reading as many of the following pages as catch your eye.

Mary Lou Driedger, the writer on the article in the March edition on the Ebenezer Maedchenheim, as well as the five ladies she interviewed, want to acknowledge the important pastoral role the late Rev. J. H. Enns, minister at the First Mennonite Church, played in the lives of the young women served by the home.

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Mennonite Mirror

Publisher, Roy Vogt

Editor, Ruth Vogt

Managing Editor, Edward Unrau

Associate Editors: Al Reimer, Harry Loewen,

Victor Doerksen, Mavis Reimer

Writing Staff: Andre Oberle, Paul Redekop, Dana Mohr, J. Braun, Tim Wiebe, Sarah Klasseq, Agnes Wall, Mary Lou Driedger, George Epp, Vic Penner, Dora Dueck, Dora Maendel, Mirror Mix-up, Bob Matsuo.

Business Committee: Rudy Friesen, John Schroeder, Leona Penner, Erwin Warkentin, Nettie Penner, advertising sales, Frieda Unruh.

Mennonite Literary Society, Inc.

President, Roy Vogt; Vice-President, Ed Unrau;

Secretary, David Unruh; and Office Manager,

Frieda Unruh

Board of Directors: Rudy Friesen and John Schroeder.

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A career of the heart: Aunt Olly Penner earned a lasting place in many youthful lives

by Mary Lou Driedger

Not too long ago Olly Penner's granddaughter was trying to explain her family connections to someone she had just met. After several futile attempts she finally declared, "Aunt Olly is my grandma!"

"Why, of course," her new acquaintance asserted, "then I know exactly who you are!"

For more than two decades Olly Penner's name has been a household word in homes where the families listen to radio CFAM. The announcer for daily features like Cradle Roll, Ladies First, Hints for the Homemaker, Social Calendar, The Garden Show, and For the Ladies, Olly Penner also co-anchored the CFAM morning program with Jim McSweeney for more than 13 years. She is perhaps most fondly remembered, however, as the hostess of the popular Children's Party.

During the years from 1959 to 1987, thousands of youngsters from all over western Canada and the central northern United States gathered around their radios each day to listen to her lively program of stories, songs and birthday wishes. Particularly in the 1960's when many Mennonite families who listened to CFAM still did not have television sets, 'Aunt Olly' became a children's celebrity of a stature now afforded the likes of Big Bird and Mister Rogers. She used to receive about 3,500 fan letters annually and admits that she has kept most of them.

I drove out to Altona to spend a morning in Olly Penner's sunny kitchen. Plenty of plants bank the walls. We look out through huge windows at the birds visiting the feeders in her back yard. As a dedicated "Children's Party" listener myself, I had heard Olly Penner's voice every day for nearly ten years, but I found it even more enjoyable to meet her in person. Olly sparkles with life. She is naturally a warm

and friendly person. Time simply flies by as she talks. It is easy to see why her radio audience enjoyed listening to her so much. Olly has devoted a great deal of her life to a career in communications that she obviously loved, but you get the impression as you visit with her that through it all she has managed to keep a handle on the things she thinks are really important: her family and her faith.

Together we turn the pages of one of the more than ten albums filled with mementos of her years in radio. Hundreds of youngsters mailed 'Aunt Olly' photographs of themselves. She has kept the many snapshots of children playing outdoors, on family vacations, in the hospital, at weddings, by the Christmas tree and with their families. Often whole classes of elementary school students sent their photos to Aunt Olly. Many of her fans drew

pictures for her. These have all been carefully pasted into scrapbooks. Among them I notice a crayon illustration of a rabbit drawn by one of my cousins at age three. He is presently a high school teacher at Garden Valley Collegiate in Winkler. There is also a pencil sketch of a boy and his dog from eight-year-old Les Brandt, who has since grown up into a recognized Manitoba artist.

The letters Aunt Olly received tell much about her popularity and media appeal. Whereas nowadays parents withdraw TV watching privileges when their children misbehave, a Mrs. Sydney Reimer from Rosenort wrote that her two boys found being refused permission to listen to Children's Party was a far worse punishment than a hard spanking. New Canadians told Olly Penner they were learning English as they followed her show with their youngsters. Another letter confessed, "I listen to your children's program every day even though I am a grandma." Similar testimonies from businessmen and factory employees claimed they tuned in on the way home from work as did farmers who listened to Children's Party on their tractors out in the field. Once Olly even got a petition from a following of senior citizens at an Old Folks Home. They said they loved listening to Children's Party but wanted to lodge a protest that the story of Big Red was being aired too often.

Some of her mail was from Hutterite colonies. At the time Olly knew that most Hutterite groups did not allow their adherents to listen to the radio. Because they were obviously enjoying Children's Party on the sly, many of her Hutterite fans closed their letters with a request that she not mention their names on the air as she so often did for the other listeners who wrote in to her.



Ollie Penner

One communication from a listener that Olly particularly treasures was written by a Catholic priest. He wrote: "Dear Mrs. Penner, Our religious vows forbid us to become interested in the other sex, but they do not prevent us from admiring female human beings. St. Francis of Assisi once said, 'Be thou blest O Lord for having created our sisters of the opposite sex so sweet and charming.' I think of this quote often when I hear your quiet, soothing, serene and perfectly clear voice on the radio. Then instead of being 55, one of the fives vanishes and I am young again."

Olly still has a chuckle over other reports from listeners like: "Our two-year-old son Raymond laughs so hard when you play the song 'There's a Hole in my Bucket that he gets the hiccoughs.'" Another mother writes: "When the birthday song comes on your program our son always gets up on a chair and conducts." One young admirer wrote a message to the post office workers on the outside of the envelope that contained his letter to Olly: "Mailman, mailman, do your duty, Bring this letter to an Altona beauty. (Aunt Olly)."

Not all the responses she received, however, were as complimentary. Olly remembers one scathing missive that arrived on her desk attacking her personally and questioning her Christian beliefs and principles. Apparently in December she had referred to Santa Claus on one program and a particularly conservative listener took exception to what they felt was mention of a "heathenish" aspect of Christmas. Olly recalls other milder but similar remonstrances from listeners who objected to the description of a square dance at the end of the children's story Tall Fireman Paul. Some encouraged her to play fewer silly songs on Children's Party such as "There Was An Old Lady Who Swallowed A Fly;" and devote more on-air time to materials of a religious or devotional nature. Other people felt free to pass judgment on her appearance and her choice as a wife and mother to work outside the home.

Some of this criticism was hard for Olly to understand. She grew up in Gardenton, a mainly Ukrainian town with just a few Mennonite families. After permit teaching in Rose Isle for a year she attended Teachers College in Winnipeg. When she moved to the Winkler/Altona, area she was not quite prepared for the somewhat narrower world view of people who had spent their entire lives in small, almost exclusively Mennonite, communities. She learned quickly though.

"I found out the hard way that when you are in the public eye you are public property. People just feel free to criticize

and comment on everything about you. It took me a while to realize that you had to expect that and cope with it," she said.

Although having her words and actions constantly scrutinized by the public took some adjusting to, it was precisely the response from her public, the contact she had with her radio audience, that made her job so enjoyable. "When I would meet my listeners for the first time they would greet me like we were old friends even though I had never seen them before. Being in touch with people, that's what made my work with CFAM so exciting and interesting."

That excitement and interest continues today even though Olly is no longer connected with the radio station. Not long ago she was having breakfast in a Steinbach restaurant. Her server pointed to four blushing males in their 30s at a nearby table. "They'd like to meet you," the waitress said. Former listeners of Children's Party, the quartet of young men appeared embarrassed but pleased when Olly went over to chat with them.

The enjoyment of meeting members of her former radio audience is just one of the many pleasures Olly Penner is reveling in since deciding to retire in 1987. She shows me a beautiful quilt she has almost completed and the afghans she has crocheted. "I'm busy keeping my four granddaughters in knitted sweaters," she says.

Trips to Europe, the Barbados, and the southern United States with her husband Vic Penner, the former editor of the **Red River Valley Echo**, have helped her first years of retirement to pass quickly. She loves the fact that now she has time to walk over to the local arena in the afternoon and watch her granddaughters participate in jam pail curling and play ringette. She appreciates the other opportunities retirement affords, such as driving out to Lac du Bonnet on a week night to watch another granddaughter perform in her school drama, and visiting frequently with her 90-year-old mother. Besides these family activities Olly says that the greatest benefit of retirement is the chance it provides to read voraciously "just for fun." For so many years she scanned books and magazines with an eye as to how she might use some of the material on one of her radio programs or in the column she wrote for the weekly local newspaper. Now it is great just to consume books for the pure pleasure of reading.

If you think Olly Penner's retirement years sound busy, they are definitely relaxing when compared to the schedule she kept during the more than a quarter century she spent working for CFAM. Responsible for several hours of on-air radio time

six days a week, she organized and planned the programs she hosted and also wrote and compiled all her own material. She taped interviews and picked musical selections. Besides this she made regular public appearances for the radio station, presiding at store openings, judging 4-H contests and acting as a master of ceremonies for various functions. She found time to publish a recipe book, write a newspaper column, serve as Sunday school superintendent and sing in the community and church choirs. For many years Olly was also an active participant in the work of the Women's Institute. She was careful, however, to make sure she had plenty of time for her two sons, Steven, now a graphic designer for Friesen Printers in Altona, and David, who is a teacher in Lac du Bonnet.

"I always insisted that CFAM give me the summer months off so I could spend them with the boys," she said.

Olly attributes much of her success at juggling her career and home life to the support and help of her husband Vic. "He got his share of derogatory comments because I worked outside the home, but he was always positive and encouraging." It's not every man who could handle being referred to frequently as "Aunt Olly's husband."

When she looks back now Olly thinks her radio work was of positive benefit to her family. "I was a much happier person for it. I just needed more than being at home. I really felt the Lord's leading in the choices I made. I had been given certain gifts and it was up to me to use them wisely and well." Her many radio listeners would agree that Olly Penner did just that!

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Contact

**Darlene Kailer
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Farm family life combined work and reading, so laying a foundation for a career in public health

You may have seen Dr. Fast on TV, giving the straight facts about AIDS, and wondered what such a proper Mennonite lady is doing talking about dangerous sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) in this blunt and unflinching manner.

"I have been criticised for not taking a strict moral stand on STDs," says Dr. Fast, director of communicable disease control for Manitoba. "It's easy to pass moral judgments from a distance, but it becomes very hard when you tackle the problem up close. Telling people to stop what they're doing and that everything will be fine simply isn't realistic. I wish it were.

"Much has changed in the world. When I was growing up, everything was so innocent. I was already in medical school when I first heard about homosexuality in a lecture. I hadn't known there was such a thing. I was shocked and so was the whole row of girls sitting next to me. Now this is nothing new. Homosexuality has raised fundamental issues which all of society has to face."

Margaret Fast grew up in a Mennonite farm community near Boissevain, along with two older brothers and two younger sisters. They had a typical Mennonite upbringing where the traditional Mennonite values were part of living. They were expected to apply themselves in school, attend Sunday school and church and sing in the choir, just like the other kids in the neighborhood.

As was the custom in many homes, the girls in the family learned piano. Often they would accompany their family and friends as they stood around the instrument, singing hymns. There was a warm and loving home. It hardly seems

feasible that her early years prepared the young Margaret for her position in the medical community. However, her home was such that it supported and encouraged her right from the start.

"It was a free and easy life. We had space to grow," recalls Dr. Fast. "All five of us children read a great deal. I remember one of the ladies of the



Margaret Fast

community taking mother to task for allowing us to read so much. She thought it would be injurious to our health. I thought at the time that our mother liked us to read so we would be out of her hair, but it was more than that. Both mother and father expected us to help with farm chores, however, they never put such a burden of work on us that we didn't have time to ourselves. They valued an education without seeming to push us. We all decided to study beyond high school. My brothers and sisters have become professional people too."

by Agnes Wall

Margaret went to the Mennonite Collegiate Institute in Gretna for her high school years. Mathematics and science were easy and her ambition was to become a doctor. After her medical studies were completed and before she became established in her field, she decided on some adventure. "I was always an enterprising sort of person and now I also experienced a certain restlessness. In the back of my mind I knew I needed to give something of myself. I felt I owed the world something and wanted to pay it back."

Service with MCC (Mennonite Central Committee), seemed the answer. She worked as a volunteer with a medical unit in Vietnam for two and a half years. Then she transferred to another medical unit, similar to that of the MCC, called Project Concern. She married during this time and the couple had their first child, a son. After five years of service, they returned to Canada, where she worked and continued her studies. She also studied abroad, in England, where another son was born, and in Kenya. Her third child, a daughter, was born in Canada.

Dr. Fast seems to be one of the few people who can do more than one thing at a time, for while she was raising her family, she also earned a diploma in tropical child health, a fellowship in community medicine, and another in pediatrics. She began her work as director of communicable disease control in 1985, after serving as assistant director first.

Besides pursuing her exacting and demanding career, Dr. Fast makes time for her family. "I think my family is very supportive of what I do and I think I'm an okay mother, too," she says. "One of the

reasons for this is that I have so many other interests. I could not be happy just working in the home."

In her workplace, AIDS seems to have overshadowed all other concerns about health in Manitoba. Not so. The department of communicable disease control operates on a much broader base. Each physician, public health nurse, hospital or clinic is required by law to report to Dr. Fast's office any patient suffering from, or infected with, a contagious disease. Even household pets must sometimes be reported. If you should have bacterial food poisoning, hepatitis, tuberculosis or any of the other communicable diseases on your doctor's list, you can be sure that Dr. Fast will get to know about it. She may even know about your bird being infected with psittacosis and insist you have something done immediately.

"Our statistics help determine what needs to be done," says Dr. Fast. "For every communicable disease we have worked out a control strategy, such as an immunization program, pure water and food inspection, inspection of sanitary conditions where food is handled, testing for infection, quarantine and much more.

"We provide all the vaccines for immunization, but the actual inoculation is done by doctors and public health people. We decide if the vaccination should be mandatory, what kind of consent forms must be signed, and what reactions must be noted. We pay a grant to the Sanatorium Board of Manitoba, but it is the one who administers the chest x-rays. In this way we are both directly and indirectly involved in prevention and control. We are also able to advise and help develop policy at a high government level."

It's costly to fund and maintain control programs, so these have to be scrutinized carefully for effectiveness. Dr. Fast is concerned that the money is spent wisely, where it will do the most good. If the statistics of an existing program tell nothing useful, the program is dropped or changed. For example, the Sanatorium Board used to give province-wide chest x-rays on a regular basis. This is not the case now because the system has been altered. X-rays are still given, but they are only done for a specific reason.

