

Mennonite MIRROR

volume 18 / number 3 / november, 1989

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ForeWord

EVERY November Canadians pause to remember those who died in war, notably the First and Second World Wars. As time passes and as the number of veterans and citizens with a direct memory of those conflicts decreases, the significance of the holiday fades. Even now, those "who remember" are a decided minority. Canadians want the holiday as a "day off," but don't want to be reminded why they should pause at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. Too bad. Just the two world wars this century, involving so-called "civilized" countries was enormously expensive in terms of lost human life. The Second World War, for example, caused the death of some 50 million people; about twice the present population of Canada. We need to be reminded that war is something to be avoided.

If there is a theme to this issue, it arises from the fact that several articles relate to the Second World War.

In the opening article, Winona Rempel, remembers an uncle who now lies in a cemetery in England. In her article she recalls some of the family tension that arose when Uncle Jake enlisted for combat duty -- it was not the way of Mennonites. But she also recalls how she and her uncle shared a special bond. While she could not explain why Uncle Jake enlisted in the air force, she observes that time will not diminish her memory of a favorite uncle.

During those same years, many Mennonites chose "alternative service," and became known as COs. While they may have avoided combat and of having to take another human life, the men in the CO camps did not escape their obligation to their country. If you know where to look in Canada, you can see where they laid the basis for public works projects that are still in use today. Our second article talks about this service.

There is hardly an English-speaking Canadian who has not heard the poem **In Flanders Fields**. Elfrieda Schroeder takes the opening lines to the poem to wonder if poppies grow in Siberia, and then turns it into a memorial tribute to her grandparents.

Last issue we published an article on Walter Klassen, the funeral director. Two items in this issue carry the theme further. Sarah Klassen examines Mennonite funeral customs, drawing particular attention to the communal caring that enveloped the bereaved families. In the Our Word section, Ruth Vogt observes that families are not comforted when some ministers use funerals as an occasion to frighten the lost into the fold of the saved.

Roy Vogt in his observed column welcomes visitors from abroad, and comments on the new interest in East Germany. Vic Penner writes from across the prairie about his autumn preparations and his plans for a winter escape.

The power of parental example is explained in a short piece by Paul Redekop who describes the results of a survey of high school graduates.

Agnes Wall in a short story, **Three Pennies**, shows how a friendship between two girls was spoiled when one mother assumed one of the girls was a thief on the basis of her origins.

Our Low German article, by Elfrieda Schroeder, is a sketch about a lady who is embarrassed about her Low German mother tongue until she learns in a university course that Low German is the original language from which both modern English and German emerged.

The cover: A sculpture in the park, early fall, 1989.

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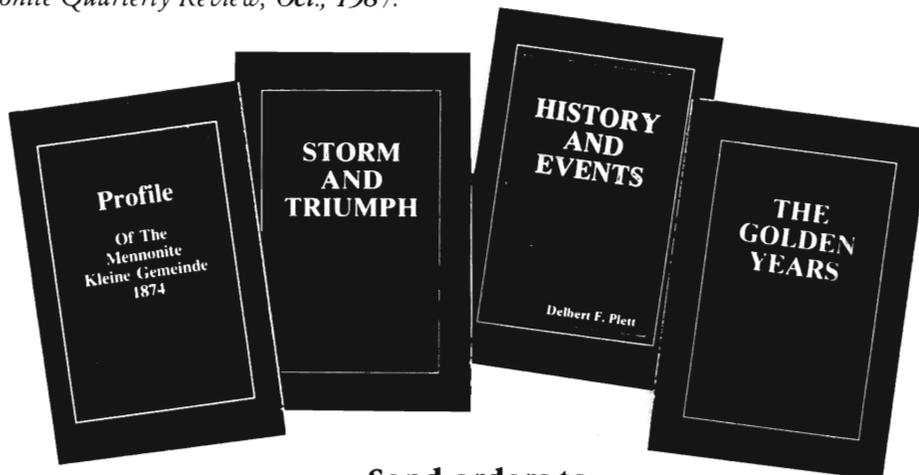
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"From a documentary standpoint it is difficult to disprove Plett's contention that the Kleine Gemeinde, more than any other group, kept the Anabaptist perspective alive and viable in the Russian Mennonite setting." Dr. John B. Toews, Mennonite Quarterly Review, Oct., 1987.



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A favorite niece will never forget her Uncle Jake...

by Winona Rempel

I AM listening to the CBC as people remember the beginning of the Second World War. Yes, I remember, too.

Etched on my mind is the knock on the door and Dad answering it. Someone from our well-to-do neighbors, the owners of the only phone in our village, has a message for us. We are to call my aunt and uncle in Winnipeg. My mother begins to cry. "It's Jake," she says. "It's Jake. I know it's Jake."

Her words are soft, but there is no doubting her meaning. Uncle Jake, her beloved younger brother had recently been sent overseas as a pilot officer.

Father leaves to make the phone call. Evening shadows lengthen as the kerosene lamp remains unlit. My infant baby sister sleeps peacefully, unaware of the uneasy feeling that has permeated the house. We wait. My mother, my older brother and I.

The sound of footsteps. The rattle of the doorknob. The door swings open. Mom utters two words, "Is it?" and Dad nods in mute assent.

I don't remember words, only Mom's tears. And then my teacher is there, helping to dress my sister and doing the small awkward things which are done to soothe the pain of the moment. Dad starts the '29 Plymouth and we settle in for the ride into town. No one speaks.

At 610 William Avenue we are greeted by my aunt and uncle and my grandparents. My grandfather and aunt weep inconsolably. They tell the news over and over again, trying to fill the bottomless hole which has been created. There is not enough information. How? Why? When? They only know that a beloved son and

brother is no more.

Someone suggests that my brother and I go upstairs to join our two cousins who are already in bed. Hand on smooth railing, we tread the straight long flight of 13 stairs, and walk into the bedroom. Here the mood abruptly changes back to the everyday world of radio, comics, and Big Little Books. My young heart cannot understand how my cousins can be unaffected. I don't feel like laughing or leaving the anguish of my uncle's death.



Uncle Jake

I remember I was his favorite one. When my sister was born and his newly-acquired English wife insisted he come to admire the new baby, he dutifully walked into the bedroom to see. But when he walked out he nodded at me and said, "You're still my favorite." Ah yes, those funny names he called me, and those high square shoulders on which I rode safe and sound through the barn -- to be lifted high to sit with uncle Jake for a little canter on Fly, the horse. And yes, the rush of excitement when Grandma and Mom hurried me out of the steamy galvanized tub and wrapped me into a towel (hurry!) because Uncle Jake was coming in from chores and he would grab me away from mom and swing me up and around the farm kitchen....that was my uncle Jake.

I was well aware of the family discord he had caused by enlisting, and then shortly after by marrying an English lass. My mom always defended him and stood by him no matter what he did, and in my own heart I knew he was kind and good. Why did it matter so much what other people thought or said? Or what was it about the church, the Church, THE CHURCH, that struck fear into everyone?

Then there was the memorial: or was it only some meeting where his passing was to be noted in church? Again we were all at 610 William. Someone had to be asked to stay with my baby sister and then the adults left to walk to the church down the street. When they came back there was much discussion and loud arguing. I sat at the window pleating and straightening the frill on the pale yellow curtains.

My uncle Jake had done things which upset people. No one cried any more. Now they only argued about what people said or didn't say, or what they did or didn't do, and they seemed to be more interested in that than in remembering my uncle.

I remembered him. It was said he saved my life one summer day on the farm when I was struck by poliomyelitis. Because the doctor he was sent to fetch was on another call, he ran miles on swift feet to intercept him and bring him to me. It was said the quick intervention of the hypodermic needle of serum (I remember the fat needles and grandma holding me down) was my saving grace. And I remember Uncle Jake laughing and teasing when finally, on the arm of my mother, I was allowed an appearance at the supper table.

"What would you like to eat, sniggle fritz? How about a heaping plate of fried potatoes?"

Yes, they were always my favorite, but this time my request differed.

"I want a piece of wurst this long," and with my finger I indicated a section of my arm from fingertip to elbow. I remember still the laughter of my uncle, later known as James Alexander. My hero lies buried in a military cemetery near Bournemouth England. Perhaps someday I can visit him. mm

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THE HOME TOIL OF THE CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS LAID THE BASIS FOR MANY PUBLIC WORKS STILL IN USE TODAY

THIS fall people around the world are recalling the beginning of the Second World War, remembering the millions who died in that conflict.

The anniversary of that war is also a time for thousands of Mennonite, Brethren in Christ and Quaker men to recall what war meant to them 50 years ago. They will remember months or years spent as conscientious objectors (COs) in alternative service camps from Ontario to B.C.

About a million men answered Canada's call to join the military during the war years. But 10,900 men -- 7,500 of them members of Mennonite, Quaker, or Brethren in Christ churches -- refused to don uniforms and go into combat. Instead of going to war, these COs built roads, planted trees, fought fires, farmed and did other forms of alternative service.

Canadians still benefit from their contribution today. Anyone who has driven on the Trans-Canada Highway near Sault St. Marie, Ontario drives on a road cleared by COs. Visitors to Canada's national parks at Kootenay in British Columbia, Banff and Jasper in Alberta, Prince Albert in Saskatchewan, and Riding Mountain in Manitoba probably do not know that COs planted trees (more than two million in B.C. alone), cleared dead timber, built roads and trails, fought fires, built dams and telephone lines in those areas.

The contribution to Mennonite and Brethren in Christ life was no less important. The alternative service experience contributed to a deeper service commitment and to a greater unity. It provided an opportunity for leaders of the different conferences to

work together to resolve a major crisis. Individually, life-long friendships were formed between alternative service workers from the different Mennonite groups. Together they laid the groundwork for the inter-Mennonite co-operation we enjoy today.

Alternative service to participation in the military grew out of a desire by Mennonites, Quakers, and Brethren in Christ to make an active contribution to the country during war-time, while at the same time not violating deeply-held non-resistant principles.

The three groups have a history of exemption from the military combat service in Canada which goes back more than 200 years. In 1793 the first Parliament of Upper Canada, anxious to attract Mennonite, Quaker and Brethren in Christ settlers from the U.S., exempted them from yearly militia exercises. A second promise of exemption of military service was made in 1873 to encourage Mennonites from Russia to settle in Manitoba.

These exemptions allowed Mennonite, Quaker and Brethren in Christ church members to avoid military service in the First World War. When war came again in 1939, leaders of the three groups wanted to show Canadians that COs were not simply trying to enjoy the benefits of Canadian citizenship without making any of the sacrifices. They emphasized that such alternative service be under civilian control, saying that their peaceful, non-resistant faith forbade participation in any type of service allied with the military.

Some, however, were willing to consider medical corps work with the

military, as long as they could be assured that they would never have to use weapons.

At first, the Canadian government was reluctant to create such a civilian-controlled alternative service program. They felt that only a few young men would be interested. But the church leaders insisted and, in June, 1941, the first 1,000 COs were sent out on alternative service assignments.

Almost 11,000 men spent time in alternative service during the war. At first it consisted mostly of forestry and agricultural work, but some COs also served as orderlies in hospitals and at institutions for mentally disabled people. Later in the war COs also served as firefighters in England, as non-combatants in the medical corps and in a medical unit in China. They were also used as members of the regular workforce; they were paid for their work, but only allowed to keep \$25 a month. The rest went to the Red Cross. By the end of the war the COs had given \$2.3 million to that agency.

On the whole, the alternative service program was judged a success by the government and the churches who helped shape it. Church members from a number of denominations were able to serve their country without violating their non-resistant principles. Alternative service became a legitimate response to the war, allowing COs to assume an active role in wartime society, permitting them to give a witness to their conviction that went beyond words. (from the Mennonite Central Committee)

BUSTED SOD

Father busted sod sunrise to sunset
six days a week \$5.00 a month
until he earned \$40.00, enough for my
grandparents to build a sodhouse

on 80 prairie acres they paid
\$5.00 an acre for in 1881. I
never saw that house but in my
imagination bare feet.

get dirty walking the dirt floor
where wind still blows
silt and sadness. Bedbugs which survived
grandmother's watchful eye still sting.

My house is wood, not sod.
No bed bugs.
Pacing carpeted floors I know
places in the past I can't go.

— Elmer Suderman

WHAT THE CROW SAID

Silhouetted against the horizon
the crow had its say,
whatever it was,
to the awful distance.