"Premarital blood tests used to be mandatory," recalls Dr. Fast. "They tested for syphilis, but not for the other STD infections. We looked at ten years' worth of information and the data told us very little. First of all, in today's society, not everyone chooses to marry. It would be useless to test even if the testing included a whole series of tests for STDs. The

money involved can better be spent elsewhere."

A large portion of this money is used to combat AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) instead, since it is clearly a serious health threat. At the time of my interview with Dr. Fast, there had been 16 deaths from AIDS. A person does not need to be suffering from AIDS to be at risk; one can be a carrier of the AIDS virus for years before developing AIDS symptoms, if at all. Information at present shows a steady rise of the infection for women, heterosexuals and lately, adolescents. "No one knows for sure whether all infected individuals will get AIDS, but it is very likely," notes Dr. Fast. This is why it's so dangerous.

"There is constant ongoing research to find a cure, but for the time being we can at least try to prevent the disease from spreading. Since the virus is not only present in body fluids, but is also found in the blood of an infected person, it can be spread by shared needles which puts drug users at a high risk.

"We are looking into control procedures used in other places, where they have begun a sterile needle exchange program or where a certain bleach is distributed to be used as a disinfectant for hypodermic needles. We are studying these strategies and looking at the findings. Sterile needle exchanges are being tried in large cities like New York and Amsterdam. Recently a similar program was started in Toronto. So far there is not enough data to show these

methods are effective. It's hard to say if the conclusions reached in a densely populated area would be the same as in a smaller city like Winnipeg or in our rural areas."

Working with drug users can become very complex. Any preventive measure has to be sorted out with the police, since drug use is illegal. The use of drugs in jail is even more illicit and difficult to handle. Dr. Fast's department is not there to enforce the law in this case, but it can't be seen to flout the law either. Dr. Fast must consider what is the role of the police and the role of the Manitoba Department of Health. "We are only a small piece of the problem. Our responsibility is to do something about the infection," says Dr. Fast.

Her office is spearheading an intense educational program telling the public how to protect itself. As long as there is ignorance about the disease, it is bound to increase. The staff at the office is also a resource for developing informative study programs planned by the Education Manitoba, schools or any of the social services. Pamphlets giving the facts about AIDS are distributed free of charge. There is a telephone service called AIDS Info-line. Dr. Fast herself is available for lectures, going on radio talk shows and appearing on television.

And this is why you may see Dr. Margaret Fast on your television screen along with your evening news. **mm**

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Run with patience

by Dora Maendel

My Uncle David grew watermelon and huge fat raspberries in a special garden plot behind and on a diagonal from my grandparents' house. Uncle David and Katrina Basel (Carinthian German for "Aunt") lived next door to them in a two-storey two-family house. My parents came often to this colony for weekend visits and I loved it there!

Most Hutterite colonies have more than one garden plot. The "rear garden" is invariably very close by or even on the colony proper and contains those essentials used fresh daily: radishes, spinach, chives, lettuce, carrots and the indispensable parsley. The other, "far garden" plots are usually much bigger and due to their farther distance, not as readily accessible on foot. Here are grown the staple vegetables necessary in large amounts: onions, turnips, parsnips, winter cabbage, beets, cucumbers, squash and vegetable marrow.

A third type is the orchard with numerous crab apple trees like Renown, Rescue, Heyer 12 and a wonderful sweet variety called simply Honey apples. Nearly always there are gooseberry bushes and plum trees including the peerless Greengage.

Most special of all the plots is the "Bastan," or fruit garden, where cantaloupe, watermelon and tomatoes are grown. It is of necessity a plot with good shelter. Uncle David's "Bastan" was surrounded on four sides by a slated whitewashed fence lined with tall luxuriant raspberry bushes. Outside, the

fence was flanked intermittently by graceful maple and elm trees, thus providing this apple of Uncle David's eye with particularly good shelter. Here he was able to raise such luscious specialties as Midget and Sugar Baby watermelon, gigantic Beefsteak tomatoes and lovely cantaloupe exceptionally early.

The plot was off-limits to everyone without prior consent from either of the gardeners, Uncle David or Katrina Basel, and to me it was a mystic, almost hallowed place. Dearly as I loved them both and warmly welcomed though I was in their home, I had never ventured into the Bastan. Only glimpses were possible, as when the women and girls returned from hoeing, and one afternoon I nearly wept when I saw Mother and Katrina Basel chatting by the gate with some early cantaloupe in their hands. "Oh Mother! I wanted to go in too," I gasped, beseeching arms encircling her waist. "Why didn't you call me?"

Handing me one of the dusty-green, golden cheeked melons she said, "You weren't here. Come, let's go and eat these with Grandfather." The closing gate afforded a brief vista of spreading watermelon vines and laden tomato plants. But oh, the stately swaying raspberry canes beckoning with crimson-stained arms! Stately too was Katrina Basel with her snow white hair and silvery laughter that dispelled whining and tears. With a last regretful look backward, I followed them quietly to my grandparents' home.

Grandmother's clock chiming seven woke me next morning and I lay lazily listening to the early household stirrings: creaking stairs accompanying Uncle Matthew down, water being pumped, Grandmother singing, "*Lobe den Herrn den machtigen Konig der Ehren*" (Praise to the Lord, the Almighty the King of Creation). Later, fearful lest I wake the others, she bade me get dressed and come out. I obeyed. "Sit down," she continued, pointing to her rocker by the window. "Tell me when you see Hannah coming from the kitchen." Hannah, 18, was one of Uncle David's daughters. Soon I spied her sturdy, familiar form emerging from the kitchen. Now she was within speaking distance and I could hear Grandmother tell her, "Hannah, I want some raspberries for Sarah Basel's and Uncle Peter's breakfast. Would you pick me some?"

Wide-eyed with interest and longing I watched as she took a tin pail from the row of tiny hooks underneath the cupboard and handed it to Hannah. A

syrup pail, it was painted white on the outside and decorated with blue and yellow asters by one of the Waldner girls. Just underneath the rim in tiny Gothic letters, Grandmother had also placed her family initials P.A.W. for Paul Anna Wurtz.

"Good morning!" Hannah greeted me warmly from the living room door. "You're up early! Why don't you come and help me?" In answer to Grandmother's dubious expression she responded, "It'll go faster then." With disbelieving eyes I accepted from Grandmother a miniature stainless steel pail, the kind used for carrying home soup from the kitchen. Hardly knowing how to contain my ecstasy, I tripped ahead of Hannah on the wooden sidewalk, hop-skipping all the way to the gate. Fairly dancing, I watched as she dallied nonchalantly with the latch, pausing to ask me, "Did you have a nice ride driving out here yesterday?"

"Yes."

"And why didn't you bring Aunt Mary along?"

"I don't know," I mumbled impatiently and she cheerfully answered her own question.

"Her baby is only five weeks old. She wouldn't travel that soon. Have you seen little Marya? And is she cute?"

"Oh yes. Very." I answered quickly not taking my eyes from the latch. Would she never get it open? How could she be so calm when we were about to enter this idyllic wonderland?

Presently the little gate glided open and we walked in. My bare feet squirmed with delight to the touch of the dark, damp soil. Now we stood beside the raspberry bushes and saw the ripe oblong fruit caps suspended on the leafy canes. I reached out and picked one. It felt velvety soft and left a bright vermilion stain on my fingers. Breathing deeply of the fragrant air I picked and ate some more. How juicy and tart they were! A catbird scolded us lustily and a pair of goldfinches twitted busily to each other as they carried string and grass to their nest in the shortest maple tree. A spider's web hung on one low raspberry branch heavily bedecked with dew drops. The early morning sun was warm on my bare arms and face.

When our pails had enough berries we returned to Grandmother's. She had already set the table with buns and butter, cheddar and jam. There was thick cream for the raspberries and a steaming pot of coffee. "Go and wash," Grandmother said, "Then come and eat." Quietly I slipped in and asked Mother for permission to go and swing. What need had I of breakfast when I'd been to heaven?

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Wagner in the Economy Store: In Memory of Peter A. Vogt

by Al Reimer

The Peter Vogt home on Main Street was my favorite haunt when I was growing up in Steinbach during the unhallowed years of the Second World War. The family and its setting held an endless fascination for me. The big attraction was Ernie, the oldest son and one of my close pals — we called him “Dip” for his long slender frame — but there were also the other boys, the twins Erich and Art, pesky little Roy, and baby Peter. The Vogt establishment was divided into three distinct domains: the Economy Store fronting on Main Street, the family living quarters attached to the rear, and the spacious backyard behind them.

The domain we spent much of our time in was the backyard, which was ruled by the strong will and superior guile of Dip, who always had the most toys, the best imagination for inventing games and not only organized our activities but usually made up the rules. Rebellious against Dip, even in the heat of play, was self-defeating, for it meant instant, albeit temporary banishment from the most interesting playground in town. The domestic domain was run by Mrs. Vogt with a compensatingly benign hand that allowed us to play cards and other daring games upstairs in winter and provided the welcome bonus of a sumptuous *Faspa* on Sunday afternoons. The third domain, at once the most public and the most inaccessible if you were a guest, was the grocery and drygoods store presided over on week days with effortless competence by Mr. Vogt.

In his prime, as he was in those years, Peter Vogt was a jovial, outgoing man whose intensity and dynamic manner were fuelled by an inner drive I sensed but could not identify: it seemed to come from some other source than Steinbach's business street. Later, I would realize that it came from another world, an older world with a much stronger, more confident culture than the one I was growing up in. He had come to Steinbach in 1923 with his mother and older

brothers and sisters, worked briefly in his brother-in-law Arnold Dyck's printery on Main Street, then in a local store where he met his future wife, after which he helped his brothers Abram and John establish a store and finally opened his own store next door to Dyck's printery.

On Saturdays the Economy Store was always full of noisy customers, most of them farmers from the surrounding districts. Above the hubbub rose Mr. Vogt's ringing laugh and voice as he carried on in his hearty manner running conversations in half a dozen different languages. He spoke all the languages native to his polyglot clientele — Ukrainians and Russians from Sarto and Zhoda, Frenchmen from La Broquerie and Marchand, Lutheran Germans from Friedensfeld, and Low-German speaking Mennonites from Steinbach and environs. The one language most of them avoided was English, which belonged to the outside world and had very little to do with their lives. Mr. Vogt spoke it only to strangers in the store and when he bought supplies in Winnipeg.

Standing behind his cash register he conducted his store like a symphony orchestra, shouting orders to clerks in other parts of the store while carrying on a political discussion with a customer, calling for one of his sons to bring supplies from the storeroom in the back while adding up a bill, calling out a greeting in Ukrainian or French or Plautdietsch to a customer just coming in, then cracking a joke with a favorite customer or asking about the family while serving a generous slice of halvah from the ever-present silver tray on the counter. And punctuating his remarks with smiles and chortles and the staccato throat-clearing and sniffing that were habitual. His animated presence dominated the store, and the alert eyes in his pale, large-featured face missed nothing. He seemed to be in his element in the store that provided him even during the Depression with an adequate living for his growing family.

There was, however, another side to this complex man that was very different from the energetic host-raconteur-clerk-



1900-1989

manager image he projected in the store. Peter Vogt was that rare, perhaps unique specimen in Steinbach, a man who loved classical music, particularly grand opera, and most of all the music drama of Richard Wagner. Even on the busiest Saturday afternoons he arranged his routine so that he could satisfy both the business and artistic sides of his nature. During the opera season the radio in the living room behind the store was tuned to the Met matinee broadcast from New York. His sense of timing was perfect. He knew exactly when the great Flagstad or Melchior or Traubel would sing their big arias. At the right moment he would slip away from behind the counter and sit down in the living room beside the radio. Having listened with total concentration to a favorite aria, he hurried back into the store beaming in all directions, as though he had merely gone to the bathroom.

Then there was Mr. Vogt's fabulous collection of operatic recordings, a cornucopia of vocal riches which I devoured even more greedily than Mrs. Vogt's delicious *Faspas*. It was in the Vogt living room where I first drank in the glorious tenor tones of Caruso and Bjoerling, the Volga-tide of basso Feodor Chaliapin and the dark-bass sonorities of his countryman Alexander Kipnis. The more I listened to these and other great singers, played on scratchy 78s with primitive war-time cactus needles, the more I loved the operatic voice and dreamt of becoming a singer myself. I never quite shared Mr. Vogt's unabashed love for Wagner, but the passionate outpouring of Italian and Russian opera flowed through my being with an ecstasy beyond expression and led to a life-long enjoyment of fine singing.

No other Steinbacher would ever have driven all the way to New York just to enjoy live opera at the Met, as Mr. Vogt

did several times during the 1930s. And after the War he and his wife went to Minneapolis frequently to catch the Met on tour. Such an expensive and outlandish hobby must have struck the townspeople as a bit unseemly and certainly unnecessary. In their eyes Peter Vogt was a little "different," a bit of an outsider like his brother-in-law Arnold Dyck, who edited the *Steinbach Post*, wrote droll Low German stories, and spoke with an Old World sophistication that struck locals as slightly odd and affected. Dyck was an occasional *Faspa* guest at the Vogts on Sunday, and I would listen to the relaxed chat about politics, German culture and the Russian past with a mixture of curiosity and envy of a world I could not share. Like Arnold Dyck, Peter Vogt probably never felt quite at home culturally in Canada, never quite got over his yearning for a world in which ideas, literature and music meant more, or at least were respected more, than mere commercial success.

And yet, he knew all too well that the Old World that had formed and nurtured him was irretrievably lost. When son Roy urged him to join our tour of the Soviet Union in 1984, he agreed at first but then

wavered and finally decided not to go because he was sure such a trip would be disappointing as a nostalgic reliving of the past. Instead he provided Roy with a hand-drawn map of his old neighborhood in Schoenwiese (now part of Zaporozhe) so that he could retrace his origins in absentia, so to speak.

We had no trouble finding his old neighborhood, orienting ourselves by the pre-Revolutionary Tavonius drugstore. We even found the vacant corner lot where the Vogt residence had stood. But we never did find his old school, although we spent a good part of an afternoon, under the discreet surveillance of a young KJB man across the street, looking for it in side streets, courtyards and back lanes. To no avail. The school, like the house, had disappeared. Mr. Vogt's intuition was sound: his physical past in the old homeland had been almost completely erased by time.

Like thousands of other Russian Mennonites, Peter Vogt came to this country as a young refugee, worked hard, prospered and raised a Canadian-Mennonite family that is making its own mark. While his generation is now passing, he and so

many others like him have greatly enriched the Canada-Mennonite community with their lives and works. Above all, Mr. Vogt's civilizing influence lives on in others. He will always live in my memory as the man who without knowing he did so, opened a magic side door into the palace of art for me, and indirectly helped me to free myself from the closed circuit of Steinbach's Main Street. mm



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LOOKING OVER THE PRAIRIE

*Clouds over Canada,
flowers on the road*

by Vic Penner



The CBC management host let me down badly this morning. He's substituting for the striking CUPE regulars on Information Radio and works out of a studio in Toronto. I knew that, and still I trusted him.

"All of Canada is under cloud this morning," he said, "and experiencing showers or snow flurries. Only Calgary, Edmonton and Yellowknife have sunny skies." I knew I wasn't in Calgary or Edmonton or Yellowknife, and yet, as I aimed one sleepy eye at the window, I could see bright sunshine and a cloudless sky.

Maybe I'm really in Hawaii, I thought, or maybe in Barbados. Or how about Palm Springs, or at least Phoenix? But that picture of a sunflower on the wall and the wall-to-wall crack in the ceiling were all too familiar. I knew I was in my bedroom in my house in Altona. The snow was still a foot deep on my lawn, and the Oakview Golf and Country Club wouldn't be opening for another month.

Even though I played golf for weeks after Oakview had supposedly shut down in fall, with flags removed from the greens and benches from the tee boxes, and all put into winter storage, the winter seemed to drag on endlessly.

By mid-February I was fondling my golf clubs and trying to sharpen my putting by tapping a ball from the living room to dining room to kitchen, and back again. But it was too much like miniature golf, what with the furniture and all. What I was itching for was the real thing. My wife put a stop to it all when I took out my driver.

"Let's go south," she said. And we did. To Grand Forks.

Now Grand Forks, North Dakota, is about as far south of Altona as Winnipeg is north. But it's OK. A poolside room at the Ramada Inn can take your mind off winter as long as you don't go outside.

If we hadn't stopped in Grand Forks but continued on the I-29 to Kansas City, and then the I-35 to Austin and San Antonio we could have enjoyed one of the most spectacular wildflower displays imaginable. Each time we've been there in spring — twice in February and once in April — the highway rights-of-way have been ablaze with blooms of Indian paint brush and bluebonnets.

My wife and I didn't realize until the *National Geographic* published a story in

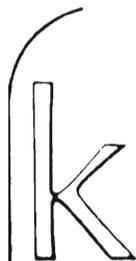
April that these flowers along the highways are far from accidental. They are cultivated by the Texas highways department and prizes are given to its workers who do the best job at propagating these vast wildflower "gardens."

I don't believe this kind of philosophy has taken hold in the Manitoba highways department, even though there are wonderful stands of wildflowers along highways in the Whiteshell area. We are always impressed when we travel east of Lac du Bonnet along Highway 307 past the lakes called Nutimik, Dorothy, Brereton, Big Whiteshell, etc. and behold the splendid growth of wild lythrum, tall blazing star, and Canada thistle in July. We should all write to Albert Driedger, our minister of highways, and urge him to beautify our highways with flowers.

We return from Grand Forks just in time to head up to Lac du Bonnet, where our oldest granddaughter is appearing for three nights in Agatha Christie's play *A Murder is Announced*. The significance of this performance is that she has announced that she is herewith launching her career as an actress. She's in Grade 8 at Lac du Bonnet Senior School and counted the weeks until she could try for a part in the drama club's annual production. She was a prompter last year.

We believe she plays her part extremely well in spite of a severe case of the flu, which keeps her in bed each of the three days, but nothing can keep her off the stage in the evenings. I give her a Grade of A+++ for perseverance.

Back home on Palm Sunday, we attend the first of three interdenominational Easter Week services. Highlighting the service is a musical entitled *The Witness* performed by singers from the community and directed by Marilyn Hamm. The music and the lyrics prove extremely moving; especially perhaps, because hearing people we know as nurses, salesmen, teachers, housewives and barbers tell the story of Christ's life, death and resurrection gives it all a special meaning. We have heard oratorios and cantatas performed by imported professionals numerous times and enjoyed them and been uplifted by them. But this was different and, in a way, more meaningful. **mm**



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Mennonite role in mental health has a long and consistent history

by Travis Reimer

It is an interesting fact that Mennonite pacifism led fairly directly to major involvement in mental health. During the Second World War a large number of conscientious objectors in Canada and the United States did their alternative service in mental hospitals. With treatment being far from enlightened and hospitals understaffed, our young men found conditions there deplorable.

When these COs returned to their churches after the war, especially in the U.S., they brought with them a ferment that soon expressed itself in a grass roots desire for better care for the mentally ill. In January of 1947 the Mennonite Central Committee agreed to establish three homes for the mentally ill in the United States. Responsibility for the mental health program was lodged in a special committee later named Mennonite Mental Health Services (MMHS). In succeeding years MMHS initiated two additional centres, and three other independently established programs affiliated with the organization. These eight member centres were a significantly high number for a group the size of the Mennonites and Brethren in Christ.

Undoubtedly, conditions were ripe for such a sudden ballooning of ministry in this field. And there was a background for it. Mennonites had always practiced material aid. A sharing in the physical needs of others was simply an integral part of sincere Christian commitment.

As far back as their sojourn in Prussia Mennonites had established a hospital for the aged and needy. In 1910 in Russia they had set up the Bethania Hospital as their first psychiatric institution. Out of this experience at least two other mental hospitals emerged. The one was begun in 1932 in Vineland, Ontario, by Henry P. Wiebe, a former Bethania staff member. It was called Bethesda. The other was Hoffnungshheim in Paraguay, begun in 1945, and now part of a larger program known as Servicios Menonitas de Salud Mental.

Thus when MCC began its postwar developments, Bethesda in Ontario was visited and consulted. Seven mental health centres emerged in the U.S. between 1949 and 1966. In Canada Eden Mental Health Centre was opened in 1967 and joined MMHS in the following year.



by Travis Reimer, director MCC Canada mental health concerns.

As early as 1957 the interest of Manitoba Mennonites in establishing a psychiatric facility led to a meeting of delegates from several Mennonite groups. This action led to consultation with MCC and with MMHS. Finally a lengthy negotiating process with the government of Manitoba resulted in the building of Eden in Winkler in 1967, with the churches paying 25 per cent of construction costs.

Church involvement continues to be important for Eden's ministry. Volunteers, support groups, some funding, and congregational ownership of the program are needed. In 1981 Linden Place was set up to provide a transitional residence for people moving from hospitalization to community living. The following year Grainex Industries was established as a specialized training facility and work placement for the employably disadvantaged. Now Eden is introducing Recovery of Hope, a program for marriages that are in danger. Setting up a base in Winnipeg is a further important development for enlarged ministry.

In Ontario, Bethesda has, under government direction, become a home for the mentally handicapped. But there are some chronically mentally ill people there still. In Waterloo, the House of Friendship was begun by Mennonites in 1937. Set up for people in need, whether indigent, psychiatrically ill, transient, or in trouble with the law, it currently has a wide ranging ministry with some 75 staff. Its residential services include a hostel for men in crisis, an alcohol recovery home for men, a residence for men who have had a psy-

chiatric or emotional crisis and need a supportive living environment, and several other innovative places. Its community services and its support services offer an impressive diversity of help as well.

Another Ontario ministry is Shalom Counselling Services, begun in 1981. Operating under the MCC Ontario umbrella, Shalom presently has a centre in Waterloo and one in St. Catharines, with consideration being given to a third in Aylmer. Not only does Shalom provide counselling, but it also offers consultation and seminars. Churches help with the financial support and in return receive many helpful benefits.

Saskatchewan has also developed a ministry for the mentally ill. The halfway house called McKerracher House has operated in Swift Current under MCC Saskatchewan since 1969. Its purpose is to provide a temporary sheltered environment with a Christian atmosphere to rehabilitate people suffering from various emotional disturbances.

In British Columbia the supportive care services committee of MCC B.C. has just recently established an ad hoc committee to explore possibilities of entering the mental health field. Efforts like this plus the active involvement of various Mennonites in counselling and in the mental health field indicate a strong commitment to dealing with mental illness. In Alberta Dr. Ron Dyck is the provincial Suicidologist and in Saskatchewan Dr. John Elias is the assistant executive director of mental health services for the province. These are but a few of our people playing leading roles in a needy field.

Another significant development has been the establishment of the mental health program of MCC Canada. Until 1986 Canada was served by the MMHS, based in the U.S. But in the 1980s questions were raised about the need for a made in Canada approach to mental health needs. At the 1982 consultation of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ moderators and secretaries, mental health was strongly endorsed as a legitimate part of the church agenda. This led to further discussions amongst several groups and finally to the striking of a mental health

advisory committee in 1985. Its task was to survey the churches and come back to MCC with recommendations.

The survey indicated a desire for MCC involvement and the involvement of the local congregation in addressing mental health needs. Given this mandate MCC Canada in January, 1986, established the mental health program and formed an advisory committee. In August of 1988 Travis Reimer was hired as the first director of the program.

Plans call for raising awareness and providing education to the congregations in the area of mental health. The church is the caring community and is a tremendous resource base for mental health care. Through seminars and workshops, congregational caregivers can be enabled to be even more effective.

One resource the committee is promoting is Called to Caregiving: A Resource for Equipping Deacons in the Believers Church. This is becoming a widely used training tool for deacons/elders and is available from the MCC office for \$10. Other resources like books and videos are available on loan from the office.

At present an attempt is being made to develop a list of all the mental health professionals in the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches. They will be placed on a mailing list and will be enabled to network with one another. Regional gatherings are envisioned, with the goal of stimulating, resourcing, and encouraging one another and ultimately of making themselves available to help our congregations in the mental health ministry. Many of these trained people will be excellent resource persons for writing articles, presenting talks, workshops, seminars, etc. Given our theology of the caring church community and our wealth of experienced mental health workers, we have much to anticipate by way of wholesome interaction.

The mental health program also cooperates in several ventures with the Mennonite Health Services (the U.S. agency that used to be called Mennonite Mental Health Services). Scholarships are offered for persons interested in studying in the mental health field. Joint awareness and education projects are in progress, such as the development of a mental health Sunday school elective. Collaboration on the international level is also a significant development.

We are living in exciting times. Mental health needs are great. Our involvement in this specific field is long and growing. And our theology of the covenant care community promotes our bringing the congregation into a new a developing role of health giving. **mm**

Blessed are the peacemakers. . .

by Paul Redekop.

The North American Conference on Peacemaking and Conflict Resolution was held in Montreal, February 28 to March 4, 1989. It was a veritable field day for anyone who has ever taken a moment to reflect on what it might mean to be a pacifist.

There were peacemakers of every stripe and colour. There were neighborhood peacemakers, peacemakers for the family, and for the church. There were those who make peace between victims and offenders, between labour and management, between black and white. There were peacemakers in blue suits who mingle with diplomats, peacemaking at the international level. They met with one another in over 250 sessions, to hear a great variety of presentations and participate in many different workshops.

And there were Mennonites too. There is Dean Peachey, for one. Dean is one of the organizers of this conference, which has brought together 1,000 people from all over Canada and the United States, and from 18 other countries. Dean is the director of the newly renamed Network: Interaction for Conflict Resolution. The purpose of this network is to maintain communication among those involved in peacemaking activities across Canada, including family, neighborhood, victim-offender mediation and school programs. The network provides a regular newsletter, a national program directory, and an array of educational materials. Dean himself is available to teach courses and workshops on peacemaking and conflict resolution.

However, this conference has taken a considerable amount of Dean's time during the past three years. First, he lobbied extensively to have it located in Canada, visiting members of the National Society for Peacemaking and Conflict Resolution in the United States, and arranging on-site visits and other events. Then he worked to solicit funding for the conference from

many different sources.

There is also John Paul Lederach, the new director of the Mennonite Conciliation Service. John Paul has just recently returned from two years in Central America, where he provided mediation training and services in a number of countries in the region. Among other activities, John Paul was involved directly in peace negotiations between the government and Indian leaders in Nicaragua. He is here to present a workshop based on his experiences teaching mediation skills to groups in Latin America. He leads the group through a rigorous series of exercises he employed with classes in Latin America, which helped him to learn more about traditional methods of dealing with conflict in this culture. He goes on to describe some of the differences, and shows the contrasts with the ways that we resolve conflicts.

There is quite a contingent from Winnipeg, too. Len Sawatsky is here, for example. Len, one-time pastor, counsellor, political candidate, among other things, is now field coordinator of the criminology program at the University of Manitoba. Len is here to report on an evaluation study he recently completed of the 'Face to Face' program. This was an MCC Manitoba program with the goal of bringing together group victims and offenders within the prisons, to discuss and share their experiences. Len reports his findings to the effect that this process helped both victims and offenders to understand one another better, and thus reach some measure of reconciliation. There were a number of others from Winnipeg as well; enough to form a substantial contingent.

How does one judge the success of an event like this? One criterion may be the sheer number of participants who have gathered to share their knowledge and experience. The North American Society for Peacemaking and Conflict Resolution held its first conference in 1983, and attracted 350 people. The growth in interest has therefore been substantial. Another criterion may be the look on Dean Peachey's face. During the first two days, Dean looked tense and anxious. However, by the third day, as it becomes clear that things were indeed proceeding as planned, he begins to look more relaxed, and actually starts to smile again! Many of the other thousand or so peacemakers feel the same way, judging by the attendance at sessions, the lively discussions that take place there, and the happy gatherings and conversations that take place in the hallways and corridors between sessions. **mm**

Handicaps are no impediment to this foursome's zest for life

by Dana Mohr

When four longtime bachelor buddies decide to head out into the world and move into a house together, there are inevitably many decisions to be made. What neighborhood to move into? What kind of house — split level, bungalow, duplex? Or should it be a condo? Who's going to get the master bedroom? How are the bills going to be paid? But even more important, who's going to do the cooking? Or worse, the laundry?

But when the four individuals suffer from a variety of handicaps, other factors must be taken into consideration. Will the doors be wide enough to allow wheelchair passage? Will all the kitchen appliances be wheelchair accessible. Is it a one storey home? And what about the front entrance — is it necessary to have a ramp installed?

In May, 1987, when Nick Unruh and Randy Falk and two of their ward pals from the Manitoba Developmental Centre in Portage la Prairie decided to make the transition into community living, all these questions and more had to be answered. Perhaps integrating four disabled persons into a Winnipeg neighborhood involved a few more complications than a regular move would entail, but these four gregarious guys had the extra fears about moving away from what to that point had been their "home."