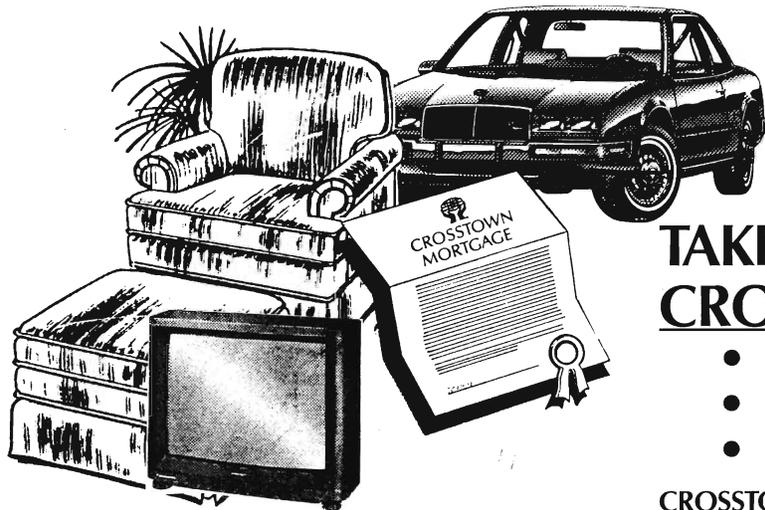
It was not meant for my ears,
or anyone else's. I heard it
anyhow. How could I help it?
There was nothing else to listen to.

An urgent sound. I wondered what
it meant. I wanted to ask, but it
was too far away, that crow, and
too preoccupied to pay attention
to the likes of me. I've wondered
about it off and on these twenty year
since that crow spoke in Minnesota
sky. I've never know just what it said.

Perhaps it doesn't matter.
It wasn't talking to me.

— Elmer Suderman

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Remembering Oma and Opa

by Elfrieda Schroeder

After the First World War, the poppy became the symbol of the tragedy of war and of renewal of life, because poppies bloomed on many French battle fields.

"In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row..."

Opa: I wonder if poppies grew
on the Siberian Steppes of Russia.
If you survived the winter
perhaps in spring you saw the little blue forget-me-nots
and thought of home and love and fireside.
Did you remember how your fingers lingered on the keys
of the old organ as you played "Annchen von Tharau"
to a little girl caressing her doll?
So rudely torn from those you loved,
there was no cross to mark your place.
An endless blanket of snow swept about by howling winds
covered your face, hiding it forever from those you loved.

Sleep Opa, sleep gently underneath your Siberian blanket
of snow.
Innocent victim of cruel war, banished forever.
When spring returns with blue forget-me-nots
We will remember the torch you threw to us from failing hands.
We'll lift it high into the dawn, into the sunset glow.
We'll let the whole world know:
Let there be peace
Let there be peace.

Oma: Red poppies bloomed in your garden,
velvety soft, with deep black centers.
They stood so straight and tall, the proudest flowers of all.

Looking deeply into that mysterious purple blackness
was like looking right into their hearts.
Like the poppies in your garden
you always stood proud and tall.
I know that even though your dresses were grey and blue,
In your heart you wore deep red velvet and black.

You believed Jesus would come before you died
and take you up to be with him.
It didn't happen that way.
You were angry with Jesus and death was hard for you.

Oma, some day I want to plant red poppies on your grave.

YOUR WORD

SPIRITUAL BLACKMAIL

It is time committed Christians and Mennonites spoke out on an issue on which we have been silent for too long. It is called spiritual blackmail.

It brooks no difference of opinion, it listens to no voice except its own, the first commandment it violates is to love one's neighbor, and it seeks to silence all opposition.

One would think I was speaking of Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini. Not so, it exists right in our midst.

Recently the Mennonite Collegiate Institute was informed that the list of speakers for its centennial celebrations was unacceptable.

Why? Does a Quaker woman who has seen at first hand the scars of Latin American refugees have nothing to say to us?

Does a Palestinian who watches Israeli tanks mow down his neighbors' homes, and still rejects violence, have nothing to say to us?

Does a Jew who belongs to a political party for which we do not necessarily vote, but who has fought passionately for the rights of third world countries at the UN having nothing to say to us? Does he not worship the same God we do?

Do we, who sit in the comfort of our bungalows with our nine-to-five jobs, and see these things from the safe distance of our colored television sets have all the answers?

If our Christianity has such narrow limitations, it is doomed. There is absolutely nothing worth saving inside the walls of the Utopia we think we have created.

For shame! We should collectively drape ourselves in sackcloth and ashes. How is it that these bullying tactics continue? To be a Christian means to try to be Christ-like. Jesus always looked at the homeless and disaffected first, not last! I see little of Christianity in this sad story.

Yours truly,
Justina Janzen Wiens,
Winkler

IDENTITY DEBATE, AGAIN

The Our Word page of the September issue of the Mirror once again brings to the reader's attention the often debated religion-or-culture argument concerning Mennonite identity. I

would like to add my thoughts on the subject.

My great-grandparents came to Canada in the great Mennonite exodus from Russia in the mid-1870s, planting their faith, language and culture in southern Manitoba. In light of subsequent developments in the Soviet Union, I am thankful that they did. Yet I do not speak Low German, that Esperanto of a rather idiosyncratic Protestant dialectic, and it is primarily in religious terms that I think of Mennonitism.

Those immigrants seem to have brought with them a kind of New Man ideal, redolent of romanticism and sincerity of faith, a second Adam created and shaped in the image of the knowledge, a little of which is said to be dangerous, that they had.

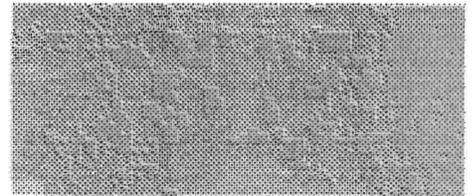
Herein lies the problem and I believe it at least partly explains the religion-culture/ethnicity dichotomy. The struggle for the unattained paradigm of the truly autonomous man against the pulls of the flesh produces an uncertain resonance. Thus it is that Mennonites are known equally for their stubbornness and their serene hymns; for isolationism and pacifism; for love of hide-bound tradition and love of family.

I am convinced however, that this paradigm will ultimately be obtained by nearly all those who have claimed or presently claim an Anabaptist-Mennonite heritage. I suspect though, that the full implications of this were not seen, or dimly perceived, by the faith's original founders.

John E. Wall,
Altona

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Family and church provide a nucleus of comfort: a valuable Mennonite quality

by Sarah Klassen

DAILY a few minutes past 9 a.m., the air waves carry the funeral announcements from CFAM.

There are those who would tell you this is the most popular program aired by this station, and that all southern Manitoba holds its breath until they are over. Others, often senior citizens, have been known to recycle the old joke: "My wife and I stay in bed until the funeral announcements are over. If our names aren't mentioned, we decide we might as well get up and get on with life."

Does this mean that the Mennonites are unduly preoccupied with death? Probably not. All cultural groups have tended to develop traditions around death that reflect the values of the group. These traditions are expressed in rituals or practices that become embedded in the group and offer the reassurance of structures and prescribed ways of acting that are familiar. Mennonites are no exception. They too have well-defined, though not static, procedures for funerals, procedures that reflect their faith and community values.

In *Lose Blätter* vol. 3 (1976), Gerhard Lohrenz describes in detail the procedure followed in a Mennonite village of the Ukraine, in the event of a death. A letter that combined an official death announcement with an invitation to the funeral was written by the local teacher and passed from house to house. The body was washed and dressed by the women, and packed in ice, if the death happened in summer. The men built the wood coffin and painted it black while the women lined it with fabric and decorated it with lace. The coffin remained in the home until

the women volunteers mixed dough and took home portions of it to bake in their ovens.

The funeral itself, in Lohrenz's example, took place on the family "Hof" in the carefully swept machine shed. More frequently a funeral occurred in the village church. Either way, singing, prayer, sermons and reading of the obituary comprised the service.

After the funeral everyone accompanied the body and the mourners to the burial place, where, after scripture and prayer, the coffin was lowered and the grave filled in by neighbors. After the burial, the funeral guests returned to the house of mourning where the women served coffee, zwieback and sugar lumps.

Community focus

Funerals were very much a community affair with a considerable social dimension: in this they reflected Mennonite communal values. To a large degree they still do. Most Mennonite funerals take place in the church, rather than in a funeral chapel, and end with communal eating, also in the church, to accommodate large numbers. These practices have been carried from Russia to Canada by the immigrants.

In *Grass Roots* (1973), Heather Robertson in her chapter on Winkler writes about Mennonite funerals in southern Manitoba prior to 1949: "The body was washed by the local women, stitched into a white cotton shroud, and laid out for a day or two in the parlour; caskets were made by the village cabinet maker. Funeral invitations were circulated like chain

letters."

Robertson claims there was hostility to any change in this "simple, civilized custom." Then she quotes Nick Wiebe, of Wiebe's Funeral Homes Ltd. "Refrigeration changed all that. People used to get a block of ice to keep the body cool. Once refrigeration came in, there were no more ice houses." In such ways tradition is changed.

The advent of the professional embalmer is the biggest change in Mennonite funeral customs in Manitoba, according to Rev. Gerhard Ens. Significant aspects of death care were removed from the community and taken on by the business sector.

Another significant change in custom Walter Klassen has observed in his years as funeral director relates to viewing. No longer does the entire congregation file past the coffin, placed just below the pulpit and in front of the grieving family, as part of the service. At a large funeral this was a long procedure, sometimes excruciating for the family who were also inevitably "viewed" both by close friends and by more casual guests. It also, states Doreen Klassen who was organist at many Winkler funerals, demanded of the organist or pianist a lengthy repertoire.

Now the coffin arrives early at the church to allow guests, as they arrive, to view (or not view) the deceased prior to the service. Rev. Ens applauds the change; he found the earlier practice "cruel and crude" and especially disliked the term "Leichenschau" (looking at the corpse) which placed the procedure on a level with entertainment of a tasteless kind.

The formal components

Present funeral formalities in many large Mennonite churches have several stages. A public viewing takes place at the funeral chapel the evening prior to the funeral. No doubt this is meant to accommodate those friends of the bereaved who can't attend the funeral. The funeral itself, with sermon, singing, prayer and reading of the obituary, is usually set for 10 a.m. or early afternoon.

Then there is the burial, often with a brief graveside ceremony or at least prayer. Following the burial (or prior to, if the cemetery is far away), a communal meal, usually in the style of a Mennonite "Vaspa" with coffee and pastry, is served back at the church. Then it may be time for testimonials. Friends and relatives rise, "freiwillig," to speak of their experiences with or memories of the deceased. Of course only positive things are mentioned, and the more prominent the deceased, the longer the testimonies. This "sharing" session is a relatively new practice.

The formal eulogy has not traditionally been part of the funeral service, probably because Mennonites are wary of praise. However, at the funeral, in August, 1988, of Maria Isaak, two grandchildren had each prepared a personal tribute for their grandmother, and delivered these tributes during the funeral service at the Elmwood MB Church. They spoke warmly of their experiences with a grandmother whom they obviously loved and who had been close to them. Their comments provided the congregation with a fuller picture of the departed woman and an appreciation for her life and service. Perhaps it is in such small departures from the usual that traditions will change, and the eulogy may yet become a part of the standard Mennonite funeral.

Another departure at the Isaak funeral happened after the burial. Friends were invited to the home for coffee and refreshments, instead of the usual church meal. Perhaps this reflects the desire of many within the Mennonite community for a more intimate, less structured gathering than the large come-one-come-all church basement meal.

Burying one's own

On the prairie it was not unusual for farm families to bury their dead on

the family property. This also happened in the case of Mennonites not living in villages. A corner of the family farm became a burial plot. When the farm changed hands, the new owners sometimes cared for the graves, especially if there were still relatives who showed interest. Such family burial places still exist in southern Manitoba, although many of them were eventually plowed under. It is still not illegal to bury one's own dead, but it must be done in a registered cemetery.

So far most Mennonites have shied away from cremation. This is not because of any widely-held conviction that resurrection is more difficult from ashes than from decomposed bone. John Epp of the North Kildonan MB church speculates that preference for earth burial may have been reinforced by Bible imagery: burial of the body is frequently mentioned, while fire is associated with judgment. Concern for stewardship of land and money may be the factor that will steer Mennonites away from tradition in this matter.

Neither the Mennonite Brethren nor the General Conference has any theological difficulty with cremation, according to Rev. Epp and Rev. Ens, church leaders respectively in these conferences. Although he has officiated only at funerals ending in earth burial, John Epp says he would have no objection to cremation. However, he would not advise immediate cremation without a funeral or memorial service. He believes that the presence of the body is essential to a complete and wholesome "letting go" of a friend or family member. Walter Klassen, long-time funeral director, concurs with this view.

Like other church groups, Mennonites have worried what to do about suicides. Sometimes this problem was resolved by allowing the coffin no further than the church foyer and burying the body outside the cemetery fence. None of this was likely to change the facts of the tragedy or help the bereaved in coming to terms with it.

Rev. Ens states that both prayer and singing of hymns have traditionally taken place at a death bed, as soon as the death has occurred, with the immediate family participating. The reading of scripture and the sermon have always been at the heart of a Mennonite funeral, reflecting a faith in God and a hope in a life beyond this

temporal one.