Recently I had the opportunity to meet Randy and Nick in their home and we talked about the new life they've built. Assisted by Jim Dodd, who along with Jose Guevera provides live-in support for the foursome, I had the pleasure of conversing with two vital people who lead active and full lives.

Two years ago, however, their lives were somewhat restricted. While the MDC offered many gratifying experiences for Randy and Nick, it was the opinion of the centre's administrators that, given the proper support, these two, along with their friends Adrien Denny and Russell Melnychuk, could, and should, be integrated into a Winnipeg neighborhood. It is because of the "Welcome Home Program" that these four today are living in their North Winnipeg bungalow.



According to Jim, when candidates for this program were considered, Randy, Nick, and their two housemates seemed natural. "These guys were the darlings of the ward," he says, "they thought they'd have fun and enjoy it."

And, enjoying it they are. Randy and Nick have been volunteering, working, socializing and keeping house for two years now, very successfully. Randy, however, feels Nick doesn't do as much housework as he does. Nick, coincidentally, thinks the same of Randy. But, they're working this little debate out, Jim informs me.

Randy and Nick's personalities are warm and inviting, and although neither communicates verbally, it is difficult not to understand the jokes that are constantly thrown back and forth. Nick speaks with his Bliss board, a tray with pictures and symbols that is attached to his wheelchair, and Randy communicates via sign language. Although no sounds are exchanged, the conversation is lively and animated. Jim acts as a friendly mediator

between the friends, and he himself never misses the opportunity to joke with his pals.

According to the schedules for these four individuals, it is obvious that they have an uncommon zest for life — they don't waste a single moment of the day. Randy at present is not working but he is far from being idle. "Randy's our party animal," laughs Jim, "he doesn't have time to work!" In the past Randy has worked in the food services industry. Two particularly enjoyable jobs were at Greenjeans where he set tables, prepared vegetables, and measured food portions, and at the University of Winnipeg cafeteria. When he "finds the time" to get back to work, Jim has no doubt Randy will easily find another position in a restaurant setting. Randy can often be found at the university hanging out with his buddies, or engaging in his favorite pastime, having dinner with his friends.

Nick is equally active. His days are spent at "Winnipeg Harvest" where he volunteers four times a week. Jim explains

that Nick has a special interest in the issue of hunger and he often questions Jim as to why there are people in Winnipeg who don't have food. Nick often goes out on the delivery runs so he can see personally who the donated food is going to. In the fifth workday of the week Nick folds bulletins and attends Bible study class at West Kildonan United Church where his father, Hugo Unruh, is minister. An avid Elvis fan, Nick, along with Jim, recently attended "Elvis, Elvis, Elvis," an impersonation extravaganza which performed in Winnipeg in March.

Through this move to the city Nick and Randy are both closer, geographically and emotionally, to their families. They often entertain family and friends in their home, but Jim relates that sometimes they feel a lack of "special friends." There are even some buddies still at the MDC whom the two hope can one day be transferred into the community so that their friendships can be renewed and strengthened.

If there are any disadvantages to living in Winnipeg, the two agree, it is loneliness. As they often spent a lot of time helping out on the wards at the centre, they are both used to almost continual contact with their many friends. But, in time, Jim predicts they'll build a larger circle of friends within the neighborhood. Their neighbors, he adds, have been extremely helpful and friendly. In the summertime, one generous neighbor provides fresh garden grown vegetables to their household.

Of course there are certain frustrations to life in the city, but with the participation of all concerned, creative solutions to almost any problem can be found. One of their most persistent problems is coordinating transportation for the foursome's activities. Jim, acting chauffeur of their specially adapted van, has his hands full making sure everyone gets to where he wants to be. "Most of the time we're very happy," asserts Jim, "but we've got our problems . . . normal, everyday problems."

Jim obviously enjoys his work and it is thanks to him and the efforts of the crew of support workers that assist the guys that they have accomplished as much as they have. In Jim's eyes the group home has been a completely positive experience and he would like to see more attempts at community integration. "It's something I endorse highly. These guys have a lot of friends they'd like to see in a group home. It's certainly more humane. The MDC is great. There are certainly a lot of good things about it, but it's not home. We've made this a home."

Now that Randy, the youngest of the four, has had a taste of independent living,

he's decided he quite likes it, enough to want to move out on his own. A "one-concept" person, his thoughts are focused on planning a future move.

As for Nick's future, he wants to meet many more friends, and continue to do

work which will benefit others. Oh yes, and he's looking forward to future vacations to get away from the dreary Manitoba winters. "He does not like winter. It's a pain!" mm

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OBSERVED ALONG THE WAY

by Roy Vogt



The rewards of giving in to an impulse to fly away

I have always envied people who feel that God has spoken directly to them. Few claim that they have actually heard His (or Her) voice, but many are convinced they have experienced divine leading through things that have happened to them. Perhaps they wanted to study at a seminary but didn't have enough money. Then, in a seemingly miraculous way, a rich uncle suddenly died, leaving them with the funds for further study. I don't want to make fun of such experiences, though in the example used here it would be interesting to hear the departed uncle's opinion on divine leading. However, we are all troubled at times by God's seemingly hands-off attitude to the affairs of this world and wish that there was more direct divine intervention.

I believe that God does intervene in the world, in surprising and mysterious ways, so that no one can claim to control such interventions. If the biblical story is correct, divine intervention often takes place through the most unlikely persons and circumstances. I believe this, and yet I am bothered by the fact that one can never be absolutely sure that a certain experience has divine and not merely human origins. There is always some ambiguity. Uncles die in the natural course of things. When rich uncles die it may be both a tragedy and blessing to some members of their family. Is this divine or human? I remember an old neighbor of ours rushing into our store in Steinbach many years ago, with the following announcement: "I have just discovered" he said, "that the Kleine-Gemeinde Church worships two different Gods." "How is that?" my father asked in astonishment. "Well," our neighbor

explained, "they have been praying for some weeks that God would lead them in the choosing of a new minister. A few weeks ago they called one of their members and told him that God had just made it clear to them that he should be the new minister. The member said that he too would pray to God about this to discern His will. After a week he informed the church that the God he spoke to had other plans for him. Obviously," concluded our neighbor, "the members of this church are not praying to the same God, because God would not contradict Himself."

I suppose it is a good thing that we can't be entirely sure about the divine nature of such things. When human beings become too convinced that they are following divine commands they often become insufferable, and even downright dangerous to others. Iran is the last country in which I would like to be living today, unless it is Lebanon where several different factions all believe that they are acting in God's name.

These random thoughts are prompted by a unique experience which changed my life, for a week, in early April. There is something sublime, if not divine, about this experience. We can easily recall the first week of April. Each day we hoped for a sign of Spring, and each day was cold and miserable. Though we had spent a wonderful weekend in March celebrating the birthdays of two of our grandchildren in Edmonton, the recent death of my father and unusually heavy work demands at the university compounded in our case the frustrations brought on by the bad weather.

It is during this miserable period in April that the sublime event occurs. On a cold and snowy Thursday morning I awake in a very depressed state. How much longer will this go on? As I struggle to get up, glaring at the falling snow outside, I vaguely hear the announcer on CBC saying something about a special rate being offered by the Geography Club on week-long trips to Florida. Is this a divine voice coming to me, through the medium

of the radio? I will not question the origins of this. I have closed my heart too often to such impulses. I jump out of bed and rush to the phone. I call Kirsten at the travel office. "Please get us on that flight to Florida" I plead. And then, with all my Mennonite instincts now in play, I add, "at the cheapest possible price!" Kirsten comes through. She knows that she is dealing here with a "higher" mission. Within a week my wife and I are on our way to Orlando, Florida. Our frustrations will be left behind forever; let it snow, nothing bothers me, I am bound for the land of Disney with a ticket on my knee.

Good fortune, unfortunately, never happens to a Mennonite in a pure way. There always seems to be some catch, a small penalty to pay. We immediately discover one catch to our trip: our flight leaves Winnipeg at 1:00 a.m. I am sure that the plane could just as easily leave during the day, but then we'd all be wondering why it was so cheap. The plane is an old warhorse, owned by First Air, an airline of which I have never heard. It operates entirely in the Arctic, sending its planes south on weekends for rejuvenation. The one we fly in certainly needs it.

However, the service and food are excellent, and the night passes quickly. All I am thinking of as we fly is that somewhere below us the snowbelt actually ends, and green grass begins to appear. We arrive in Orlando at 6:00 a.m. in deep fog, and with a tremendous longing for more sleep. Within an hour we are groping our way to our hotel in our rented car. When we finally arrive at our high-rise budget hotel we are dismayed to discover that it is undergoing renovations, and the lobby is packed full with a thousand teenagers, here for a convention of "America's Future Leaders." I look around to see if there is a future Ronald Reagan or George Bush in the crowd. Fortunately, despite the noise, some of them look more promising than that. We are given a depressing little room, which hasn't been cleaned in weeks and has

For Rent: 1283 Wellington Avenue at Valour Road, 3 BR main floor duplex; carpeted throughout; drapes; basement; and garage. Telephone, 774-1358 or 668-7049.

The Radicals

What happened during the production of *The Radicals* ?

The years of preparation culminated in February and March of 1988 when we shot *The Radicals*. Literally thousands of persons were involved in this inter-Mennonite effort: with time, money, and expertise. European Menno-



The city of Moulhouse, France, loaned over 400 costumes for use in the production. This contribution saved over \$120,000. Pictured here are upper-class citizens.



(All Photos by Howard Zehr)

nites and other Christians helped us with location selection, costumes, construction, transportation, food, and lodging.

During the four-week shoot, an estimated 1,200 extras appeared on screen at one time or another. The lead roles were played by actors from Los Angeles, and Mennonite actors played in several supporting roles. Also working full-time was a crew of about 45 people: sound, lighting, camera, stunt people, and coordinators for transportation, food, and lodging.

The Alsace area of France was the location for most of the shooting, with additional footage shot in Switzerland and Germany.

Eberhard Hoffmann (played by Mark Lenard) pushes Michael Sattler (Norbert Weisser) to increase the collection of taxes from the peasants under his monastery's administration.



Leigh Lombardi played Margaretha, Michael Sattler's wife, who was also tried and sentenced to death.

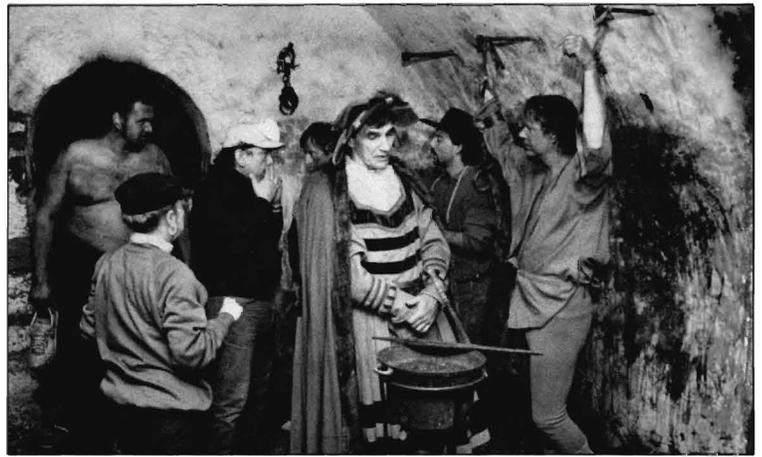
Post Production

On the shoot, we gathered the basic material necessary for the production: picture (on 35mm film) and dialog. The first challenge in post-production was to edit the 12 hours of film that we brought back from Europe to 95 minutes (the film's final length).

Next, we worked with sound. In production the mics were used to record the dialog among the actors. Sounds such as footsteps and the rustling of clothing – foleys – were added in post-production. Sound effects such as wind, birds, chickens, snorting horses, creaking doors, and roaring fires were also added to the sound track. Groups of people – called wala groups – created the crowd sounds needed in the story. All these sounds play an important part in building the emotional impact of each scene.



Grady Bishop (right) demonstrates a stunt for the battle scene.



The torture scenes were shot in an actual prison in Moulhouse, France which was last used during German occupation in World War II.

Music is an important component in any feature film. It helps build suspense, warn of impending danger, and heighten a sense of drama. Los Angeles musician Tim Simonec scored the music for ***The Radicals***, tailoring each musical segment to fit exactly to the number of frames in each scene. The music was recorded with 45 members of the Indianapolis Symphony.

The final step in the sound process was to mix the sound effects, foley work, music, and dialog so they flow together.

The Radicals is based on the Herald Press novel “Pilgrim Aflame”, written by Myron Augsberger.

“I was attracted to ***The Radicals*** because the story is timeless and it's about issues that are as relevant today as they were during the year 1524

Based on distribution deals already made, we know that there's going to be literally hundreds of thousands (if not millions) of people across the world that are going to learn about Michael and Margaretha Sattler. They were heroic characters. People will see the story of a man and a woman who were willing to die for what they believed, and that is what human drama is all about. Knowing that this is a true story makes it all the more gripping.”

– Robert Nowotny,
Producer



Sisters & Brothers' Board members hold the completed film of THE RADICALS, the story of Michael and Margaretha Sattler. SBI members pictured are: (l-r) Cheryl Elliott, D. Michael Hostetter, J. Ron Byler, Joel Kauffmann, Jim L. Bowman, and Virginia A. Hostetter. (Absent is Keith Graber Miller.)

The Radicals is an expression of the way of peace in a world of coercion and violence, and is an impact for social renewal that can affect our global village. Our society will be enriched by the examples of integrity of faith, peace, and love expressed in this film on Michael and Margaretha Sattler.

It's been my privilege to preview the "rough cut" of the film. I'm excited about the way the production tells the story and with the quality of the film. It is visually attractive and at the same time is true to the history and the faith of the characters.

The Mennonite Church will benefit from this film through its presentation of the central elements of our faith as it was forged in the crucible of suffering. It is a living story that will inform many and will reawaken an interest in our heritage."

— Myron Augsburger, Project Consultant

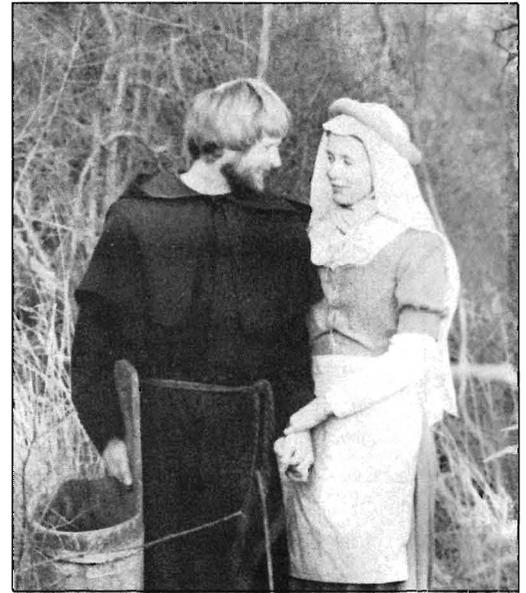
Who is distributing *The Radicals* ?