Personal words

In the Lohrenz description, there were two sermons, one by the village preacher, the other by the elder. He also mentions that after the funeral meal, some of the older guests gathered in the "Grosse Stube" for a third sermon, and singing.

Agnes Wall, who taught south of Altona in New Berghal in the 40s remembers that the sermons at Rudnerweider or Sommerfelder churches were set sermons, read more or less mechanically. However, after the "Vaspa" the preacher would address the guests less formally, in Low German, beginning with an expression like, "Na Breedah." She remembers a villager saying she always took seriously these heartfelt, personal words, much more so than the formal sermon at the service.

Agnes Wall also remembers that the school trustees insisted that the school be closed and that all students attend the funeral.

In conservative churches of the villages, the deceased was often buried in a simple white dress or shirt made especially for the burial.

The Mennonite propensity for mutual aid led to the institution of the "Sterbekasse," one version of which lives on in the North Kildonan Funeral Aid Society, with a current membership of over 2,000. This society was set up in 1935, for the benefit of Mennonite and German settlers of Manitoba. It has perpetuated itself largely by drawing in the children of current members. Twice a year a fee is levied, based on the number of deaths among its membership in the preceding six months. In the event of a death, depending on length of membership, up to \$820 is paid out for funeral expenses.

Heather Robertson describes the Mennonite funeral with exaggerated images and a too-flippant tone. Nevertheless, although an outsider, perhaps she has sensed the hope of a resurrection that is integral to the faith of Mennonites and that takes the sting out of death, when she concludes: "Death is the beginning, not the end; the funeral is a celebration."

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OBSERVED ALONG THE WAY

by Roy Vogt



THE VIRTUE OF MANNERS, VISITING WRITERS, AND NEW INTEREST IN EAST GERMANY

PERHAPS by the time you read this the cold of another Manitoba winter will be dulling your spirits, but recall with me, if you can, the truly beautiful Fall that we had this year. In September and October there was, on the whole, no better place to be than Manitoba. Early in October we closed our cottage for another year, but it was a magnificent Saturday and we spent most of the day hiking through the woods, enjoying the lush Fall colors. It was a good preparation for the more austere pleasures of winter.

It is always interesting to see your own familiar surroundings through the eyes of visitors. We have been blessed with a number of such visitors in the past few months. In the past decade Ruth and I have travelled to England several times to visit her relatives and friends. We have always had wonderful times and have begged our gracious hosts to visit us in Canada. Most of the cousins in Wales see no need to venture far beyond their beautiful hills and valleys. Those who live elsewhere are content to spend their holidays in southern France. Finally this year we persuaded one of our cousins and her husband, both dentists in Northampton, to make the big trip to Canada. We even managed to keep them for a week in Manitoba. They impressed us immediately with their gracious English spirit.

I should, perhaps, explain why this has peculiar significance for us. A few years after my wife and I were married my mother-in-law, who was British to the roots, complained to my wife that her social graces had diminished considerably during the years of our marriage. I was amused to hear that a simple Mennonite boy from Steinbach could have such a devastating impact on years of British cultural training. But I suppose we did change; my wife, apparently, for the worse and I (hopefully) for the better. But now, in our cousins, we can see what we might have been. They are both

extremely warm and interesting people, not averse at all, it seems, to sharing a few days with their rough colonial cousins. To my surprise, and delight, they are particularly fascinated by the Mennonite Heritage Village in Steinbach. I see again how important this place really is, to give people a quick and vivid sense of what it was like to settle the open prairie.

SEVERAL writers, researching the Mennonite community, also pay us welcome visits during this time. Andreas Schroeder from Mission B.C., the author of that very moving book, *Dustship Glory*, is producing a photo-study of the Mennonites in Canada and drops in several times to exchange ideas. We sometimes think that we have to move quickly to get all our work done, but Andreas puts us to shame. I have never seen a person do so much in so little time, while maintaining high standards to boot. Another visitor, with a very keen eye for what makes the Mennonites tick, is James Urry, an anthropologist on study leave from his university in New Zealand. We Mennonites often like to look at ourselves from a fairly lofty perch, from where our most human qualities, both good and bad, are not too visible. Urry would like to see us at ground level. For this reason he has chosen to live for periods of time in the village of Grunthal, listening to people and trying to discover what we are like when our pretences are down. I am curious to see how much of the Anabaptist vision he will discover. While Urry is here we are also able to celebrate the publication of his book, *None But Saints*, a scholarly but very readable study of Mennonite life in Russia from 1789 to 1889.

WHILE these writers are here they are told many amusing stories by

Mennonites about themselves. Apparently one story now making the rounds in southern Manitoba asks the question: "Why are Mennonite Brethren buried two feet deeper than other Mennonites?" The answer: "Because down deep they know they are good."

DURING October a subject which I have been pursuing for many years, but in which there has been little interest till now, suddenly assumes great importance. I refer to the economy of the German Democratic Republic, or East Germany. It was exactly 20 years ago that I spent almost three months in East Germany examining its economy. Since then I have been able to return there almost ten times, publishing my research results in journals that nobody reads. Now suddenly, with the amazing exodus of tens of thousands of East Germans, mostly young people, to West Germany, and the general upheaval taking place in East Europe, a new interest in the field has been spawned. The media are not far behind. I start getting calls at odd hours and odd places, including the lake, from radio and television stations. Somebody has obviously looked up the obscure journals, and they are surprised to find that a few people in Canada have been trying to monitor events in East Europe for years.

I am intrigued by an appearance that I am asked to make at 5:40 a.m. on Canada AM. This is taped in Edmonton and while I am in the studio there, carrying on a discussion with two other scholars from eastern Canada, I discover how difficult it is to do this when you cannot see any of the other people on the program. You simply stare into a camera and listen to the other voices via an ear plug. I keep wanting to raise my hand to cut in on the conversation, but of course this would be entirely futile. The most

futile thing of all is to do what the TV people actually want you to do: to summarize in less than half a minute why East Germany is in trouble. The communist party in Winnipeg gives me more time than that. I am invited to speak to party members, and other interested people, on the economy of East Germany. They are truly surprised at what is happening there and a good discussion is had by all.

Early in November I will have the opportunity to mix with several hundred specialists on Eastern Europe at meetings to be held in Chicago. What I find amusing at these meetings, which I attend almost every year, is that representatives of the CIA take part, and they openly display their affiliation with the CIA on the identity badges that everyone wears. They too want to know what is going on in Eastern Europe and they don't seem to care that others will know that they want to know. Maybe with Glasnost in the Soviet Union we will have representatives from the Soviet Union sporting KGB badges this year. There are always legitimate researchers from East Europe at these meetings; we may now find out who some of the others are.

WHILE all this East European commotion is going on we enjoy a wonderful birthday party in Winnipeg for three people who were born in what is now East Europe -- in the area around the Polish city of Gdansk -- 60 years ago, and came to Canada after the Second World War. These Danziger Mennonites, as we often call them, bring a wonderful spirit to everything they do, and especially to ceremonies like this. All generations take part in their parties and there is always a healthy mixture of reverence and irreverence. We value their friendship immensely.

ANOTHER important event in our family is the moving out of our youngest child, now a mature woman who may like the comforts of home but wants independence even more. After 31 years of marriage we find ourselves in an empty nest for the first time. We are grateful that she is at least staying in the same city, not so that we can keep an eye on her but so that we can enjoy her company often. My wife and I both feel that our greatest cause for gratitude is the

wonderful children that God has granted to us.

IN mid-October we attend the opening ceremonies of Westgate Collegiate, which this year are accompanied by the dedication of a new building. I am constantly amazed, and impressed, how our people rally financially and through voluntary service to such causes. One always fears that the spirit cannot go on, but so far new people always emerge from the wings to carry both the vision and the burden.

We also participate in a huge banquet put on by the German Society of Winnipeg in honor of several German-Canadian families who, together with generous assistance from the federal government, have established a chair in German-Canadian studies at the University of Winnipeg. We know several of these families and admire their generosity and vision. However, the evening itself -- apart from the meal, which is delicious -- leaves an unsatisfactory taste in my mouth. The society seems to have become political in a rather crude way, and one might be forgiven for thinking that the whole evening was put on by the Conservative Party. I don't think that it is either wise or necessary for cultural groups to be so blatantly partisan in expressing their thanks for what is, after all, a gift from the government and people of Canada, not from a particular party.

THERE are many other things that give pleasure in Winnipeg, including a number of outstanding musical evenings in October, several delightful Low German programs and the silver wedding of friends at whose wedding I participated. I would recommend that everyone see the mysterious and beautiful paintings by Grace Rempel on display at the Mennonite Heritage Centre, and the sensitive poetry by Ruth Rempel that accompanies them.

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NEW RELEASE



Ingrid Suderman
KNOCKIN' AT YOUR DOOR

Has Anybody Seen My Lord
Goin' To Set Down An' Rest Awhile
Nobody Knows The Trouble I See
Somebody's Knockin' At Your Door
Sweet Little Jesus Boy
New-Born Again
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REVIEW

Late discovery of the Hutterian way of life

reviewed by Harry Loewen

IN 1920 Eberhard and Emmy Arnold with their family and a few friends left Berlin for the little village of Sannerz in western Germany to start a new mode of living. They had turned their backs on the life of the world to seek the will of God for their lives. A few years later they founded the Rhön Bruderhof between Frankfurt and Fulda.

This was the beginning of a Hutterian way of life far away from the North American Hutterites. In fact, at first Eberhard Arnold knew nothing about the Hutterites. But while he studied the New Testament and the Anabaptists of the 16th century, Arnold and his friends came to the conviction that they wished to live as the first Christians did, caring for one another, sharing all material things, and witnessing to the world about the love and justice of God.

One can imagine how pleasantly surprised the Rhön brothers and sisters were when they discovered that in Canada and the United States there lived Christians who had existed communally for over 400 years, ever since the time of the Reformation. The German brothers and sisters, about 70 persons in all, naturally wished to establish contact with their coreligionists in America, perhaps even, if possible, to unite with them.

As the political and economic clouds in Europe were darkening, it became even more necessary to seek dialogue and solidarity with like-minded people and communities. Thus in 1930 Eberhard Arnold travelled to the United States and Canada to visit the Hutterites and to seek closer co-operation between the Bruderhofs. He made contacts with John Horsch and Harold S. Bender of Goshen, Indiana, and then travelled to almost all the Hutterite colonies in the Dakotas, Manitoba, and Alberta.

Recognizing Eberhard Arnold as a man of God and as one of their own, the Canadian Hutterites in December, 1930, confirmed his spiritual leadership by rebaptizing him by pouring (Arnold

had been baptized earlier by immersion) and by ordaining him as a servant of the Word. The Canadian Hutterites also agreed to assist financially and materially the struggling brotherhood in Germany.

This most valuable book, **Brothers Unite**, is an excellent translation into English of Eberhard Arnold's letters, diaries and reports written between 1928 and 1935. Published by the Hutterian Brethren of Rifton, New York, the book is not only interesting reading, but it also provides most informative insights into the Arnold people, their view and practice of the Christian life, and the Hutterites in North America during the late 1920s and early 1930s. While Arnold was at times critical of the Hutterites in America and they in turn critical of Arnold, they accepted each other as communities resolved to model the Christian life in a world of greed, materialism and economic exploitation.

Eberhard Arnold died in 1935. In 1937 the Rhön Bruderhof was dissolved by the Nazis and the brothers and sisters were forced to move first to Liechtenstein and then to England. Sadly, the German Mennonites, to whom the Arnold people appealed for assistance, were unable to help their fellow Christians in need. Benjamin Unruh offered to assist them in exploring possibilities of emigration to Canada, but with the Depression and the coming of war these plans could not be realized.

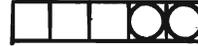
Today there are three groups of Hutterites in the world: The traditional Hutterites in the U.S. and Canada, the Arnold community in the eastern United States, and a Hutterite community in Japan.

It is the Arnold people who more than any other Hutterite group write, translate and publish books and other materials which continue the great literary tradition of the early Hutterite leaders. Their periodical, **The Plough**, is published six times a year by the Woodcrest Bruderhof, Rifton, New York, 12471.

Brothers Unite. An Account of the Uniting of Eberhard Arnold and the Rhön Bruderhof with the Hutterian Church. Translated and edited by the Hutterian Brethren, Ulster Park, New York, and Robertsbridge, England: Plough Publishing House Hutterian Brethren, 1988. Hardcover, pp. i-xviii, 1-366. ISBN 0-8746 023-7.

MIRROR MIX-UP

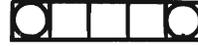
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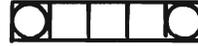
ROSHE

IN WINTER



ACTIVITIES!

LEBAT



WISEN



TANIS



**It's winter! It's frigid!
That's no reason to**



From the 24 entries to the September puzzle, Rachel Dyck, of Niverville, was selected winner.

Answers to September are deer, bison, camel, impala, iguana, and pandamonium.

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 above 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 November 28.

_____ name

_____ address

_____ city/town

_____ postal code

Send entries to: Mix-up Contest, Mennonite Mirror, 207 -1317A Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3G 0V3

LOOKING OVER THE PRAIRIE



by Vic Penner

FALL WORK, A FAMILY CREW, AND WAITING FOR TIME TO ESCAPE SOUTH

IT'S another grand Indian Summer day on the Prairies. That's five in a row now and there are still a few more to come, if you can believe the weatherman. In B.C. and Ontario it's raining and cold, and we are basking in 20+ degrees C temperatures. Ah, yes, give me sunny Manitoba in fall any time. It's gentle. It's balmy. It's wonderful.

On our yard the apple tree has been pruned, and so has the elm. The latter now looks more like a palm tree than an elm. A three-generational pruning crew descended on it two weeks ago and lopped off three large branches and a half dozen smaller ones to make more room for three nearby ash trees.

Herb, the tree man I hired came accompanied by his father, age 63, and his nine-year-old nephew. Amidst ladders, ropes, grappling hooks, two sizes of chainsaws, and shouts of: "That's the wrong branch," "Not there, over here," and "Get out of the way. Here she comes," the job was done in an hour. After Herb had done the sawing and grappling, and his father had yanked the ropes at just the right time in just the right direction so that no hedges or flower beds were damaged, the nephew raked up all the debris and helped his two older relatives load the truck that hauled it all away. In the course of the project the boy was shown how to load the truck and how to make a proper coil with 100 feet of rope. He also helped with the cleanup and did his share of shouting. It was a marvelous demonstration of on-the-job training.

GARDEN HARVEST

Besides the big pruning job, we've harvested a bucketful of potatoes, another one of carrots, a few jars of cucumbers that are now pickling, and a few packages of green beans stashed in a corner of the freezer. Our harvest was small because our vegetable

garden is small. We have one, not so much for the produce it yields but as a way of acknowledging our agrarian roots and accepting some of God's bounty directly from the soil.

The leaves, too, have been raked for the umpteenth time. (We have four maple trees, five ash trees, one apple tree, one elm, a caragana hedge, and a lilac hedge, all of which drop their leaves at different times. And then there's an immense poplar that neither our neighbors nor we are claiming title to as it straddles our common boundary. On windy days we watch the leaves swirl around the neighborhood and wonder where they'll end up and who will have to rake them.

NO MORE FIRE IN THE WIRE

Quite a few years ago I bought a length of stucco wire and formed it into an incinerator and burned the leaves in it. On a calm day I could cover almost the whole town in a pall of smoke. That kind of incinerator caught on quite widely and soon the town fathers, in a fit of anti-pollution fervor banned open fires. Whether or not a stucco wire incinerator is deemed open fire has not been settled as far as I know, but I have accepted the spirit of the by-law and invested in a utility trailer and now haul my leaves (and sometimes my neighbor's -- those that end up on my yard) to the dump. By my wife's count there were 18 loads this fall. I noticed this morning that a new shipment of poplar leaves have arrived under our washlines -- at least another trailerful.

Three times this fall I have gone to play farewell rounds of golf at the Oakview Golf and Country Club. (The OG&CC closes for the winter -- country club and all.) Each time I was sure winter was on the doorstep. The groundskeepers at OG&CC must have thought so too. All the benches have been removed, as have the ball washers. And the clubhouse has been

locked up for the winter. You have to bring your Cokes from home now and your hot dog too, with some mustard and relish in a small jar on the side.

When I arrived at the golf course this morning (11 o'clock) the only person there was Jake, who had just cut down a huge elm tree at the 9th hole that had been dying all summer, a victim of the Dutch Elm Disease. Jake had it in small chunks by now and was carting it away in his pick-up truck. We decried the loss of Old Elmer for awhile. I said it had always been my target when I set up on the 9th tee. He said he had bounced a few balls off that tree in his time, and some had even landed on the green. Mine bounced off Old Elmer too, but mostly ended up in the creek. My balls all seemed to have water-divining qualities.

A LAST ROUND OF GOLF

I was determined this morning to defy T.S.Eliot and end my 1989 golf season with a bang, not a whimper. But alas, the oak leaves ankle-deep among the trees -- where I spend quite a lot of time when I'm not fishing balls out of the creek -- cost me a lot of strokes. It took every club in my bag, including the left-handed one I carry for awkward lies behind trees and under bushes, to break 100. No bang this year. But it's not the end of the world either.

All of last winter my wife and I looked forward to this one, when we would head for the Sunbelt and loaf the winter away in Arizona or California. But in a moment of weakness I accepted the job of editing a picture history book of Altona -- a job I am both enjoying and resenting. It is interesting but it has put our winter in the South on hold. mm

MANITOBA NEWS

Kornelius and Linda Dyck of Winnipeg have begun a two-year Mennonite Central Committee assignment as administrators of Shalom House, a Kenora, Ontario, residence that offers housing to people who are breaking away from drug and alcohol addictions or working towards self-sufficiency. They are members of the North Kildonan Mennonite Church.

Nancy Johnson, of Winnipeg, has begun a two-year Mennonite Central Committee assignment as an assistant chaplain with ex-offenders in Winnipeg in September. She is a member of the Immanuel Pentecostal Church.

Sheila Krahn of Morden began a two-year Mennonite Central Committee assignment as an elementary school teacher in Port Hardy, B.C. in September. She is a member of the Morden Alliance Church.

Darrel Reimer of Winnipeg began a two-year Mennonite Central Committee assignment as researcher and writer for the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada in Toronto, Ontario, in September. He is a member of the Westwood Mennonite Brethren Church.

Jake and Beatrice Reimer of Morden began a two-year Mennonite Central Committee assignment with SELF-HELP Crafts in Akron, Pennsylvania, in September. He will be working as a pricing foreman and she will work as a data entry clerk. They are members of the Mennonite Brethren Church.

Hugo and Martha Unger of Morden began a two-year Mennonite Central Committee assignment with Supportive Care Services in Clearbrook, British Columbia, in September. They are members of the Morden Mennonite Brethren Church.

Kathleen Unrau of Winnipeg began a two-year Mennonite Central Committee assignment as a health and community worker in Hazelton, B.C., in September. She is a member of the Kronsweide Sommerfeld Mennonite Church.

Betty Kasdorf of Niverville, most

recently of Morden, is beginning a three-year Mennonite Central Committee assignment in Maijdi, Bangladesh, where she will work as homesite program leader. Homesite is a health and agriculture program for village women. Kasdorf was last employed as a home economics teacher in Morden. She is a member of Niverville Mennonite Brethren Church. Her mother is Susanna Kasdorf of Niverville.

Victor Janzen of Steinbach is beginning a three-month Mennonite Central Committee assignment in Yerevan, Armenia, Soviet Union, where he will work in earthquake reconstruction. Janzen received a bachelor's degree in German and history from the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg. He was last employed as co-editor of *Die Mennonitische Post* in Steinbach. Janzen is a member of the Steinbach Mennonite Church. He and his wife Helen have four children, Bernie, John, Walter and Lilli. His mother is Helena Harms of Winnipeg.



Garry Wayne Froese graduated from the University of Cincinnati on June, 1989, with a Doctor of Musical Arts degree. His doctoral studies included a major in choral conducting and a minor in arts administration. His research focussed on the music of George Philipp Telemann's *Das Musicalisches Lob Gottes*, a cycle of choral cantatas written for the church year. Dr. Froese has served as conductor of the Central Manitoba Youth Choir for the past three years. He has been a faculty member of the Steinbach Bible College and Westgate Mennonite Collegiate, and has conducted church choirs at Steinbach Mennonite Brethren Church, Home Street Mennonite and First Mennonite Churches of Winnipeg. He organized the first Canadian Association of Mennonite Schools concert of choirs from

across Canada in a sold-out concert at the Winnipeg Centennial Concert Hall. He also formed the low German folk group "Dee Jereeschte Tweeback" as the in-house performing group of the Mennonite pavilion at Folklorama in 1981. The repertoire sung by this group of seven music teachers is included in Doreen Klassen's recently published book entitled *Singing Mennonite*. He has also taught at the School of Music of Brandon University and the University of Manitoba, and has actively promoted choral music through his work with the Manitoba Choral Association. Dr. Froese is the supervisor of music for the Assiniboine South School Division, Winnipeg, conductor of the Assiniboine South Youth Choir and Chairman of the Manitoba Association of Music Administrators, as well as Interim choirmaster at All Saints' Church of Winnipeg. He and his wife Dorothy are members of the First Mennonite Church, and have three school-age children.

Doreen Klassen is the recipient of a scholarship from the Archives of Traditional Music at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana, where she is pursuing doctoral studies in folklore, ethnomusicology, and African studies. She is on a two-year leave from the music department at Steinbach Bible College. The University of Manitoba Press recently published her first book, *Singing Mennonite: Low German Songs of the Mennonites*. Alongside her studies, she is editing the 1990 *International Songbook* in preparation for the 12th Assembly of the Mennonite World Conference in Winnipeg.

Broken Boundaries, a resource packet on child sexual abuse, is now available from Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). The packet includes an introduction to child sexual abuse, the church's response to abuse, worship resources, articles on related concerns, and a listing of suggested readings and resources. *Broken Boundaries* is available for \$5. In Canada write: MCC Women's Concerns, 50 Kent Avenue, Kitchener, Ontario, N2G 3R1, phone (519) 745-8458; or MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, R3T 5K9, phone (204) 261-6381.

An updated version of the **MCC Earth Stewardship Packet** is also available from MCC. The packet, assembled by MCC's global education desk, is for Christians concerned about environmental issues. The first step to solving many of the world's environmental problems is defining and understanding the problems, note Art and Jocele Meyer of the global education office. The packet presents environmental issues from a biblical perspective. It includes background material, worship aids, brochures, an annotated listing of other resources on the environment and other materials. Copies are available from MCC U.S. Global Education, PO Box 500, Akron, Pennsylvania, 17501-0500.

MCI CELEBRATES ITS HUNDRETH YEAR

The longest-serving Mennonite school in Canada, the **Mennonite Collegiate Institute**, its celebrating is 100th birthday this school year, 1989-90, with a variety of special events. The centennial speaker series focuses on a theme central to Mennonite identity and theology -- peace and justice.

Beginning in October, outstanding guest speakers will speak on this theme from a Christian perspective in various locations throughout southern Manitoba. The series includes: John Redekop, political science professor and prominent Mennonite Brethren church leader, speaking on how the Mennonites' view of peace affects their view of politics; Nancy Pocock, Canada's Quaker "Mother Theresa," sharing about her work with refugees in Toronto; Jack Dueck, entrepreneur and inspirational speaker, using stories and songs to tell of the Russian Mennonites' search for peace during the turbulent revolutionary period in Russia; and Elias Chacour, a courageous Christian priest, speaking about his quest for peaceful resolution of the racial strife in Palestine.

Also distributed across the province will be a **concert series** showcasing the generous musical talents of many MCI alumni and current students. The University Singers under the direction of Henry Engbrecht, Dietscha Sposs, the MCI Chamber Choir, Peter Wiebe, and Victor Engbrecht are some of the numerous artists to be featured.

CrossRoad, a musical drama written for the MCI's centennial celebrations by **Tim Wiebe** and **Esther Wiebe**,

was premiered in early November by students. It will be presented again by an alumni cast, under Henry Engbrecht's direction, during the climax of the centennial celebrations next summer when an estimated 1,500 alumni will return to Gretna for the MCI's gala centennial Homecoming. This homecoming weekend will be filled with nostalgia and thanksgiving as current students, alumni, and staff members enjoy a historical fashion show, performances by former MCI singing groups, tasty Mennonite food, worship services, and times of reminiscing with old friends.

Publication of a new history of the school by Gerhard J. Ens is expected during the spring of 1990, and centennial mementoes such as lapel pins, sweatshirts, and watches will be available throughout the centennial year.

The current students will benefit as well during this centennial year with visits from past graduates who will share from their experiences in Chapels and in music and sports clinics, as well as other special guest speakers and musical performers. To symbolize their continuing commitment to MCI's ministry, students will plant new trees on campus to ensure that the tradition of a beautifully treed campus continues long after the now 100-year-old cottonwoods reach their end.

With this year's substantially increased enrollment and enlarged teaching staff, MCI has much to celebrate as it embarks on its second century. Students, staff members, alumni, and friends of the MCI look forward to the many celebrations giving thanks to God for one hundred years of grace and guidance.

Don and Elaine Peters, Mennonite Central Committee workers from Winnipeg, and their children were involved in a car accident September 17 on the outskirts of Recife, Brazil. Don sustained head injuries that left him in a coma until early Monday, September 18. Elaine and the children, Jotham 11, Tanya 7, and Leah 3, were not seriously injured. The Peters serve as MCC country representatives in Brazil.