Sisters & Brothers' foreign distributor, Manson International, has already negotiated distribution rights with distributors in Europe and Asia, and continues to explore new markets.

The film was screened at the American Film Market in Los Angeles. It was shown at the prestigious Houston Film Festival and was one of the best attended films at the Festival.*

In Canada, distribution is being coordinated by David Dueck of Winnipeg. He has been producer/distributor for such films as **Menno's Reins**, **Hazels People**, **Heimat fuer Heimatlose** and **And When They Shall Ask**.

* Silver Prize Winner 1989



Travelling as one – both in spirit and mutual support – Michael and Margaretha Sattler set out on a pilgrimage to discover the true church of Christ. A pilgrimage that made them outlaws, heretics.

Over 500 extras fought in the battle scene between nobility and Anabaptist-backed peasants. TV crews and newspaper reporters recorded this event for the Swiss, German, and French media.





Wilhelm Reublin (played by Dan Perrett), the film's narrator, was one of the most controversial Anabaptists and a close associate of Sattler. Reublin was among early Anabaptists who wanted to use violence to bring about change.

When and where can I see *The Radicals* ?

Sisters & Brothers plans to distribute *The Radicals* in 35mm format in theaters throughout North America.

The Radicals, will have its initial Canadian theatrical release in Winnipeg, June 2 to June 17, 1989. The showings, 7 p.m. and 9 p.m., matinees Saturday and Sunday at 2 p.m. will be held at the Winnipeg Convention Centre Theatre, 375 York Ave. Regular admission rates apply but special advance tickets (Monday to Thursday) may be purchased at various Christian book stores and participating churches.

— *An interest holding story line, an accurate rendering of the basic historical situation. I recommend this film without any reservation.*

John H. Redekop, Professor of Political Science, Wilfred Laurier University, former moderator Canadian Conference of M.B. Churches

**For beliefs
we take for granted,
they paid the
ultimate price.**

The RADICALS

is a theatrical, feature-length motion picture independently financed by Sisters & Brothers, Inc. of Goshen, Indiana — a nonprofit tax-exempt organization founded in 1981. All production funding has been acquired through cash donations received in both Canada and the United States.

executive producers D. Michael Hostetler
associate executive producers Jim L. Bowman, J. Ron Byler and Joel Kauffmann
producer Robert A. Nowotny
director Raul V. Carrera
screenplay writers Darryl Wimberly and Joel Kauffmann

THE RADICALS stars . . .

NORBERT WEISSER as Michael Sattler (*Midnight Express, Heaven's Gate, Three Amigos, Walker, Radioactive Dreams*); MARK LENARD as Eberhard Hoffman (*Star Trek: The Search for Spock, The Voyage Home, The Final Frontier*); LEIGH LOMBARDI as Margaretha Sattler (*The Wild Life, Memories of Me, Moontrap, On Our Own*); CHRISTOPHER NEAME as Ulrich Zwingli (*D.O.A.*); and DANIEL PERRETT as Wilhelm Reublin (*General Hospital*).

For more information, please contact . . .

David B. Dueck
Coordinator for Canadian Distribution (204) 661-2483
P.O. Box 158, Station F, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2L 2A5

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2-17

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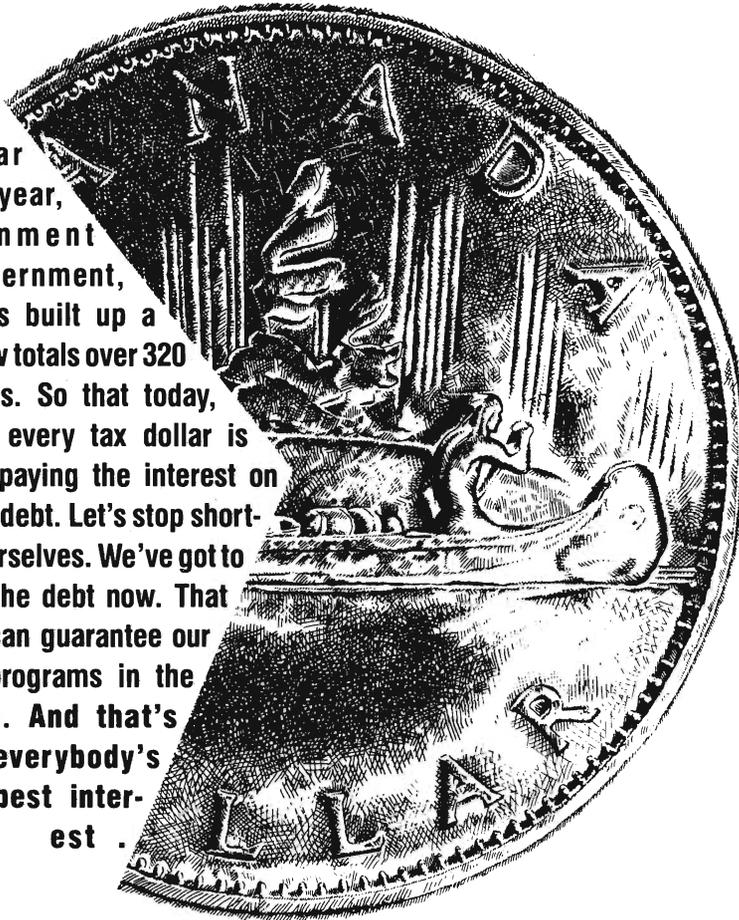
(Not recommended
for children under 12.)

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Wardrobe: MARYNA GARGONNE Screenplay: DARRYL WIMBERLEY and JOEL KAUFFMANN
Director of Photography: MICHAEL BUCHER Executive Producer: D. MICHAEL HOSTETLER
Produced by: ROBERT A. NOWOTNY Directed by: RAUL V. CARRERA

Based on the Herald Press book, *Pilgrim Aflame* by Myron S. Augsburger

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Canada

obviously not been renovated. I have seen (and used) apple boxes that look better than the furniture in this room. "Oh yes," I say to myself, "we are paying again for our cheap good fortune." This, however, turns out to be a brief low point to an otherwise exciting and relaxing stay.

Instead of wallowing in our disappointment I call the front desk to request a nicer and cleaner room. A pleasant woman replies. "Our desk is swarming with kids," she shouts over the line, "but if you come down I'll fix you up with something better." "Who do I ask for when I come to the desk?" is my next question. "My name is Eugenie," she replies, "I'm the only black gal on duty. Just come to the little blackie" she chuckles. We do, and when we arrive in the lobby she has the key to another room ready for us. This is indeed much nicer and cleaner, and our spirits lift immediately, not only because of the better room but because of Eugenie's hospitable spirit. After a few hours of good sleep we are renewed in our conviction that there was something sublime, if not divine, in the impulse to come here, and are ready to enjoy Florida.

Florida is well known to many of you, so there is no need here to go into many touristy details. Our impressions are, on the whole, very favorable, though much of the countryside resembles the scrubland south of Steinbach. It is astonishing, first of all, to see the "world" that the Disney Empire has created here.

Orlando, we are told, has become the busiest tourist area in the world, all because Disney decided to build a memorial to Mickey and Minnie here. Naturally this unusual undertaking did not become a success without a lot of money and hype, but one cannot help but be impressed by the courage and imagination that it took to transform hundreds of acres of Florida swampland into a great playground. I am always intrigued, though not awed, by the ways in which the rich use their money. A lot of it, we know, is wasted on silly little indulgences, either by those who make the money or by their children. Most of us would probably do no better if we had it. Some of the money is spent on ostentatious projects - oversized homes, hotels, etc. - which are often more imposing than inspiring. Some of the money, fortunately, is spent imaginatively and effectively. We deliberately explore some of this in the Orlando area, where a lot of money has been invested. We spend part of an evening wandering through the lobby of the very expensive Peabody Hotel, where both the residents

and the decor reek of money. We are not impressed, or envious. There is something cold and ostentatious about the place.

However, during our stay we also spend a little time on Sanibel Island, on the Gulf Coast, and here we are impressed by the lovely, quiet community that wealth has created. It would be wonderful to spend a month in one of the motels here, for reading and writing. A little brochure tells us that "this is what Florida might have been like." I can't help but think that if human beings had always treated the world with more imagination and respect then this is what the world might be like. We are similarly impressed with aspects of Disney World, like the Earth Space Ship at the Epcot centre, where simplicity has been achieved with money. We enjoy a day there very much, though the hype is sometimes a little overwhelming. We chuckle to ourselves, for example, when we discover that the trip on a "hydrolator" to "Sea Base Alpha" in the Living Seas Pavilion is nothing more than an elevator trip from one level of the exhibit to another. More realistic is the display of spaceware at the nearby Kennedy Space Centre, though even here American space propaganda makes one cringe at times.

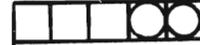
Paradise, of course, always has its snakes. A brief visit to the beaches of Tampa Bay is disappointing because a red organism in the waters of the Gulf of Mexico has killed thousands of fish, which now litter the beaches for miles. This "Red Tide," as it is called, which apparently afflicts the area every four or five years, fills the air with a stinging stench, driving all people with a sense of smell off the beach, and all allergy sufferers away from the area. We stay for lunch and head back to Orlando. A visit to Miami is postponed for a few days because of a fire in the Everglades, which has created a cloud of dense smoke over the city. Even money cannot prevent such disasters.

The things we enjoy most, turn out as usual to be the little things: a good meal in a restaurant, a relaxing hour or two with a good book beside the hotel pool, and the movies that we never find time to see at home. We especially enjoy *Rainman* and *Twins*. We always seem to be fortunate in finding a very good restaurant, not too pricey but good. In Orlando it turns out to be Jonathan's. In Hawaii it was the Renown Milano in the Discovery Bay centre. The week ends all too quickly. We return on a Sunday afternoon, to minus 5 degree temperatures, but our spirits have been renewed

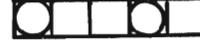
and we have no doubt that it was a benign voice that prompted us to go. We now look forward to a good summer, and wish the same for you. mm

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From the 84 entries to the March puzzle, Justina Falk, of Morden, was selected winner.

Answers to March are lilac, aster, pansy, violet, dahlia, and silent.

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

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

Entries must be sent to the Mirror office by June 30, 1989.

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207-1317A Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3G 0V3**

Conversations on middle age laced with laughter and a sense of one's own mortality

by Dora Dueck

For the past two winters I've been part of a small group which meets weekly to quilt and visit. One afternoon the conversation ranged as widely and animatedly as the colors and prints of the fabric scraps we pieced, and then ended up at the topic of middle age.

We shared the complaints which inspire the familiar jokes and groans about middle-age — the burgeoning grey and the "sag" (one friend's comprehensive description).

More soberly, however, we discovered that each of us was feeling a new awareness of death, not morbidly so, but as the unbidden, persistent, and somewhat unpleasant knowledge of our mortality.

I remember that conversation, not because it was terribly profound, but because of a realization within myself. As we tossed about words like "midlife crisis" and "middle age," still with some disdain, I well knew that I had journeyed exactly that far. I think we all knew.

This is how, besides the evidence of birthdays, we know:

First: We are discovering that those we automatically consider our contemporaries don't necessarily view us as such. They think of us as "older" or "40-ish." This is unsettling and annoying, for we are sure we're the same people we've always been: in fact, we consider ourselves quite spontaneous, youthful, current.

Second: We are finding ourselves more conscious of time and our mortality. Gail Sheehy, in her popular book *Passages*, gave the name "deadline decade" to the years between 35 and 45.

"Sometime in the ten years after they reach 35, both men and women confront an often harrowing passage when mortality first becomes real and time suddenly begins to press in," she writes.

There's a bittersweet sense of loss; the

past seems so recent and yet so far away already. Elaine Braun, a thoughtful mother of three, says, "I feel a real sadness that the childbearing years are over. I won't experience that joy and wonder of new life again. I just can't believe the time has gone so fast."

For women who are single or who have put off having children, the mid to late thirties may be years of anxiety or indecision because of that same realization, but from the other side of those rapidly-closing doors.

Third: We are re-assessing choices made earlier and thinking a lot about the future.

Gail Sheehy continues, about the deadline decade: "As we examine the gaps between our youthful illusions and where we actually are, we may experience the same confusion and fears we thought we had left far behind in adolescence. Such inner turmoil has become well known as the midlife crisis."

Lorna Boge is a vivacious 38-year-old who responded with a laugh of recognition when I asked her about this. For her, this experience was centered in a period of about six months when she says she *murred* (German word) about trying to decide if she should resume a career she had set aside with the advent of their children.

Now that she's reached a decision, the pros and cons sit neatly in their rows and the conclusion seems clear. The process of sorting, though, is an intense one, full of uncertainty and long back-and-forth conversations.

In retrospect, the contradictions and confusing invitations within ourselves may seem inflated. (Perhaps they seem so to others *during* the turmoil, but what a blessing then to have someone — a spouse or friend — who will enter uncritically into the process with us!)

One small example of this from my life: looking back at my journal I notice what

a big production I made of deciding whether or not to try the earlier-mentioned quilting project.

I was keenly attracted to quilting, pored through library books, and agonized on paper about it, but struggled to actually commit myself to trying. It seems laughable now, but I dare not laugh, because I still know exactly what it represented: starting something new, and could one, nearing 40, afford to dabble?

It seemed that I must diligently measure any new longing or project against my growing awareness of energy limitations, family commitments already firmly in place, and interests already chosen. And, of course, exactly those interests needed fresh assessment. Had my decision to write been a good one? So I'd finished one book. What next? Time to pursue the masterpiece quilt? And what about the yen to teach which had earlier raced neck-in-neck with the desire to write?

Sigh. No, it is definitely not laughable. (But at least one has learned to journal!)

It would be pretentious of me, at 39, to offer any final advice on navigating the transition to middle age. But, since I'm "older" now, I can't resist offering the following tips, gleaned in collaboration with others.

First, be willing to undergo a process of evaluation or decision-making, or to confront the new fears and night-time anxieties which may present themselves. Think, read, talk, pray, make deliberate changes if necessary.

There's good news in this. Each "crisis," small or large, engaged in this way seems to spawn a new burst of creative energy. When Lorna Boge decided at the end of about six months' struggle that she would not return to teaching, she turned with energy to a new challenge in the church MOMS program as well as other projects which utilized her musical and

organizational gifts.

A certain stubbornness seems necessary too. One processes the change deliberately, and then lives it. This is true whether the decision involves returning to work, staying home, quitting work, as well as many other midlife choices in matters of health, parenting, marriage. The fortunate thing is that midlife offers some loosening of the "self-consciousness" of youth and the concern with what others think.

Second, resist the stereotype of ideal adult life as a plateau upon which change is not only undesirable but impossible. The first pressing intimations of mortality seem to counsel just that: *no* big changes, no big risks, and no dabbling *now!*

The main challenge which I took away from reading Katie Funk Wiebe's recent book, *Bless Me Too, My Father*, was that we can give ourselves permission to change. Beliefs and opinions can change, old dreams can be abandoned, new dreams creatively risked.

Third, get an idea of what's ahead. The threshold of middle age is high time to find out what middle age might involve. Books, of course, are an important and easily accessible resource.

Another invaluable resource is people who are farther into middle age than you are. I stumbled into this while preparing for this article. Besides women my age, I talked to three who are older: Irene Labun, Mitzi Peters, and Susan Brandt. This is hardly a scientific sample, I'll admit, small and one-gender as it is (and consisting, I might add, entirely of people who seem to me to embody a sense of "well-being").

Each woman's experience of middle-age has been unique, but I got lots of ideas about what to expect ahead. There would be more physical changes, possibly less energy, there might be reversed roles with parents, and definitely many changes in relationships with children.

The awareness of mortality does not become less acute, they said, and takes new forms. Susan Brandt, one of the younger members of her family, said, "You expect your parents to die before you, but when it begins to touch your siblings, that really brings mortality close."

I also learned from them that the middle years are wonderful years, in many ways. There's the relief of having independent children. All of the women expressed the wonderful freedom this gave them, whether or not their children were still at home.

They also enjoyed the new relationships with grown children. Although this required giving up old roles, it also yielded the glad "reaping" of all the work of parenting which had earlier been sown.

Middle age can bring a growing appreciation for one's spouse. "Before, there was *busy* appreciation," Irene Labun laughs, "but now we have time to show it."

What stood out to me in all these conversations about middle age was the laughter in them. Perhaps this was noticeable because I interviewed mostly by phone, but I think it's significant. It seemed to underline the dominant sentiment that "I can't honestly say I like getting older, but I'm not afraid of it either." Samples:

"I don't feel grown up yet" (Hearty laughter).

"I look back and can't believe what I used to do like take ten 14-year-old girls on an overnight camping trip alone! I don't get myself into things like that anymore!" (Hearty laughter).

"When my mother complained that my face was smooth and hers was wrinkled, I remember thinking, 'well you're older, what's wrong with it?' Now I see my daughter and I know exactly what my mother was feeling!" (Hearty laughter).

For these women, middle age has brought growing contentment and acceptance, confidence, joy and a deepening spirituality.

"I read more," says Mitzi Peters. "I have

more time for people. I pray much longer. One's concerns broaden as one grows."

So without denying some of the real pressures middle age can bring — and certainly life's turns can never be entirely anticipated — those who are ahead of us chronologically offer a compelling vision of the middle years.

And once well-entrenched in middle age, what does one do? Well, while living it to the fullest, you can get ready for the next stage. Says Mitzi Peters, 55, "I'm getting ready now to be a nice *old* person." (Said with hearty laughter!) **mm**

Hospital Chaplain Concordia Hospital

Concordia Hospital is a 136-bed acute care general hospital serving the northeast quadrant of the City of Winnipeg, owned and operated by the Mennonite Hospital Society Concordia. The role of the chaplain is to provide pastoral care for patients, families, and staff.

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Submit resume by **June 15** to Siegfried J. Enns, Executive Director, Concordia Hospital, 1095 Concordia Avenue, Winnipeg, R2K 3S8.



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MANITOBA NEWS

Triple E Canada. Co-founder and chairman of the board, **P.W. Enns**, has resigned, and **Philip R. Ens**, president and general manager, is the new board chairman. **William D. Chalmers** has been appointed as general manager, president and chief executive officer, of Triple E Canada.

Trudy Wiens, a homemaker from Glenlea, has been appointed as a board member of the Manitoba Arts Council.

Rose Cornelson from Rosenort has had her first book **Please Carry Me Lord** published by Kindred Press. Publication was jointly sponsored by Evangelical Mennonite Conference, Steinbach, and the Mennonite Brethren Board of Christian Literature.

The Conference of Mennonites in Canada will have to make cutbacks in programs this year since only 94.2 per cent of the 1988 budget was realised. However, building plans for a new office complex and conference centre at 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard are proceeding. Ground breaking ceremonies for the complex took place April 14. The two-storey addition to existing facilities will house the national offices of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. Occupying the second floor will be the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba.



The sod-turning ceremony for a new conference complex at the Canadian Mennonite Bible College site was held in April. Here Frank Neufeld, chair of the Manitoba conference, is seen addressing the assembly.

Tom Edge of Winnipeg has been appointed director of Handicap Concerns for MCC, Canada-wide as well as the Manitoba program. Edge formerly managed Choice Books in Winnipeg. He and his wife Renate are

members of the Aberdeen Evangelical Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.

New editors for church papers: **Ron Geddert** of Saskatchewan is the new editor of the **Mennonite Brethren Herald**. Interim editor for the past year, **Jim Coggins**, will continue as associate editor. **Lorena Marsch** has been appointed editor of the German language **Mennonitische Rundschau**, replacing **Abe Schellenberg**, who retires June 30. **William Schroeder** of Winkler will be associate editor of the **Rundschau** on a half-time basis.

Ernie and Esther Isaac, due to the unrest and conditions of war, returned from Kabul on February 9, cutting short their one-year term with International Assistance Mission. Ernie, consultant at Eden Mental Health Centre, Winkler, worked as a counsellor, and Esther as an optician in a hospital. **Richard Penner**, Winnipeg, head of IAM, stayed in Kabul, but his wife and family went to India.

Eleanor Loewen, Charleswood Mennonite Church, has accepted a half-time position at Windsor Park United Church. Her work will include Christian Education, preaching, worship and training responsibilities.

Ernie and Lynette Wiebe of Charleswood Mennonite Church will be going to Taiwan under the Conference of Mennonites (COM). Ernie will be teaching and Lynette will be secretary at Bethany School, Taipei. The Wiebes have three children.

Abe Bergen, director of youth and young adult ministries for COM in Manitoba, is co-ordinator of the youth program for Mennonite World Conference, to be held in Winnipeg July 24-29, 1990.

Leonard Enns and Esther Wiebe, associate professors of music at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, and Canadian Mennonite Bible College respectively, will participate in a faculty exchange effective July 1.

Walter Sawatsky of MCC, East-West Relations, has been appointed associate professor of church history at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana.

Elmer Neufeld, former MCC chair, **Hugo Jantz**, Neuwied, West Germany, and **Reg Toews**, Akron, Pennsylvania, recently travelled to Armenia on behalf of MCC. MCC is

proposing to send pre-fab construction materials, technical and medical consultants, Armenian Christian literature, and explore possibilities of long-term service projects in the Soviet Union.

Mennonite Economic Development Association (MEDA) has been awarded a \$450,000 fertilizer education contract with Canadian International Development Agency. The contract involves monitoring of a \$30 million project between Canada and India over five years.

Palliser Furniture Ltd., with eight years exposure in the U.S. market, is now consolidating its North American marketing operations in Winnipeg with the appointment of **Roger Friesen** as general manager of marketing and sales in North America. Previously based in Fargo, North Dakota, Friesen helped boost U.S. sales to about 20 per cent of the company's \$120 million sales in 1988. Palliser sees its best opportunities for growth in the U.S., but due to the Free Trade Agreement believes continental marketing can be done from Winnipeg.

Mennonite Brethren Bible College has a new recreational/athletic facility. Programs of instruction in recreational and athletic studies will be taught. It is hoped this will be a new door of opportunity for Christian service and outreach into the community.

Steinbach MCC Thrift Shop had a ground-breaking ceremony April 20 to mark the beginning of the construction of a new building on Main Street.

Canadian Foodgrains Bank ships grain and other food to the Third World on behalf of nine denominational partners, MCC being a major one. CFGB is making a special appeal for donations of wheat from areas of western Canada which had an average or better crop in 1988. CFGB began 1989 with low reserves of grain but a high level of requests from countries hit hard by natural disasters and war. Grain Drive 88 last November brought in about 3,000 metric tonnes of donated canola and wheat, valued at \$600,000, from about 500 donors. Farmers can still contribute at their closest elevator, and will receive a tax-deductible receipt for all donations.

A new association for the Arts will be created at the meeting of the Mennonite Church General Assembly and the General Conference Mennonite Church Triennial sessions at Normal, Illinois, August 1-6, 1989. Those interested in the arts are encouraged to attend. The association will be open to artists from all Mennonite churches and institutions and other interested individuals. For more information contact Philip K. Clemens, associate minister, College Mennonite Church, 1900 South Main Street, Goshen, Indiana, 46526.

The gene believed to be responsible for a rare genetic bone disease that causes death almost immediately after birth has been isolated at the Winnipeg Children's Hospital. According to reports, Mennonites suffer a higher incidence of the disease than other people.

The annual sessions of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada will be held this year in Normal, Illinois, during the general conference Triennial sessions. The idea to hold the sessions in conjunction with the general conference sessions was prompted partly by economic and time factors, but also to symbolize oneness with the general conference and Mennonite Church. A major agenda item at the joint conference will be the question, "Is it time for the General Conference and Mennonite Church to integrate into one denomination?" CMC will spend time in its shortened agenda to discuss what implications such a move could have for the Canadian setting.

A multi-million dollar self-contained "village" is being planned for the south-east corner of Springfield Road and Gateway Road. The 55 acre development, a project of Palliser Furniture, will be geared for the 45 and over age group, with a small restaurant, medical clinic, a village green, with a church, recreation complex and senior housing complex. River East MB Church plans to move to the new church site.

Di Brandt has been nominated for a Commonwealth Prize for Poetry in the category of best first book by a poet, for her collection of poems *Questions i asked my mother*.

Gwen Klassen, flautist, won the eighth annual Lawrence Genser Scholarship Competition at the University of Manitoba. Gwen is a

fourth-year performance student in the school of music. The scholarship includes a cash prize of \$1,000.

World News

Revolutionaries remembered: A Mennonite community whose Anabaptist roots were planted in revolutionary soil is celebrating two anniversaries this fall -- one of 405 years, the other of 300. The celebration is tak-

REVIEW

An afternoon of earned applause for Mennonite orchestra

a review by Leonard Isaacs

The Mennonite Community Orchestra gave its spring concert on Sunday afternoon, April 16, in Jubilee Place. It was conducted by Franz Paul Klassen, who is in Canada from Germany, and the piano soloist was Sara Schmidt.

A community orchestra is something which is worthy of both praise and support — support it certainly had on Sunday, for the big hall was quite full, and the applause must have pleased both the performers and the organizers. The orchestra is composed mainly of amateurs and students, with a sprinkling of professionals, and it acquitted itself on the whole extremely well. Intonation was mostly good and its enthusiasms was infectious. It did suffer from that from which almost all amateur orchestras suffer — weak string tone and over-emphatic brass and wind. In a hall as resonant as Jubilee Place it would be wise to persuade the wind players to moderate their *fortes* and to make their *pianos* really quiet. I could see no justification for allowing *four* (instead of two) trumpets to play in the first and last movements of Mozart's *Haffner Symphony*: they swamped every chord in which they played.

The *Symphony* was a serious effort — almost too serious, for Mozart was hardly allowed to smile and relax. The "slow" movement was, for me, a trifle too brisk to permit its charm to predominate, while the "minuet" became a *Laendert* the con-

ing place in Deventer, the Netherlands, whose first Anabaptists were revolutionaries allied with the Munsterites. This band of Anabaptists hatched a plot to seize Deventer by force in 1535, a plan which failed when it was betrayed. The Deventer Anabaptists persisted, though not without persecution, and in 1687 the congregation purchased a church which it moved into the following year. This is the 300th anniversary that is being celebrated. Today Deventer has a Mennonite membership of 200.

ductor's and the orchestra's concentration was admirable.

In three pieces a number of "junior" players joined the orchestra, and we had a spirited (and remarkably clean) *Polka* from Weinberger's delightful opera *Schwanda das Dudlsackpfeifer* — really faster than any *Polka* should go. Then, a fine alive *Radetsky March* — and an *Intermezzo* from an opera by Franz Schmidt, that composer beloved of Austrians and so hard to export. This *Intermezzo* drew from the conductor some satisfyingly flexible direction — the lush romanticism of the piece surely called for it. One the whole, though, while Mr. Klassen's direction was admirably clear throughout, his big energetic beat ended to produce a certain rigidity in the playing.

The best performance of the afternoon came at the end of the concert. The Liszt *E-Flat Piano Concerto* is apt to draw condescending sniffs nowadays, but it is a very good example of a short romantic virtuoso work, written by the composer for himself to play, and on Sunday it was extremely well-played by Sara Schmidt, and well accompanied by Mr. Klassen and the orchestra. (We should have like to hear the triangle more often and more clearly! This work was sometimes jokingly called the "Triangle Concerto!")

Ms. Schmidt showed herself to be a well-prepared and competent pianist, and she played Liszt with assurance and panache — consequently she gave pleasure. And in many spots she also showed traditional "romantic" breadth and freedom, which was good and satisfying. She, the conductor, and the orchestra received a well-deserved ovation.

Altogether this orchestra and its directors (the organizations is more than 40 years old) deserve every encouragement.

Leonard Isaacs was the first director of the School of Music, University of Manitoba, and is now living in retirement in Winnipeg.

REVIEW

A Viable New Mennonite Play

A review by Al Reimer

Although Mennonite writing is blooming like the flowers in May these days, original Mennonite plays are still a rarity. All the more reason then to rejoice over Esther Wiens' provocative little drama *Sanctuary*, as produced by Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre. Esther Wiens, who teaches English and Drama at MBBC, has both the theoretical and practical knowledge of theatre required for the writing of a viable stage script. *Sanctuary* raises the vexing and perhaps insoluble issue of an inevitable conflict between moral and legal forms of justice as worked out within the dramatic context of desperate Salvadorean refugees brought into the U.S. illegally by a charitable and well-meaning Christian Mennonite family living in California. It's a timely and worthwhile theme for a serious play, and Esther Wiens exploits it with considerable writing skill and some adroit stage craft.