Paul M. Unger of Niverville is beginning a one-year term with the Intermento program at Ingolstadt, West Germany. Unger will work as a farmhand for the first six months. He will probably move to another placement in the same country for the

second half of the year. He attended the Word of Life Church in Niverville.

Heather Block of Winnipeg has begun a two-year MVS assignment in Cincinnati as a staff person at Talbert House. She is a member of the Maples Mennonite Brethren Church. Her parents are Henry and Gladys Block, Kingston, Jamaica.

Heather Driedger, Winnipeg, has begun a two-year assignment with MVS in St. Louis, as a child care worker at the Salvation Army residence for children. She is a member of Portage Avenue Mennonite Brethren Church. Her parents are Bernie and Irene Driedger.

Holly Guenther, of Morden, has begun a two-year MVS assignment in Markham, Illinois, as a worker at the Community Mennonite Day Care Centre. Her parents are Henry and Irma Guenther.

Charlotte Rempel, of Winnipeg, began a one-year MVS assignment as a staff person at the Gathering Place, a shelter for abused women, Denver. She is a member of the Sargent Avenue Church, Winnipeg. Her parents are Frank and Joanne Rempel.

A group of six Mennonites is exploring enterprise development in the Soviet Union. Led by **Art Defehr**, president of Palliser Furniture Ltd. they spent 18 days in August investigating ways to help the church in the Soviet Union through economic linkages and business partnerships. They met with church and business representatives in six cities in four Soviet republics. Other members of the group were **Neil Janzen**, president of MEDA in Winnipeg; **Arthur Block**, Vancouver; **Milo Shantz**, St. Jacobs, Ont; **Harry Giesbrecht**, Winnipeg; and **Johannes Reimer**, representing Logos of West Germany.

Dr. Donald Penner and his wife Helen left early in October for Nairobi, Kenya, to spend two years training 16 Kenyan doctors as professional pathologists. Penner, 71, officially retired from his position as professor in the University of Manitoba's pathology department in 1976, but has continued to spend 12-hour days as honorary consultant pathologist at the Health Sciences Centre.

Alex Janzen of Bethel Mennonite Church has been elected chair of the Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Board.

Peter and Elfrieda Dyck have been serving with Mennonite Central Committee since the 1940s. Both are emigres from the Soviet Union and were asked by North American Mennonites to be representatives at recent celebrations in the Soviet Union commemorating the 200th anniversary of the coming of Mennonites to Russia. This was Peter's seventh trip to the Soviet Union since 1966; it was Elfrieda's first visit since she left there as a seven-year old. The bicentennial turned into a major evangelistic effort with altar calls, literature distribution and hundreds of new commitments to Christ. In Zaporozje thousands of Russian citizens gathered at the Dnieper River to watch a baptism of 41 men and women. A prayer service was held under the 700-year-old oak tree, and a Sunday afternoon rally in the Zaporozhe stadium attracted about 10,000 people, who stood for almost four hours listening to two choirs, sermons, recitations and instrumental music. Christian literature, including Bibles, was distributed. The Dycks also visited Orenburg, Karaganda and Alma Ata.

Two of Steinbach's largest churches have moved into new buildings which were built at a cost of well over \$5 million. The Steinbach Mennonite Church, started in 1935, has an average attendance of about 600 people, and is headed by pastor Paul Dyck. The Emmanuel Evangelical Free Church is now in its third building since its founding in 1943 by a group of Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Church members. The new Free Church is the largest church building in the community, with room for 950 people.

On October 15 the River East Mennonite Brethren Church celebrated its 25th anniversary. The church held its chartering service on January 6, 1963, in the Princess Margaret School gym. There were 60 charter members. It was then named the Springfield Heights MB Church. The leader of the church at the time of the chartering service was Rev. J.H. Quiring, who was the guest speaker at the anniversary celebration. The present church was dedicated on November 22, 1964. By this time, Ernie Isaac was the

pastor. A drama, written by Sarah Klassen, reviewed the 25 years of the congregation's history.

Decisions to place volunteers with agencies that serve people with AIDS and to send a letter about abortion to the prime minister highlighted the September 14 Mennonite Central Committee Canada Executive Committee meeting in Winnipeg. The review of MCC's programs in Canada produced some surprising revelations about the growth of MCC activity at home. Reg Toews, former MCC associate executive secretary and author of the review, began his report to the executive committee by suggesting that perceptions about MCC service and the reality are two very different things. He cited, as an example, the perception that MCC is primarily involved in overseas relief and development work. The reality, he stated, is that only around 50 per cent of funds contributed to MCC is used overseas. Most of the rest is used for the 87 programs operated by the provincial MCCs in Canada and by MCC Canada. From 1975 to present, he stated, MCC national and provincial organizations have grown dramatically, from "simply organized entities with minimal domestic program and income and limited administrative capability to large well-organized entities with considerable resources and the motivation and capability to respond to needs within their areas." The reasons for the growth, he observed, were calls from Mennonite and Brethren in Christ (BIC) church members for MCC involvement in meeting local needs; increased constituency donations; government funding for overseas programs which freed up donated funds for use at home; and government grants for provincial programs.

Published genealogy: Guenter, J.G. (compiler); private publication, 1989, ISBN 9690681-1-5; Part One: Franz (1761-1936) and Anna Guenther and Descendants: Lineage of the late Gerhard, Peter and Aron up to 1989. Part Two: Collections and Reflections. Size 8 1/2 x 11 in; 233 pp, hardcover; \$17 plus \$1.50 postage. Contact Jac. G. Guenter, RR4, Box 72, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, S7K 3J7.

Morning and Evening: Images of Africa, is the title for a display of paintings by Winnipeg artist Grace Rempel at the Mennonite Heritage Centre, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard. The exhibition is open Monday-Friday, 9-5 p.m. and weekends, 1-6 pm.

Coming Events

November 25 and 26: The War Requiem, by Benjamin Britten, with the Winnipeg Symphony Oratorio Choir, Winnipeg Singers; 8 p.m. November 25 and 2 p.m. on November 26.

December 2: The annual meeting of the Mennonite Literary Society Inc.; Viscount Gort Hotel; from 9:30 a.m.

December 10: Winnipeg Singers Christmas Concert. Guest conductor: Ward Swingle, Westminster United Church. 8 p.m.

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PARENTAL EXAMPLE MORE IMPORTANT THAN CHURCH SCHOOL

by Paul Redekop

WHAT do Mennonite high school students believe about God, about life after death, and about basic values to live by?

These and other questions are addressed by Profs. Shirin and Eduard Schluderman, of the department of psychology at the University of Manitoba, who carried out a study of Mennonite and Catholic private school students. The study surveys the religious commitment of students and their general world views, values and moral beliefs.

Questionnaires were given to 1,980 junior- and senior-high school students. This sample included 325 church-going Mennonite students, as well as 170 church-going Evangelicals attending Mennonite schools, and 211 "unchurched" students attending either Mennonite or Catholic schools. The rest were from Catholic schools. About two thirds of the Mennonite students were Mennonite Brethren.

The good news from this survey is that Mennonite students, together with the Evangelicals, endorsed traditional Christian beliefs and practices much more than others. More than 85 per cent of Mennonite students affirmed the existence of God and the divinity of Christ, compared to an average of 69 per cent. Regarding practice, 68 per cent of the Mennonite students often engaged in private prayer, compared to an average of 46 per cent. As well, 42 per cent compared to 22 per cent reported they often read the Bible at home. It should be noted that these averages for private school students are in turn considerably higher than for the general population, where, for example, only one in four adolescents attends church regularly.

Mennonite students were also significantly less likely to accept such unconventional religious beliefs as psychic predictions of the future, communication with the dead, belief in life on other planets, and horoscopes, defined by the authors as symptomatic of the fragmentation of belief in modern society.

The bad news, at least from the point of view of parents who are paying the tuition to send their children to these schools, may be the finding that the private schools themselves have little if any independent influence on religious beliefs. There was a lack of association, for example, with number of years of private school attendance. The extent of religious belief and practice was instead very strongly associated with parental beliefs and practices. For instance, 91 per cent of Mennonite mothers and 89 per cent of fathers attended church frequently, compared to an average of 69 per cent and 59 per cent respectively for parents of private school students. (And an average of one in three for the population as a whole). Therefore, the greater religiousness of Mennonite students was attributable to the influence of parents, rather than the influence of the school.

We could say that the findings at least do not indicate that the schools have a negative influence. Nevertheless, the authors suggest that 'Mennonite educators should carefully consider ways of making the religious socialization in Mennonite schools more effective.'

The study's exploration of basic values held by students revealed that Mennonite students place an unusually great importance on friendship and personal relations. This finding may reflect the traditional emphasis on community among Mennonites. As such, it also indicates another reason for sending one's child to a private school; as a way to provide the child with the opportunity to develop his or her own Mennonite networks, associations and friendships.

One final finding may be of interest. This involves the tendency among Mennonites, along with Evangelicals, to think less than others about "world-view" questions (e.g. What is the purpose of life? What happens after death). The authors note the similarity with the students from an evangelical background here, and suggest this finding may reflect a general characteristic of a wider conservative evangelical community. The study also found that Mennonite students were similar to others in many ways. For instance, they placed similar importance on a number of basic values, including freedom, family life, privacy, and success (although with somewhat less importance placed on the latter).

The authors conclude that Mennonites have had some success to this point in maintaining their separate identity and their distinct beliefs and values. At the same time, Mennonite students share beliefs and values with students from "evangelical" church backgrounds. In other ways they also reflect the influences of the wider Canadian society. **mm**

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THREE PENNIES

by Agnes Wall

Katja was on her way to school, walking along the muddy road with the Bergen boys. She kept her head down, trying to find the driest place to step on. Her grey coat was neatly brushed and mama had pressed her long-sleeved, dark green dress. A peanut butter sandwich and a sugar bun were packed in her lunch pail. She eagerly looked forward to her first day of school in Canada. Perhaps the teacher would ask her how she had got here. Then she would show everyone on a map.

She was shaken out of her daydream by a rude voice which asked, "Who's the mejal?" She looked up and saw five boys ranging from about thirteen down to seven. Black Manitoba gumbo stuck to their boots, reaching up to the knees of their overalls. The biggest boy stared at her. His pale eyes held no promise of friendship.

"She's just a Russlaenda," explained Willie Bergen. "Paupi hired her old man to work on our farm. They live in our old house by the granary. Mahmi said we have to show her the way to school."

"She looks like a snotty Russlaenda all right. Let her find her own way. You guys come and run ahead with us." With this remark the boy started to run and the other boys followed. To discourage Katja, he threw a lump of half dried mud at her, but it flew past her head.

As she walked along, Katja looked at the desolate landscape, surrounded by plowed fields, dotted here and there with farms. From a long way off, she could see what must be the school, standing by itself on the treeless prairie. When she came closer, she saw that it was a grey, boxlike structure. The yard around it was bare, with the beginnings of a few scruffy weeds defying the trampling feet of the children. In the back, set well apart, were

two outhouses. Surrounding the yard was a rickety fence. She entered through the gate. Many children were milling around the entrance, shoving each other and yelling.

"Russlaenda, stupid Russlaenda," they chanted when they noticed her. She was not sure what a Russlaenda was and why a Russlaenda was stupid. She decided to walk into the school. Someone touched her arm. She turned and saw a skinny girl with a pointed face and a runny nose.

"You can't go in. You have to wait till the teacher rings the bell. Don't listen to those Wiens boys. They're mean. I don't like them. I don't like most of the kids. Why are you wearing such funny clothes?" The girl sniffled, drawing the sleeve of her sweater across her nose.

Katja looked at herself. Yes, her clothes were different. Instead of a coat, the other girls wore sweaters over cotton print dresses. One girl had removed her sweater to show off her pretty, puffed sleeves. Another had a ruffle around the hem of her dress. Katja noticed that the coat and dress she wore were much shorter than the dresses of the girls. Most of the girls wore ankle socks; Katja's stockings were of heavy, black cotton. Mama had braided her heavy, brown hair this morning. These girls all had short hair.

Before she could answer the girl, a pretty, young teacher came out and rang a small handbell. The children crowded into the school and found their seats. Some of the smallest ones stood around, looking as if they were lost. The teacher took each by the hand and put each in a small seat close to the front. Then she came towards Katja and said, "You must be the new girl."

Katja stared. The children had spoken Low German, but she didn't understand a

word the teacher said. Then she realized that the teacher spoke in English. Oh! Well, she would have to learn English. It couldn't be too hard and she would learn fast. She could already read and write in German and had started to read and write Russian in her three years of school in the small, Mennonite village in Russia.

"Say something, girl!"

When Katja still did not answer, the teacher called, "Lena." The girl who had spoken to Katja came over and the teacher said something to her. Then Lena said in Low German, "She wants you should go sit over there."