Father Peter Reimer, convincingly played by Gerhard Wiebe, commits himself rather casually to the illegal action of bringing in the family of refugees via the underground railway against the wishes, initially, of his family and without realizing what he is letting himself in for when the long arm of the law catches up with him. Inadvertently betrayed by a member of his own family, Reimer learns the hard way that even a moral and Christian commitment may have devastating negative effects unforeseen and uncontrollable in the real world. The experience, harrowing and painful as it is for the Reimer family, compels them to make a moral and ethical stand that clearly revitalizes them spiritually as individuals and as a family.

Neither the play nor the production is free of faults and weaknesses, although none proves crippling. The play, while containing some fine dramatic moments (indeed whole scenes) is not as smoothly developed structurally as it might be, and some of the characters would benefit from clearer motivation and integration with the plot (Gonzales the sheriff, for example).

The dialogue, while credible for the most part, becomes, in places, a little stilted with diction that is too formal and "literary." More seriously, some of the more dramatic moments are undercut by sentimentalized imagery (Peter Reimer's dream of the lamb, and his vision of his deceased grandmother in her rocking chair as he is led away in handcuffs).

I liked Ted Korol's replica of a spacious Mennonite kitchen and living interior, although the stage in the new Jubilee Place at MBBC is too far removed from the audience (fine for concerts but a little remote for plays). The cast was satisfactory overall, and I particularly liked, besides Gerhard Wiebe, the work of Paul Enns as the sheriff, and Carl Krahn and Lara Schroeder as the Reimer children. Gerda Regier as the Romero daughter also had fine moments, as did Henry Penner as the expedient lawyer. Alfred Wiebe is an intelligent director and did as much with this play as the resources available to him allowed.

Esther Wiebe and WMT are to be congratulated for the success of both play and production. This is already the third production of *Sanctuary* and I am confident that in spite of its minor deficiencies it will wear well and continue to be performed by Mennonite groups. If you missed it you may get a chance to see it as part of next summer's Mennonite World Conference here in Winnipeg. **mm**

REVIEW

A Spring Evening with Schubert's Maid of the Mill

A review by Al Reimer

Prairie Performances Manitoba, Inc. presents "An Evening of Schubert Songs" featuring *Die Schöne Müllerin*, performed by Mel Braun, baritone, and Jenny Regehr, pianist, at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, April 27th and 28th, 1989.

Who but an unrepentant misanthrope could resist the limpid melodies and passionate moods of Schubert's *Die Schöne Müllerin*, the first extended song cycle ever written and still the most popular. The twenty songs set to the poems of Romantic poet Wilhelm Müller tell the rapturous story of a young miller who falls in love with his master's beautiful daughter only to lose her to a more aggressive and masculine forest hunter. In true Romantic style, the miller ends his misery by immersing himself in the cool waters of his beloved brook.

Baritone Mel Braun and pianist Jenny Regehr brought this ravishing song cycle vividly to life in a sensitive, insightful performance. Singer Braun was suffering from a cold when I heard him in the Friday performance, but the warmth, the charm and flexibility of his voice and style were there in good measure and he sang the closing half dozen songs in splendid fashion. These songs do not offer the dramatic challenges (and opportunities) of the even greater cycle *Die Winterreise*, the tragic sequel to *Die Schöne Müllerin*, but they contain plenty of emotional nuances and variations of mood. Mel Braun obviously understands these songs, and splendidly supported by Ms. Regehr, he managed not only the delicate shading of quiet songs like "Danksagung an den Bach" and "Morgengruss," but also negotiated confidently the passionate, urgent tempos of songs like "Ungeduld" and "Mein," as well as the pain and pathos of "Die liebe Farbe" and "Der Müller und der Bach." Jenny Regehr was a worthy partner in this recital and these two young Mennonite artists proved once again what

rich resources of artistic talent the local Mennonite community is blessed with.

Prairie Performances deserves our gratitude for bringing us recitals of a kind not usually offered here by other artistic organizations. The Friday night audience was not large enough, however, to fill the Muriel Richardson Auditorium, more's the pity.

The costly choice of Anabaptism

An American film festival has given an award to the recently completed movie, **The Radicals**, which will be playing at the Winnipeg Convention Centre theatre in early June.

The Houston International Film Festival gave *The Radicals* its 1989 Silver prize.

The verse from John 8:32, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free!" was distributed by a 16th century printer and resulted in his death. The scripture also led Michael Sattler, a Benedictine monk from South Germany, to renounce his priestly vows. Later he and his new wife, Sister Margaretha, became early leaders of the Anabaptist-free church movement. They, too, died at the hands of the "state."

The story of the Sattlers is chronicled in **Pilgrim Aflame**, a novel by Myron Augsburger. This book has now the basis for the movie, **The Radicals**, produced by the Sisters and Brothers Inc. of Goshen, Indiana, a non-profit inter-Mennonite organization founded in 1981.

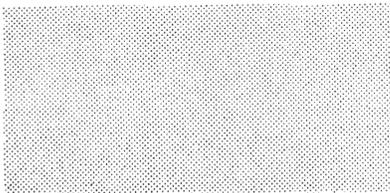
The Radicals was funded by cash donations from Canada and the U.S. and will make its Winnipeg debut on **June 2** at the Winnipeg Convention Centre theatre and continue to play there until **June 17**. Regular admission prices apply, but special advance tickets (Monday to Thursday) may be purchased at various Christian book stores and participating churches.

A special dedication showing to raise money for distribution, and a reception at which some of the cast and film crew will be present, is planned for Thursday, June 1, at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$50.

"While **The Last Temptation of Christ** triggered protest from the Christian community, **The Radicals**, will inspire and challenge us to live for our convictions," said the Canadian distribution coordinator, Dave Dueck.

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YOUR WORD

COMIC TOUCH RETAINED

My old friend and mentor, Jack Thiessen, demonstrates in the March edition of the *Mirror* that he retains his Low German comic touch with the story of the dying man denied half a *Tweeback* by his frugal wife.

To my mind, there is something quintessentially Mennonite in that story. You may be on your death bed, but you're not going to get anything that isn't coming to you. The idea of an orderly way of doing things is so strong that it takes on its own imperative, blindly to be followed in all situations. Besides, wouldn't there be something *wasteful* in giving food to a man who's about to pass on?

It's a wry laugh indeed that the absurd and almost shocking last line wrings from the unsuspecting reader. Thiessen has justly achieved renown in the Mennonite community for his ability to puncture pretense; nor does he fail us in this piece.

At the same time his comment about Indians, gratuitously thrown out at the beginning of the story, can't go unchallenged. In comparing the old-fashioned life of Mexican Mennonites to our hectic, overstimulated North American existence, the story teller informs us that *'daut Fernsee wea nijch folla* causes them concerns: *kjeene blindje, besopne Indieauna ooda sowaut . . .'*

I take this to mean that down-to-earth Mexican Mennonites are not beset by television programs insisting they must feel guilty about the problems of the unfortunate and downtrodden. And that they're better off for it.

Considering that we've seen every imaginable kind of social problem on television, and that television is essentially meant to entertain, not educate, and that guilt is as likely to paralyze as to motivate, there may be a point here.

But to characterize Indians as "blind or drunk" is thoughtless, mischievous, and not funny. I could go on to explain why, but I would rather think that both Thiessen and his readers don't need any explanation.

The humour of women talking about pig-slaughtering "as God intended," in an edition of your magazine devoted to the accomplishments of Mennonite women also falls a bit flat.

Jack! You, more than, anyone, taught me to challenge those who sit in the seats of the mighty. I never took that to mean reinforcing negative stereotypes of the

powerless.

Where were the *Mirror* editors on this one? A publication that defines itself along ethnic lines has an extra responsibility to respect other cultures, no?

Ralph Friesen, Winnipeg

MORE AVERAGE VIEW

Would like to let you know that I have enjoyed reading the *Mirror* for many years although for a while it seemed as though things were getting a bit over the heads of the average person but the last issue was more suited to the average intellectual as one might say.

I appreciate the low German stories written by Al Reimer, Victor Peters, and Agnes Wall.

Tim Wiebe's write ups and items on travel or trips people have taken are also appreciated.

Mrs. K. Neisteter,
Winkler.

FACTS OF HISTORY

In "Zur Diskussion" of the **Mennonite Mirorr** February 1989, V.G.D. brings to our attention some important facts of history.

In regard to the *Aufklaerung*, or Enlightenment, of the 18th century, I found helpful information in the New International Dictionary of the Christian Church. The editor, J. D. Douglas, PhD, writes in his introduction: "most of all (we sgiykd gave) and appreciation of the priceless heritage which is ours in Christ."

Was reminded of a remark Dr. A.H. Unruh made, teaching Bible Introduction (1930) in regard to a problem in reference to the Old Testament: "*Wenn der Herr Jesus sich geirrt hat, dann wollen uns nur mit ihm irren?!*"

Jesus Christ claimed for Himself: "I am the way and *the truth* and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me (John 14:6) In His prayer, according to John 17:17 He says, "Sanctify them by *the truth*; your word is *truth* (NIV)

G. A. Braun,
Altona.
Editor:

NOT WHAT IT WAS

In a recent report in one of our church-family papers we read of yet another marriage wreck that was tossed on a cliff in a sea by a raging storm. The two occupants of the sailing vessel managed to cling to some floating debris and thereby their lives were saved but drifted apart amidst billowed waves.

Out of this, partly imaginative story, yet true in our everyday day lives, the follow-

ing lines were penned.

The Song

Our Menno folks, they aint what they used to be, aint what they used to be many long years ago!

During Granma's and Grandpa's courtship days, once the wedding vows were exchanged, if in later years be it peace or strife,

The Good Book said: You are married for life - Amen! Amen!

Our finger pointing game may no longer be played since the fingers began to point our way.

Divorce and re-marriage has entered our fort and it appears to be here to stay!

One time evil words like disdain and contempt

Are no longer permissible to be heard in our tent!

Repeat Our Menno folks, they aint what they used to be, aint what they used to be many long years ago!

Jake Hildebrand

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Loos Henje

Fonn Agnes Waul

Fäle Kanadja, besondasch dee ut Manitoba, kjenne aulahaunt Reibapistole äwa dee Kjill emm Winta fetale. Woo dee Wint iesijch utem Nuade jult bott eena schia stiew frist. Woo eena emm Schneestorm nijch de Haunt ferre Uage seene kaun. Woo daut Kwetjselewa sitj gauns unje emm Grodglauss fetjriipt. Woo dee Schnee sitj unjre Uake oppstoselt soo daut eena nijch wieda kaun. Wann eenem Maun ditt dann opp eenst ütjriest, lat hee aules stone onn ligje onn flijcht no Hawaii, wajch fomm Stiem onn Schnee.

Dertjse onn siene Fru wulle uck mol han. See sade sitj opp'm Loftschepp no Honolulu, Hawaii. Aus see meist doa weare, wort an een Blautje jejäft, daut sulle see ütfulle. "Heea, du," säd dee Dertjsche too am, "daut ess hia opp'm Papia jeschräwe daut wie kjeen Fleesch enn Hawaii nennbrinje selle. Du hast oba twee Aultoonasche Ruackworscht emm Schemmedaun."

"Etj foa noanijch one Ruackworscht han, daut weetst du. Opp'm Blaut woare dee nijch Ruackworscht meene. Daut ess je uck nijch jeweelijchet Fleesch," meend Dertjse.

Hee haud rajcht. Een Mennist kjrijcht

emma Ruackworscht enn Hawaii nenn. Dee kjanne doa aul onse Lied. Emm Winta sennt doa sea fäl fonn onse Mensche onn eena heat uck foaken Plautdietsch oppe Gausse. Plautdietsch onn Jaupaunsch.

Fuats aus see aunkaume, sage Dertjse doa een Jung onn een Mäatje, jieda mett eenem straumen Bloomekrauns. Ea see soo rajcht wisste waut passead, haud dee Jung dee Dertjsche dän Krauns äwrem Hauls jehonge onn äa eenen Kuss jejäft. "Waut jeit hia fäa?" docht Dertjse onn langd no sienem Gonstock. Oba nu streept daut Mäatje am uck eenen Bloomekrauns äwrem Kopp onn jeef am uck eenen Kuss. Am wort diretj en bät dieslijch doabie.

"Wellkom, Kosin," säde dee Beid.

"Na, woo sennt wie dann Frintschoft?" fruch Dertjse aul fuats.

"Enn Hawaii sent wie aula Kosins," meende see, "hang loose."

"Loos henje sell wie uck? Woo henjt eena loos?"

"Daut woa jie aul leare," meende dee Beid onn jinje no Aundre onn kusste dän onn jeewe an eenen Bloomekrauns.

Hawaii ess eene scheene, woame Insel. Doa jeit loos too henje wiels doa ess emma Somma. Doa kjenne dee Lied emma mett korte Maue gone. Doa wausse Paulmebeem onn fäle bunte Bloome daut runde Joa derjch. Aule Lied sennt frint-

lijch. Dee Himmel ess blau uck daut Wota. Doa ess daut scheen toom bode ooda schwamme. Oppe Bietsch sage Dertjse uck aul foats aulahaunt loos henje. Ditt honk loos onn daut honk loos. Fäle Lied lage opp Haundeatja opp'm Saunt onn reade sitj nijch. Fe Stunde lage see doa soo. Eenje Lied haude een Bratje emm Wota onn schwomme oppe Walle. Eenje leete sitj mettem Loftballoon enne Loft rommschlape. "Dee henje opp ernst loos," säd Dertjse.

Doa woare jieda Joa mea Huachhiesa jebut wiels jieda Joa kome mea Jast onn dee motte wua een Krupunja habe. Twee Kontraktasch fonn Nuadkildoona stunde bie eenem soonen Bu onn kjitje too, woo daut enn Hawaii jedone wort. "Etj kunn daut billja, bāta onn schwinda doone," säd Wiens.

"Doa hast du rajcht," säd Iesaac, onn jintj utem Stijch aus doa jrod een Homa fonn bowe rauffoll onn am meisst opp'm Kopp troff. "Oba hia henjt je aules loos, soogoa diss Homa."

Omm eene Wäatj wort Dertjse enn daut siene Fru opp eenst aundasch wea aus hee daut mett äa jewant wea. See jintj nijch mea twee Schräd hinja am. See haud sitj een Mumu jekoft onn haud ditt bunte Kjeled foaken aun. See haud meist emma eene straume Bloom enne Hoa. See räd selden plautdietsch oppe Gauss oda oppe Bietsch, wann daut uck enn Hawaii gaunss aunjebrocht ess. Hee wull habe see sull am Plumemoos oda Borscht koake oba see säd, "Etj ha' doatoo nijch Tiet. Etj mott loos henje."