After Katja settled in the seat, she watched the teacher write some numbers on the board. She recognized it as an exercise in long multiplication. It was easy! She could do that without any mistakes. The teacher passed out scribblers and pencils and the students started to work. Katja waited for a scribbler too, but the teacher got out some pegs and Plasticine, which she gave to the little children to play with. The teacher had beautiful, blonde hair and blue eyes. She wore a delicate pink blouse and a slim, black shirt. Katja was fascinated by her shiny, black, high-heeled pumps, which made a tapping sound when she walked. "When she is finished with the little ones, she'll get me a scribbler too and I can get to work," thought Katja.

But the teacher sat down at her desk and started to buff her nails. Once she looked up at Katja and frowned.

With nothing to do, Katja examined the classroom. She could see the particles of dust in the sunbeams as they streamed into the room from the row of smoky windows to her left. Across the front of the room was a long blackboard. Above it were two portraits. One was of an older, bearded gentleman in a fancy uniform.

"H.M. George V" was printed underneath. The other was of a very handsome young man in a suit. "The Prince of Wales" was printed underneath this one. She tried to sound out the printing, but it didn't make sense. In front of the board was the raised platform where the teacher sat at her desk. She had finished buffing her nails. Now she was fluffing up her curly hair. On the desk was a pile of readers. Katja wished she could look at one of them. She looked for other books, but couldn't see any. To her right, opposite the windows, the wall had another blackboard running across the entire space. A large, black heater was set against the back wall. Next to it was a closed door, then the entrance through which she had come in. In the centre of the room, the children sat in rows of battered desks, the floor already littered with clumps of mud fallen from their restless feet.

The morning dragged on until the class became noisy. The teacher gathered up the scribblers, then said something. The students got up from their seats and went out, so Katja went too. It was warmer than in the early morning, so she left her coat hanging in the cloakroom, a long, narrow hall just by the entrance.

The yard was still very muddy and the children hung around by the door again. Some of them drifted back in, but nobody bothered Katja. Then she heard loud noises and shouts of "I got one!" and "I got one too!" coming from inside. She looked around the door and saw the cloakroom crowded with girls and boys. With their muddy boots, three or four boys were kicking and stomping on something on the floor. She saw that it was her coat, so dirty that she barely recognized it. As she watched, more boys joined in the sport, jumping on the coat and yelling, "I found another Russlaenda louse, and there's one too! Ugh! Stomp on it! How many lice can one Russlaenda have?"

She stumbled outdoors, then ran to the girls' toilet, where she burst into tears. When the bell rang, she dried her eyes and tried to compose herself. "I'm not going to let them see that I cried and pretend that it doesn't matter what they did to my coat," she thought to herself.

Looking straight ahead, she marched into school and sat down at her desk. The teacher lined up a group of boys and girls against the side blackboard. "You're supposed to stand with those kids and read," said Lena.

The readers were passed out. The teacher called on the students to take turns reading aloud from a story. When

the girl next to Katja finished, she poked her in the ribs and whispered, "It's your turn."

The teacher looked at her and nodded. The letters on the page looked just like German letters, so Katja pronounced the words as if they were German. The girls and boys in line burst out laughing. A sharp object pierced her back and a voice hissed, "Stupid." She hadn't read for very long when the teacher called, "Abe." Abe read in a hesitant voice with many pauses. He took a long time to finish his paragraph. The children shifted their weight from one foot to the other and leaned against the blackboard. The teacher yawned. Finally, they could all sit down.

At noon, they brought out their syrup pails packed with lunch. Katja looked for a place to wash, but saw nothing. She wiped her hands on her handkerchief. Lena came over to sit with her, peering into Katja's pail. "Didn't you bring an apple? I always bring an apple for lunch. I guess you are too poor to bring apples?"

Katja nodded. Lena stayed with her during the lunch break. The other girls stayed away from them. The boys were further out in the yard, tossing a ball. Some of them were hitting it with a short, thick stick.

Katja had nothing to do all afternoon. At times, the teacher watched her with a speculative look in her eyes. On the way home, Katja, accompanied by Lena, carried her coat folded over her arm. Lena trudged beside her, chattering all the while. "We can walk home together. I don't live far from your place. Don't walk or talk to the other girls. They're stuck up. Nobody will be your friend anyway. I don't have friends either. You could be my friend if only you weren't a Russlaenda."

"What is a Russlaenda? Why is a Russlaenda so bad?"

"You sure don't know nothing. Mahmi

says Russlaenda come from Russia, and that's a very bad place. They're always dirty and have lice and steal. They don't have money. All Russlaenda are poor all the time. Mahmi says Russlaenda are always begging for us Canadians to give them things. Mrs. Bergen gives you a syrup pail full of skim milk before she gives the rest to the pigs. Well, doesn't she?"

"Yes, but papa works very hard and soon we'll have money. I'm not dirty. And we don't have lice. I don't even know what lice look like."

"And my paupi says Russlaenda are always bragging about all the schools they built in Russia and how much they know. They think they are better than us. What's the use of going to school? I'll quit on my fourteenth birthday. Everybody does."

Katja remembered papa telling her, "What is in your head, no one can take away from you. They took everything your mama and I had, but they couldn't take away our education. Learning is very important."

To Lena she only said, "I won't stop school when I'm fourteen. I want to go to high school too."

"That's very dumb. Just like a Russlaenda. Here's the road where I turn to go home. Tomorrow after school I'll come to your place."

As she came closer to home, Katja began to worry about her coat. "What happened to your coat?" was the first thing her mother asked.

"It fell on the floor and some children stepped on it." Katja tried hard to keep her voice even.

Mama was quiet for a minute. "Next time, don't let them. Brush the coat off for now. I'll have time to check it later. It's getting warm, so you can wear your jacket tomorrow. How was school?"

"I have to learn English. Mama, my



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dress is much shorter than the other girls'."

"I can let the hem down. You'll learn English if you do what the teacher says."

After supper, mama got out two of Katja's dresses, examined the hems, then let them down. Katja saw that the let down part was darker than the rest of the dresses. "Can you make puffed sleeves too?" she asked.

"There's not enough material in the sleeves to do that."

Lena had more instructions for her next morning. "Teacher says you should take the Beginners to the attic and read these German stories to them. Can you read German?"

"Oh yes. Who are the Beginners?"

"They're the little kids who have come to school after Easter to learn to sit still. Don't you know anything? Next year they'll be grade ones. Take the books. Open the door in back and you and the kids go up the stairs."

The attic was hot and airless. Katja looked at the books. They were old, but the pictures were beautiful. The stories were printed in Gothic script, but she had learned to read it too. Soon she and the children were in the land of fairies, giants and princesses. In what seemed only a short time, it was time for recess. The grounds were drier and she started a singing game with the Beginners, a game mama had taught her.

"Stop playing with the babies. Come here, we need you for baseball!" It was Abe Wiens, the boy who had met her on the road. Katja walked over to where two boys were choosing up sides. As each child was called, that child went to stand by the leader. Katja was chosen last. "We had to take you because there was nobody else left to make up our team," said Abe.

The players spread out on a rough diamond and started throwing a ball and hitting it. It seemed the batter had to hit the ball, then run for dear life around the diamond. Katja wanted to ask Lena how the game was played, but Lena was way out in the field, just standing there. Katja's team was at bat.

"It's your turn." Someone shoved the bat into Katja's hands. She walked over to the place where the others had stood. The pitcher was fierce-looking and threw a fast ball at her. She stepped aside to avoid being struck. "Strike!" yelled the pitcher and threw another ball her way. This time she took a swing at it, but missed. Before she saw the next ball coming, it had passed her. "Out!" yelled Abe. "You're sure a lousy player. It's your fault if we lose. Just wait till after school!"

Lena joined her in the dreaded walk home. They saw Abe in a group of boys and he shouted, "We'll get you, lousy Russlaenda."

When the girls got to Katja's house,

Lena's curiosity took over. "Your furniture sure is old. Who gave it to you? The table is from Bergens. There's only two rooms here. Do you have to sleep in the kitchen? What's cooking in this pot?"

When she tried to lift the cover, mama asked the girls to go and play outside. "I'll stay for supper," said Lena.

"Another day," was mama's firm reply.

In the following weeks, the situation in school didn't change much. Katja participated in more of the work, but it wasn't as easy as she thought it might be. True, she often had OK printed on the page where she had done her arithmetic, but she still pronounced the words in a German way when she had to read aloud in the reading lineup. The class laughed; the teacher frowned. No matter how often she practiced her spelling words, when the teacher dictated the lesson, she got many of them wrong. It was all in the letters one didn't say in English, Katja thought. The teacher always wrote her mistakes in large red pencil at the top of the spelling page. Katja often asked Lena to explain, but Lena was not a good explainer.

Katja remembered how it had been in her first school. She had always understood the teacher the first time he explained something and recalled how easy it had been. He had praised her for good work and sometimes wrote "Very good" across her work. In this school

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there was so much she didn't understand.

Low German, the recess language, she understood only too well. The girls answered her when she spoke to them, but they soon walked away, their arms around each others' waists. Because she was needed to make up two teams for baseball, the boys made her play. She didn't want to find out what would happen if she said, "No." In the village in Russia she had known everyone and had many friends; here she had Lena.

She continued reading to the Beginners. The teacher allowed them to sit outside in the shade of the school now.

"Read the story about the princess again," begged Tina, snuggling up to Katja.

"And read the one about the wild horse." David almost choked her with a bear hug.

"You know the stories off by heart already, I've read them to you so many times."

"Nobody else reads to us. We want to hear the stories again. Maybe we can stay out all afternoon, like yesterday."

"Okay, okay, I'll read to you, but only if you're good. Then we'll play a game I learned when I was as old as you are now."

The days were getting hotter and the fields beside the road waved their green in the breeze. The trees planted around the farms were thick with foliage. One day when on the way home Lena asked, "What'll you wear to The Picnic?"

"What's a picnic?"

"Don't you know anything? Everybody goes to The Picnic. Grownups too. Everybody is dressed up. They have races and play baseball against other school districts. You can buy treats at The Picnic. I guess you won't buy any because you are so poor. I guess you won't get a new dress either. Mahmi already bought the material for my new dress. It's blue and has little white flowers all over it. You're so big, else you could have my old dress."

"When is this picnic?"

"Soon school is over and then is The Picnic."

The last day of school was much like any other. After they were dismissed, the students, Katja included, whooped and yelled all the way home. The Picnic was the next Sunday.

Mama had prepared a picnic lunch. Papa grumbled, "Do I have to wear my good clothes for this picnic? I'll be sweating all day."

"Mrs. Bergen told me that all the men wear their Sunday suits to The Picnic. If you get too hot, you can take your jacket off. The women wear new cotton, print

dresses. I've remodeled my second best dress. Katja, I have a surprise for you."

Mama opened the closet door and there hung a brand new dress. It was white, with red polka dots. To Katja's delight, mama had remembered to make puffed sleeves. Then mama handed her a pair of ankle socks, Katja's first. "Now hurry and get dressed. Bergens are coming to take us along to The Picnic."

"Thank you, thank you," Katja flung her arms around both parents and slipped into the dress as fast as she could.

"You look like a princess in your story book," smiled papa.

The Picnic was in a farmer's meadow. Many cars were already there when they arrived. Before the activities started, each school child received a dime to spend on treats. Katja could hardly believe it! Her first money in Canada and she could spend it on treats! And there was Lena, splendid in her new dress, tugging her to the booth where Mr. Bergen was selling all sorts of goodies.

"I'm awfully thirsty. Let's buy Orange Crush," said Lena.

"I've never tasted it. Let's."

Mr. Bergen opened two bright orange bottles, put a straw in each and handed them to the girls. They gave him their dimes and he handed them a nickel in change. The fizzy liquid tasted marvelous. "This Orange Crush sure is good," said Katja.

When the girls returned the bottles, they looked at the other treats. Katja bought a chocolate bar for her five cents, Lena five suckers. Katja explained that she would have to eat the bar right away, else it would melt. Lena put one sucker in her mouth, another in her pocket. "I'll keep the others for later. There are so many thieves around here. I better hide them. You come along."

She led the way to a small clump of trees where the lunches had been put in the shade. Katja watched her place the three suckers under a syrup pail belonging to her family. Then the girls wandered about, watching the fathers mark off a diamond for the baseball competitions and set up goals for the races. Very soon it was time for lunch.

Mama had spread out a cloth on the ground and was setting out the lunch. Papa was already there. "I thought someone would ask us to join his family," he said, as he watched the other families grouping together to share their lunches.

"I thought so too," said mama. "Maybe it's too soon. Well, never mind. Here, have an egg sandwich. Katja, I baked the cake especially for you."