"Du henjst aul fäl too loos," säd hee äa.

Dertjse nobade foaken mett eenje Oolasch, dee weare aus 'ne Grupp jekome onn woamde sitj hia nu äare Knoakes opp. An jintj daut sea scheen onn'n poa fonn an weare aul ea hia jewāse. Dee oole Taunte Hiebatsche säd, "Etj feel mie tian Joa jinja. Etj jleijch daut scheene Wada, dee woame Loft onn dee schmocke Natua. Etj spāa uck nuscht fonn miene Rietinj. Soo jeit ons daut aula. Dee lome Faust jeit hia one Stock onn dee tsiempauagje Wiensche sajcht see kaun bāta seene. Ons Gruppeleida betuttat ons sea goot onn dee Kosins pause no aules opp. Wie henje hia aula en bātje loos."

Soo wea daut bie aulem. Enn dee Tiet aus see enn Hawaii weare, lead Dertjse uck, loos too henje. See, dee Dertjsche, lead daut eascht, dann hee. See naume sitj fäa, hia wudde see noch earemol hanfleaje onn bie dee Kosins loos henje.

mennonite mirror / may-june, 1989 / 27



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Wilder Honig

Ziege Meck

Dann kam es zu der bisher größten Sensation auf dem Moorhof. Wilhelm kehrte mit dem Fahrrad aus dem Städtchen zurück, auf dem Rücken einen Rucksack, aus welchem ein Ziegenkopf herausguckte.

Er stieg vom Rad, Hans, Kora und ich mit Klaus auf dem Arm umstanden ihn, als er nun den Rucksack abnahm, auf die Erde stellte und aufschnürte. Sogleich sprang eine kleine, vollkommen weiße Ziege heraus und sagte verwundert: „Meck.“

„Ha, ha, ha“, lachte Hans, der Sinn für Humor hatte. „Sie hat sich vorgestellt“, meinte er, „ihr Name ist Meck.“

Meck verzichtete auf Anpassungsschwierigkeiten, sie kannte weder Hemmungen noch Heimweh. Das Leben fand sie ausgesprochen schön, hier oder anderswo. Sofort begann sie die Umgebung in Augenschein zu nehmen; im Nu entdeckte sie die ersten saftigen Gräser und hielt unvermittelt eine genüssliche Mahlzeit, wobei sie uns gutgelaunt musterte.

„Plock ör hier an!“ befahl Wilhelm,

und Hans rannte-holte Pfahl, Vorschlaghammer und ein Stück Bindegarn. Bald besaßen wir eine angepflockte, glückliche Ziege, wie wir sie uns schon lange erträumt hatten.

Von diesem noch ahnungslosen Tiere erwarteten wir die Versorgung der Kinder, ja des ganzen Haushaltes und, falls sich ein solches wieder einfangen ließ, auch eines Rehkitzes mit täglicher Frischmilch.

Aber noch war es lange nicht so weit, unsere Ziege war nämlich noch Jungfrau, und wir konnten vorläufig nicht mehr tun, als uns mit ihr anfreuden, sie gut füttern und darauf warten, daß sie Anzeichen von Paarungswilligkeit von sich gebe.

Wie zeigt man als jungfräulich Ziege so etwas an, überlegte ich, und wie sollte ein Mann wie Wilhelm und gar ein unerfahrener Jüngling wie Hans ihre womöglich schüchternen und verschämten Signale verstehen? Würde sie ihre heimlichen Wünsche durch verstohlene Blicke oder vielleicht deutlichere durch eine Neigung zum Schmusen anzeigen? Wilhelm als Bauernsohn mußte das wissen.

„Wie zeigt eine Ziege ihre Paarungswilligkeit an?“ fragte ich, und Hans spitzte die Ohren.

„Se blökt“, antwortete Wilhelm, der sich, wie der Leser beobachtet haben wird, stets des Plattdeutschen bediente, egal, ob man ihn verstand oder nicht.

„Ein bißchen hat sie schon geblökt, Herr Kröger“, sagte Hans, denn Meck hatte in der Tat inzwischen mehrmals gemeckert und mit dem kurzen Schwänzchen lustig gewackelt, falls es das war, was Wilhelm meinte.

„Se blökt dann masse lua' un unanstännig“, erklärte Wilhelm, „dit bäten tellt noch nich.“

Aha, dachte ich, sie muß also laut und penetrant und endlos blöken; darauf galt es zu warten, ehe Aussicht auf Milch, Sahne und Kochkäse bestand.

Zur Nacht sperrten wir Meck in einen kleinen Verschlag, aber das nahm sie uns nicht übel; aber sie hat einen ausgesprochen starken Eigenwillen, das merkten wir sehr bald, vor allem Hans, der zum Ziegenhirt bestimmt wurde und der dieses Amt zunächst auch gern übernahm.

Als Meck in den nächsten Tagen die saftigen Gräser auf unserem Hof abgegrast hatte, guckte sie — und wir auch — verlangend hinüber zur angrenzenden Kuhweide, deren Besitzer

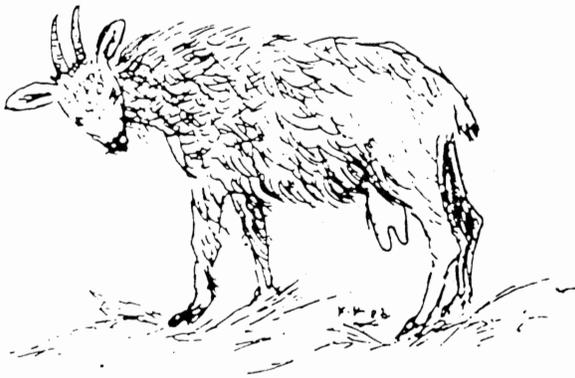
von Hedwig Knoop
(Fortsetzung)



fernab im Städtchen wohnte. Ohne Erlaubnis konnten wir sie dort nicht mit gutem Gewissen grasen lassen. Aber diese Erlaubnis erteilte uns auf Anfrage bereitwillig der Bauer, denn er nahm unseer bißchen Ziege überhaupt nicht ernst; die würde seinen gewaltigen Holsteiner Kühen, welche er in Kürze auf die Weide treiben wollte, schon nichts von Bedeutung wegschnappen, meinte er.

Voller Freude und in der Hoffnung, daß das viele gute Futter ihre Paarungswilligkeit beschleunigen könnte führte Hans am nächsten Morgen die Ziege auf die Weide.

Er führte sie auf die Weide — das klingt so idyllisch und unkompliziert. Doch die Wirklichkeit war anders. Meck hatte ihre eigene Vorstellung davon, wie sie auf die Weide gelangen wollte, keinesfalls aber so, wie Hans sich das dachte, nämlich lammfromm hinter ihm her an der Leine. Nein, sie wollte sich zuerst auf unserem



Hof umsehen, wollte probieren, ob die Blätter des Fliederbusches heute noch genauso schmeckten wie gestern, wollte gucken, ob sich jemand hinter der Hausecke versteckt hatte und vieles mehr.

„Komm her, du!“ schimpfte Hans und zog mit Gewalt an der Leine. Aber Meck sträubte sich mit aller Kraft, und nur zentimeterweise konnte er sie hinter sich herschleifen.

„Du verdammtes Vieh!“ rief er aus und versetzte ihr einen Klaps. Dies faßte Meck als ein kleines Spielchen auf, sie tat ein paar vergnügte Hüpfen und meckerte Hans schalkhaft an. Dann warf sie in ihrem Bärmut plötzlich den Kopf zurück und riß ihm die Leine aus der Hand. Hans warf sich blitzschnell auf sie, doch sie sprang zur Seite, und er landete auf dem Bauch.

„Du verdammtes Mistvieh“, knirschte er und sammelte sich auf. Ein Lasso hätte er haben müssen, der unfreiwillige Cow-

boy; er war für dieses frühmorgendliche Rodeo weder ausgerüstet noch trainiert, und seine Laune verschlechterte sich von Minute zu Minute, während Meck in die heiterste Stimmung geriet.

Schließlich bekam Hans das Bindsegarn wieder zu fassen. Er wickelte es sich nun entschlossen um den Arm und zog Meck mit brutaler Gewalt bis an den Stacheldrahtzaun, dann kroch er unter ihm durch auf die Weide. Meck aber sprang leichtfüßig über den Zaun und verwickelte die Schnur im Stacheldraht. Nun bin ich neugierig, was er tun wird, dachte sie wohl.

„Gottverdammtes Vieh, ich zieh dir das Fell über die Ohren“, zischte Hans und machte sich daran, die verfangene Schnur wieder freizubekommen. Als das nach Kratzern und Flüchen gelungen war, packte er energisch die Leine, und dann ging's mit Riesenschritten zum Pflock mitten auf der Weide: Hans zornig

voraus, die Ziege gutgelaunt hinterher.

Im Laufe der nächsten Tage und Wochen wurde Hans ein wenig geschickter im Umgang mit diesem argen Widersacher, aber sein Groll auf die lebenslustige Ziege steigerte sich zusehends, und ich fürchtete, daß er sie eines Tages ermorden könnte.

Angesichts dieser täglich beobachteten Stierkämpfe mußte auch ich meine Meinung über Ziegen revidieren. Ich hatte sie mir bisher wie die betuliche Mutter Geiß aus den Sieben Geißlein vorgestellt oder wie die frommen Tiere aus Moni der Geißbub.

Meck war Völlig anders. Freilich mußte man ihr zugute halten, daß sie noch ein Teenager war und vor dem Establishment, vertreten durch Hans, noch nicht den gebührenden Respekt entwickelt hatte. Der Ernst des Lebens käme auch für sie noch, Kinder zum Beizpiel und die Pflichten als Milchlieferant. Durch diese Könnte sie

sich vielleicht doch noch zu einem angepaßten Moorbewohner entwickeln.

Dann eines Tages blökte Meck. Hans war gerade mit ihr auf der Weide und merkte es zuerst. Puterrot im Gesicht kam er angerannt: „Herr Kröger, Meck blökt!“

„Ich hör nix“, entgegnete Wilhelm.

„Ich sage Ihnen, die blökt; sie schreit so laut wie noch nie!“

„Meenste?“ sagte Wilhelm.

Wir alle rannten nun bis an den Weidezaun und lauschten. Ja, ganz eindeutig; in ihrem Pflock stand Meck und blökte — laut, gemein und in einem fort.

„Was habe ich Ihnen gesagt, Herr Kröger!“ triumphierte Hans.

„Heßt recht, Junge. Se mott na'n Bock. Treck ör na Fietgen sienen. Den kennst du doch all.“

„Sie meinen, in die Stadt zu Herrn Knopmacher? Weiß der denn Bescheid?“

„De weet Bescheid.“

Oh armer Hans. Die Bienen waren schon eine große Prüfung für ihn, aber nun diese Ziege. Ich rüstete ihn mit Proviant aus, denn selbst die Götter hätten nicht voraussagen können, wie lange diese Expedition dauern würde.

Erst spät am Abend war Hans mit der Ziege wieder zu Hause, halbtot beide. Er hatte sie den ersten Kilometer gegen entschlossenen Widerstand hinter sich herschleifen, sie dann auf den Arm nehmen und den Rest des Weges tragen müssen.

Nun war er böse, der Hans. Nicht nur auf Meck, auch auf die Imkerei, die ihn zum Trecken von störrischen Ziegen verpflichtete, auch auf seinen Meister, auf mich, auf die ganze Welt. Er verzichtete aufs Abendbrot — ein sehr schlimmes Zeichen — und ging ohne Gruß zu Bett.

Die Ziege hingegen erholte sich schnell und machte sich mit gutem Appetit über einen Armvoll Gras her, den Wilhelm ihr in den Verschlag warf. Sicher erging sie sich dabei in Erinnerungen an Fietgens Ziegenbock, zu dem sie zuerst nicht hingewollt und von dem sie danach nicht wieder weggewollt hatte.

Am nächsten Morgen hatte Hans diese Katastrophe einigermaßen verarbeitet und grüßte wieder.

Meck aber brachte nach angemessener Frist ein allerliebstes Zicklein zur Welt und begann Milch zu geben. Hans wurde ihr Melker.

(Fortsetzung folgt)

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OUR WORD

WHEN CHARITY IS NOT

Season after season, week after week the pressure increases on us to give. . . to the Salvation Army, the Boy Scouts, the Cancer Society, the United Way (remember when that was supposed to combine all of these?), to the community club, to the Winnipeg Symphony, . . . to the church, to the political party of choice. . . and, whether we give or not we wonder where it will all end or if it will before we do.

God loves a cheerful giver, we have heard. We know that charity begins at home — whatever that means! Now our fiscally fixated governments are telling us that we must give more. The "private sector" is supposed to support those causes that are considered worthwhile, thus leaving the government to spend its revenue on other things, like submarines and winning elections — oh yes, and bringing down the deficit.

It is ironic that while the government gives us this clear message, it makes giving less attractive at tax time, no longer allowing the 100 per cent deduction for charitable donations.

Perhaps the time has come to admit that those things that truly are important to us: health care, education, improvements in social justice, are in fact best looked after by the largest community, the people as a whole (I am trying to avoid saying the dirty word: government!) Why should the agencies of us all be necessarily inefficient or uneconomic?

We have heard that in one part of Winnipeg the subscribers to cable TV will pay about \$3 per month for a number of new pay TV services, while those in the rest of the city will pay three or four times as much. Why? Because those who subscribe individually are far fewer and thus must bear a higher cost. With the so-called "negative option" the others, who all "subscribe" automatically, can enjoy a higher level of service at much lower cost, *as long as many subscribers remain.*

Why cannot the same principle be used in our so-called charity funding? Agencies which benefit many should be supported by all, or at least by the majority. As things stand the pressure on those who do support good causes — always a minority — will increase quickly beyond the point of no return. Then casinos will become the logical next step and we will find ourselves gambling systematically in order to maintain our services and our self-respect.

For those causes about which there is sufficient agreement there should be funding from a progressive tax base. True charity could then go the second mile. As Canadians we have always been willing to pay more for a more humane society. But even this can be done most economically if everyone participates. And if this is properly done then we can also avoid the patronizing do-goodedness that has become so much a part of our social and business climate. What we often call charity is or should be our common duty and responsibility. That should not stop us then from letting our love (charity) move us to individual actions which do not require an official, numbered receipt. If as a society we can take responsibility for our duty then we will also be able to let charity be charity again.

—VGD

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