All around them people were laughing

and calling to each other. No one called to the little family of three, sitting off to the side. When lunch was finished, they heard a shrill whistle. It was time for the fun to begin. The crowd moved towards the areawhere the races were to start. Katja looked for Lena, but couldn't see her anywhere. She sat down on the grass, watching the teenage boys get ready for the sack race. Suddenly, a fist came down hard on her shoulder. "You took them! You took them! You Russlaenda thief!" Lena was screaming at her.

"Took what? What's the matter?"

"You know what! You stole my suckers!"

"I didn't"

"You did too! You knew where they were. I'm telling mahmi." Lena ran off.

Katja spent the next few hours in misery, watching games and races she didn't want to join any longer. The scene with Lena kept running through her mind. Where was Lena? Had she told her mother? Who could have taken the suckers? The sun was low on the horizon when she could, at last, climb into the Bergens' Model T and go home.

The next day was washday. Katja helped mama hang clothes on the line when they saw Lena and her mother come into the yard. So Lena had told! What would Lena's mother do? What would mama say?

"I wonder why they've come calling on a workday? All dressed up in their picnic clothes, too," mused mama.

"I have something of great importance to discuss with you and your daughter." Lena's mother sounded very formal. "May we go into the house?"

Mama ushered them into the house, then pulled out four chairs and they all sat down. "Now, what's the matter?" she asked.

Lena's mother was blunt. "There is no denying that Russlaenda steal. They say you people do it all the time. I think you should know that Katja stole three suckers from Lena at the Picnic. Suckers cost one cent for one. We are here to collect three pennies."

For a minute there was shocked silence. Then mama said, "My daughter a thief? Never! How dare you? Get out! Get out of my house this minute!"

In the face of such anger, Lena and her mother almost ran from the house. Through the window Katja could see them scurry towards home like two flustered hens.

Mama leaned against the table. She sighed.

"They are ignorant folk," said mama.

mm

RE-PAYING A TRAVEL DEBT

The year was 1948. Fifteen-year old Hugo Reimer was one of thousands of Mennonite refugees fleeing to the west, away from the Soviet Union. Together with his mother and two sisters, he was smuggled out of Berlin by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). MCC also paid their way to a new home in Paraguay. As he boarded the ship for his new home, he promised himself: "If I can ever pay back MCC for their help, I will."

Forty one years later, Reimer, recently retired after 20 years of teaching at the Morden Collegiate, is fulfilling that promise. In September he and his wife, Martha, members of the Morden Mennonite Brethren Church, began a two-year MCC voluntary service assignment with Supportive Care Services in Abbotsford, B.C., where they will serve as caretakers at Twin Firs, a supervised residence for adults with mental disabilities.

Reimer, 56, has vivid memories of his escape. Under the terms of wartime agreements, all Russian-born refugees were to be forcibly repatriated back to that country. MCC sent volunteers to Berlin, an island of safety in the Soviet zone, to help Mennonites born in the Soviet Union to escape to the West. But when the Reimer family arrived in Berlin from their home in the Ukraine, they found the MCC refugee camp empty. They were crestfallen -- had they missed their chance to escape?

By chance, they had arrived at the camp only two days after Peter and Elfrieda Dyck led the first group of Mennonites on a miraculous escape to the West. But a caretaker told them not to worry -- the MCCers would be back in a few days. By the time the MCC workers returned, around 20 other refugees were at the camp. They arranged for the Reimer family to be smuggled out of Berlin with a group of Dutch refugees; the closed truck was waved through the border by the Russian guards. They had made it.

They spent a year at an MCC refugee camp in West Germany before leaving for Paraguay. MCC provided the fare, and gave them food and

farming equipment for their new life in South America. "It was then that I promised that I would one day repay MCC," he says.

He and Martha, 53, immigrated to Canada from Paraguay in 1958. Martha, who was born in Paraguay, also has an MCC connection; her

parents had received MCC assistance when they settled in that country.

Now that he's retired, it's time to make good on the promise. The Reimers want to show their gratitude by giving to others, just as they received many years ago. (from the Mennonite Central Committee)

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BEZAUBERENDE LANDSCHAFT IN CANADISCHEN NORDEN

(Im Zug von Winnipeg nach dem Osten)

von Helene Janzen

VOM Zug aus genoss ich sie und ein Jahr später im Volkswagen. Eigentlich hatte ich vor viel zu lesen, ich hatte ja nun Zeit dazu. Auch lagen da einige gute Bücher obenauf in meinem Koffer, besonders für diese Reise bereitgelegt. Aber -- immer wieder fesselte die Landschaft meinen Blick. -- Lesen kann man auch zu Hause -- ich gab es auf und überliess mich den Eindrücken der vorübergleitenden Weiten des canadischen Nordens.

"Endlos, eintönig, nur Wald, Wald, Steine und Wasser," eufzten meine Mitreisenden gelangweilt, rauchten ihre Zigarette und blickten in die Tageszeitung. Nur ein älterer Herr, der still nebenan am Fenster sass, wandte sich mir zu und sagte: "Es ist doch schön, nicht wahr?"

Ja, sie ist schön diese weite und karge, felsige und kurzwaldige Landschaft, eigenartig fesselnd und erfrischend. Urwald -- nicht der Urwald, den wir uns auf der Schulbank so phantasie reich in Afrika oder Brasilien dachten, aber dennoch Urwald, Urwald des Nordens.

Dieser Wald ist erdnahe und dicht. Er hat gemischten Baumwuchs und viel Buschwerk am Boden. Das dunkle Grün der Nadel bäume im Wechsel mit dem hellgrünen, oft schon herbstlich gelb getöntem Laub der Birken und Pappeln, geben dem Wald einen eigenartigen Zauber.

Wie Wellen des Meeres hebt und senkt sich der unendliche Wald durch die geglätteten graurötlichen Felsrücken. Mit hellgrauem Moos bedeckt, gleich Walrossrücken, steigen sie streckenweise terrassenförmig empor, erheben den Wald mit sich,

spalten sich und brechen ab, -- und die frischen scharfzackigen Felsbrocken fallen mitten in den grünen Wald hinein. Meistens aber sind sie flach gewellt und von Wind und Wetter sanft geglättet.

Immer wieder wird der Wald durch tiefliegende Seen, Moortümpel und ruhig dahinfließende Flüsschen unterbrochen. Schon aus der Ferne schimmert das dunkle Blau durch die Bäume, ist plötzlich da, der weitarmige See und geht ein Streckchen mit uns. Silbern glitzert er bei leichtem Wind im Sonnenschein, -- grau, wenn Wolken den Himmel beziehen, dunkel in der Nacht und sanft beleuchtet bei hellem Mondenschein.

Im See scheint der Wald seinen ebenbürtigen Gegner zu treffen. Ganz hart tritt er an das Wasser heran, hier aber muss er sich beugen, sich ergeben. Der See wird Sieger, denn immer wieder neigt sich ein stolzer Baum und sinkt, seiner Wurzelkraft beraubt, ins Wasser. Fahl und gebleicht, seiner Rinde beraubt, liegen bald Stamm und Wurzelgebilde an der Luft am Ufer, wenn der See ihn zu lange umspülte.

Wenngleich die emporstrebende Bäume wieder und wieder durch Wind und Wetter geknickt werden, hie und da ganze Waldstrecken abbrannten und nur graue kahle Reste zurückblieben -- wird unten der Waldboden schon wieder lebendig. Das junge Grün wächst mit starker Kraft empor, und zwischen den kleinen weihnachtlich wirkenden Tännchen sieht man die zarten hellstämmigen Birken und die silbergrünen Sprösslinge der Pappeln.

Sie wirkt belebend, diese Vitalität des jungen Nachwuchses. Das Leben überwindet das Sterben in der Natur. Doch -- zwischen Sterben und Leben -- zwischen Dunkel und Grün -- leuchtet das Goldgelb und Rot -- der Schimmer des Herbstes.

Und sieht man näher zu, so tritt uns die ganze kleine Welt des Waldrandes entgegen: Gräser und Blumen, schon herbstlich gestimmt. Neben den farnbedeckten Abhängen ziehen sich die rötlich braunen Flecken der Heidelbeerbüschen, dazwischen das schöne Blau der wilden Herbstastern und das Braun der reifenden Gräserrispen, die Bündel der schlichten duftenden Schafgarbe und der Blütenstamm der stolzen Königskerze! Und das alles unterbrochen und belebt durch die leuchtendgelben Blüten des sich weit ausbreitenden "Goldenrods." Welch' eine Pracht im Wechsel der Form und Farben an den Abhängen und den Lichtungen!

Immer wieder aber wird mein Blick gefesselt durch die knorrige Kiefer, die sich aus dem Waldmeer erhebt und oft hoch auf einem Felsrücken stehend, unnahbar und einsam zu sein scheint. Und nicht weit davon, nur tiefer, sieht man die weisstämmigen Birken zu dritt und zu viert in enger Kameradschaft vereinigt. Welch ein Kontrast auch in der Natur, Welch' eine grossartige Individualität: die dunkle herbe Kiefer neben der hellen Gruppe der freundlich aneinander sich schmiegenden Stämmchen der Birken!

Geheimnisvoll scheint sich die Tierwelt in der Tiefe des Waldes zu verlieren. Man ahnt sie dort und

sieht sie kaum. Nur einmal sprang ein braunes Reh aus der Lichtung in den Wald hinein, gefolgt von ihrem gesprenkelten Rehkitzlein. -- Hin und wieder sass ein grauschwarzer Vogel unbeweglich auf einer kahlen Baumspitze. Kleine silbrige Vögel schwirrten über den Bäumen davon und über dem morgendlich dampfenden See flog eine Möwe mit schwerem Flügelschlag dahin. Am Boden aber krabbelte ein Erdhäschen flink zwischen den Gräsern umher, am Bahndam aber reckte ein Gopher seine kleine Gestalt und blickte erstarrt dem davoronllenden Zug nach.

Und der Mensch, der einzelne Mensch in dieser Unnedlichkeit der unberührtscheinenden Waldwelt? Immer Wieder wirkte er verloren, klein und einsam. Einmal stand er, wie eine Silhouette, weit auf einem Felsvorsprung am See -- unbeweglich, sein schaukelndes Kähnlein unten daneben. Ein andermal lehnte er grau gekleidet, braun und hager an einem Baumstamm und blickte unverwandt dem davoneilenden Zuge nach, erdrückend verloren zwischen den vielen grauen Baumstämmen. Ein anderer sass am Waldrand im wehenden Gras, die Knie hochgezogen, die Arme darumgeschlungen.

Verloren und klein erscheint der Mensch mitten in dieser Gewalt des Waldes, der Felsen Schluchten und Seen. Man ist fast überrascht, ihn hier zu sehen. Nicht der Mensch beherrscht die Natur, sondern die Unendlichkeit des Waldes scheint den Menschen zu beherrschen und in sich einzuschliessen.

Wer kann sich dem Eindruck, der Gewalt, der Weite, der manigfaltigen Schönheit dieser herben, waldigen und felsigen Landschaft des canadischen Nordens entziehen?! Wer sieht ihren Zauber, wer verspürt die belebende Kraft! mm

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9KT

Plautdietsch ess miene Muttashproak

fonn Elfrieda Schroeder

NA, waut ess mie ditt? Daut kjemmt mie opp emol soo fää daut Plautdietsch nu entlijch uk ne rejchtje Sproak jesorde ess, onn soo aunjeseene, sogoä bie de Jeleade Mensche! Mien Maun brocht fonn siene Oabeit enn dee Biebeljesallschaft opp eemol en grootet Stopsel Papiere no Hus. Daut weä ne nije Biebeläwasattung onn etj sull daut nu aules derjchläse onn miene bemoatjungen dootoo moake. Daut wieä noch niemols fääjekome daut etj eene Sproak bäta festunt aus mien Maun. Siene Läwensoabeit weä de Biebel enn eene aufrikaunische Sproak too äwasate. Omm ditt too doone, must hee fäl aundere Sproake uk goot kjanne. Buta dee Hebräische onn dee Jriejchische Sproake haud etj dee aundere Sproake uk mett jeleat oba daut wie bloos soo daut etj mie feständje kunn mett dee Lied dee doä wonde wuo wie onse Oabeit fe de Mission deede. Nu opp eemol wull mien Maun fonn mie aulerhaunt äwe eene Sproak weete dee etj bäta festunt aus hee. Waut fe eene Awasattung haud hee mie dann mettjebrocht? Daut weä eene plautdietsche Biebeläwasattung, onn mien Maun ess fonn Danzig, etj sie oba noch enn Russlaunt jebuare, onn derjchen Kjrich no Dietschlaunt onn Paraguay ütjewaundat, onn dann no Kanada. Mien Maun sien Plautdietsch weä een bät holperijch soo aus mien Französisch. Etj haud soo miene Jedanke aus etj mie hansaut omm dee äwasattung too läse. Fleijcht weä Plautdietsch aul emma eene rejchtje Sproak fe sitj jewäse oba bloos too Sied jeschowe wiels sitj de Mensche doamett schämde.

Aus etj enn Paraguay enn de Kolonie Nielaund, Darp Eloachj, de School aurfange sull mett säwen Joa, kunn etj bloos plautdietsch räde. Etj haud en Jehea fe de hoagdietsche Sproak wiel etj se jieden Sindach enne 28 / mennonite mirror / november, 1989

Aundacht hiad onn wiels onse goode Mama ons fäl Leeda opp Hoagdietsch fääsinje deed, oba etj räd emma bloos plautdietsch Tus. Etj must too Wienachte onn uck too aundere besondere Doag Jedijchta ütwendijch leare, onn dee weare uck aula opp Hoagdietsch. Oba wann etj mett miene Jeschwista, miene Ellere onn mien Frintschaff räde wull, wurd etj nijch doaraun dentje Hoagdietsch too räde. Nu opp eemol aus de School aurfunk must etj dän gaunsen Dach äwä enne School bloos Hoagdietsch räde. Nijch bloos mett de Learasch enne Schoolstow oba uck wann wie onse Pause haude. Etj docht etj wurd daut nijch doone wiels mie daut too schwierig sach. Oba mien Brooda dee aul enne dredde Klaus nennkaum säd wann etj oppem Schoolhoff een kjeleenet Wuatje plautdietsch räde wurd dann wurd dee Leara mie ferr de gaunse School mett sienem Ladajirtel fedrasche. Onn ditt wieä enne Leara dee fonn daut MCC ut Amerika jeschetjt wurd. Etj gruld mie soo wie soo ferr am. Hee wieä nijch eena fonn onse, daut wie goot too moatje. Taunte Ditsche säd hee aut sien Bultjebottabroot mett Massa onn Gaufel. Eascht wurd daut Broot fienjeschnäde onn dann mett eene Gaufel oppjespetjt. Emmahan etj haud so schratjlich schis fe däm fedrasche ferr de gaunse School, daut etj een haulwet Joa kjeen Wuat enne School säd, weens nijch enne Paus. Wann dee Leara mie waut fruach dann must etj je Auntwuad stone, oba etj wist daut etj mie mett däm aumerikaunischen Leara nijch fejäte wudd. Dee kunn soowiesoo nijch Plautdietsch. Oba mett miene Frind Hoagdietsch räde? Daut kaum mie sea domm fää!

Aus etj näjen Joa oolt wort, waundat onse Famielje no Kanada ut. Nu sull wie äwahaupt nijch mea plautdietsch räde. Onse Ellera wulle nijch daut wie daut Hoagdietsche fejäte sulle, wiels daut doch de School

onn Kjoatjesproak weä, onn fäl wijchtja aus Plautdietsch. See wulle nu habe daut wie bloos Hoagdietsch too an räde sulle. Etj haud mie nu aul derjche School aun daut Hoagdietsche jewant. Aus etj eascht aurfunk too läse jintj mie daut soo goot daut etj miene Näs bloos emma enn irjent een Boak stätje haud. Fäl ütwaul weä enn Paragua nijch. Etj laus dän Bote, besondasch dän "Kinderbote," miene Fiebel onn Läsebeatja enne School; tus haud wie een Jesankboak, die Biebel onn dan Märtyrerspeajel. Daut gaunse ditje Boak haud etj boold derchjeläse. Soo kunn etj mie nu leijchta toom Hoagdietschen räde jewane. Oba mien ellara Brooda dee soo fein enne School hoagdietsch räde kunn, wääd sitj doajäjen, onn haft nie too onse Ellere hoagdietsch jerädt. Dee kanadische Menniste deede soo aus wann see uck plautdietsch räde kunne, oba daut Plautdietsche waut see räde weä noch ne Sproak fe sitj selfst dee wie meist nijch festone kunne. Dee haude daut aules fe-enjlischt. Wann dee eascht fonn äare Swettasch onn äare Koare räde deede, haude see ons feloare.

Emmahan räd wie nu bloos emma Hoagdietsch Tus batt wie ons daut Enjlische jeleat haude, onn fonn dann aun wurd wie emma mea fe-enjlischt. Wie räde soogoa too onse Mutta enjlisch, oba see auntwoad bloos opp Dietsch. Foda festunt nie rejchtijch Enjlisch onn wie räde bott Fondoag bloos dietsch too am.

Aus etj mie befried onn mett mienem Maun no Afrika enne Mission fua, must etj wadda aurfange Sproake too leare. Mien Maun interesied sitj sea fe aule Sproake, deswääjen weä he uck enne Biebeläwasattungsabeit. Wie muste nu no Belgien omm Französisch too leare. Daut jintj mie soo aus opp'm Schoolhoff hoagdietsch too räde. Etj säd een haulwet Joa meist nuscht!

Nu sent aul fief Joa febie daut wie

aul wada enn Kanada wone. Mie jankad aul lang Literatua studiere onn soo jintj etj nu no de Universität, om dietsche onn enjlische Literatua too studiere. Enne dietsche Klaus wia etj gauns feblefft aus dee Professor ons fetald daut dee plaudietsche Sproak dee orijinelle dietsche Sproack ess, onn daut daut Hoagdietsche uck daut Englische sitj fomm Plaudietschen entwetjeld haft. Etj wea gauns stolt opp miene Muttasproak. Etj docht emma daut wia soo en bät ne domme Sproak, sea prost onn nijch fe jeleade Mensche. Daut wea oba aum Aufank nijch soo, onn wurd bloos vonn de Mensche äare Enstalung soo. Etj haud eascht uk soone Enstallung. Aus dee Universität foddad etj sull miene Muttasproak aunjäwe, docht etj Plaudietsch wea kjeene rechtje Sproak, onn Hoagdietsch wea uck ne aunjeleade Sproak dee etj nijch soo goot kunn aus Enjlisch, onn soo gauf etj Enjlisch aus miene Muttasproak aun. Nu sie etj oba aul jeleada onn weet daut daut Englische on daut Hoagdietsche beides fomm Plautdietschen staume. Fonn nu aun woar etj stolt senne wann etj schriewe kaun daut Plautdietsch miene Muttasproak ess. mm

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"I want to stay here now"

by Susie Wiebe

This is a transcript of recollections given in writing class by a Winkler grade four student.

WE was not rich. We lived on a farm. We have cows and horsies and chickens and what was that other one...pigs, yah. And we have little pigs, like baby pigs, and baby cows, and I have to feed them all. And we have some ducks and turkeys and baby hens. All the animals stayed in a barn. The ducks were in another barn. There were how many barns? I forgot how many barns, four or three: I forgot how many.

Then there was a wolf. It came and eat some hens and a turkey. My mom and dad saw it. They went out and my dad ran after the wolf and then the wolf, he leave that hen, and so then, the next evening he came and eat a hen and we didn't see that. One week after there was a skunk and then he eat a chicken. We can smell it. My dad he went outside and my mom and then they have a stick and they kill him. It smelled very, yeck! The next day my dad put that skunk on the fire and then it was gone.

Sometimes we would go to our friends that was our neighbour, our third neighbour. That was by the hill and we run there and we sit down and that was so almost straight down and that was fun sliding down.

The next day we went to where there was trees and under there was that kind of blueberries and some days we can go and get some blueberries. And so we take it home and my mom she make a pie with the blueberries. My mom make two of those pies and we brought our cousins those pies that just have potatoes to eat. They eat it. We don't have potatoes so they brought some potatoes to our house. Here it is better because we

have here more food and more meat.

Our cousins that don't have those to wash clothes they came every week on Saturday to our house and we have to bring them some, how do you say, cucumbers, and peaches. They come to wash their clothes every Saturday by our house.

When we came here from our cousins' house away we came to our cousins' house in Chortitz for a week. We have to go to the States because we didn't have the papers that we can live here. There we live for three months. Then we came back here and came again to our cousins' and so we stayed there for a week and then we buy a house in Winkler.

They want to make that house to an apartment so we have to live on a farm. Before winter we move back to Winkler because we don't want to live in winter on the farm.

I want to have my doll from Mexico but I couldn't have it because my cousins have an auction sale and they sell the doll. There we have to use a hat in school and the kids ripped my hat because I have the color green around there and they say I should have a different color because that was sin. I want to stay here now. mm

Christian Singles: Meet new friends through our introduction services. For confidential interview call 705 876 9824 or 705 749 0228 or write Christian Association Services for Singles, Box 2124, Peterborough, Ontario, K9J 2H4.

MINISTERING DURING BEREAVEMENT: A TIME WHEN COMFORT IS REQUIRED

IN her article on Mennonite funerals in this issue, Sarah Klassen gives us an overall picture of the customs and traditions followed by Mennonites when they bury their dead. Last month we had an opportunity to consider the work of one particular Mennonite funeral director and to see the philosophy of service which he follows in his business.

With urbanization, we have given this aspect of our lives into the hands of professionals. No longer do the men of the community work together to build the coffin; the body is no longer laid out in the parlour by the women; the people of the community no longer dig the grave themselves. We now camouflage the sight of the newly-dug grave with artificial grass and we ease the pain of the final separation by not lowering the casket into the grave in the presence of the mourners. We no longer take shovels to fill in the grave and bury the deceased.

Despite this easing of the final moments of a funeral, we can never avoid the sting and pain of death. If we have loved, then we will mourn. It is at the time of the death of a loved one that we most need the support and comfort of a community. Even though the type of support offered by the community in the Mennonite tradition may have changed, it continues to be one of the great strengths of the community.

This support is shown in visits by caring friends to the bereaved; in gifts of food and help; in the preparation of a funeral meal by people in the congregation. To be the recipient of such love and caring is to experience the blessing of community in its richest and fullest sense.

In the *Mirror* articles on funerals and funeral directors, little has been said about the role of the minister in this time of family crisis. Whether or not the family is actively involved in a church, family members generally look to the minister of a local congregation for direction, for comfort and to officiate at the funeral service.

A funeral service, obviously, is a time to recognize the life of the one who has passed away, also to support and comfort bereaved family and friends, and to help them in the grieving process. It is not a time to ask the mourners to reflect on the state of their own souls, to give dire

warnings about impending judgement in the next world if they do not repent and accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour. It would appear to be the height of insensitivity to address a family or a congregation in such a way at such a time, and yet this does happen within our congregations.

If a pastor is concerned about a lack of spirituality in the life of a church member or people to whom he or she is called to minister, then there are surely opportunities to reach out to them when their minds and souls are calm.

We are exhorted to weep with those who weep, and to mourn with those who mourn. It would be hard to find in the Bible an exhortation to harass and cajole those who mourn. Those of us who have needed the support of ministers in a time of mourning know just how comforting it can be to be able to express grief and receive reassurance at such a time. It is always a shock to attend a funeral service and listen to a judgmental sermon that clearly is aimed either at the departed person, the family or the congregation in the pews. Some who are of an evangelical bent might applaud such an approach, believing that this is an opportunity to scare people enough to change their ways and turn to God. Such scare tactics at a time of death, when people are most vulnerable, can hardly lead to a significant and thoughtful decision to follow a Christian way.

Surely Jesus would want those who decide to follow His way to do so after careful reflection, for positive reasons, and in a spirit of joy. If ministers really care about the souls of their charges, then their ministries should never involve harassment of people in pain. Certainly there are times when people need to be reminded of their responsibilities, when they need to be challenged. This is undoubtedly one of the roles of a minister of the gospel. But a funeral is not the time and not the place.

--Ruth Vogt

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ANNUAL MEETING Mennonite Literary Society

The Mennonite Mirror and the Mennonite Literary Society, Inc., annual meeting will be held at the Viscount Gort Motor Hotel, at 9:30 a.m., Saturday, December 2.

To attend, please call 786 2289



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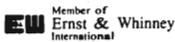
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**Suggestions
for sharing "In the
name of Christ"
this Thanksgiving
and Christmas
season.**

Since refugees in the West Bank cannot leave their homes during curfews to buy food, MCC helps needy families buy chickens. \$20 buys chickens for one family.

MCC:

**S H A R I N G
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MCC workers at the Independent Living Centre in Kitchener, Ont., help people who are disabled and live alone to do their own homemaking and shopping. \$582 supports a worker for a month.

Through MCC's SWAP program, youth repair roofs, paint porches and become friends with Kentuckians. \$5 buys a sheet of drywall. \$30 buys three gallons of paint.

Help children in Vietnam have healthy teeth. \$100 pays for a school dental care education program and buys instruments for check-ups.

MCCers encourage Haitian farmers to terrace hills and use fertilizer. As a result, some corn yields have increased five to 10 fold. \$180 buys lessons, extension visits and fertilizer credit for a group of farmers.

Ethiopian refugees in Sudanese camps have asked MCC for seeds and tools to grow their own food. \$8 buys a hand tool. \$400 buys a ton of grain, groundnut or sesame seed.



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Committee**

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