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MENNONITE BRETHREN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA

NEWSLETTER

SOCIETY PLANS BEN AND ESTHER HORCH EVENING

November 13, 1981 has been set as the date of a "Ben and Esther Horch Appreciation Evening" to be held in the Mennonite Brethren Bible College auditorium at 8:00 p.m.

The Horch's are well known to Mennonites of all provinces for their many years of involvement in Mennonite Music-making. Serving on many different levels Mr. Horch has at one time or another been a voice teacher, conductor, administrator, resource person, editor, educator and professional broadcaster. For 12 years he conducted the Mennonite Brethren Bible College Oratorio Choir, College A Capella Choir, and the Mennonite Community Choir in Winnipeg. He founded and conducted the Mennonite Symphony Orchestra, and in summer interims (1943-1950) he was also the leading Kurseleiter (music clinician, resource person, conductor of choral festivals) for the Mennonite Brethren Conference in Canada.

Mrs. Esther Horch has shared in her husband's musical interest. She has taught hymnology at both the Mennonite Brethren Bible College and the Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg. In addition she has been a consultant to the editors of the M.B. Gesangbuch. For the last 15 years before her retirement she was professionally involved in social work institutions in Winnipeg.

The purpose of the "Appreciation Evening" is to inaugurate the musical collection of the Centre for M.B. Studies, which will be named the "Ben and Esther Horch Musical Collection," in honour of their many years of service to the Mennonite community.

Planned for the "Appreciation Evening" is an interview with the Horch's, a brief chronology of their many contributions and involvements, with the highlight of the evening being Mr. Horch conducting the entire group in the singing of selected "Kernlieder," accompanied by an instrumental ensemble.

The public is invited to attend this event.

4. Ken Reddig, Conference Archivist, reported on the present projects of the Centre for M.B. Studies.

4.1 The J.A. Toews book of essays and addresses is now available.

4.2 Erich Ratzlaff presently is writing the biography of the late D.B. Wiens. Publication is expected to be in the fall of 1982.

4.3 William Neufeld is researching and writing the history of the Manitoba M.B. Conference. This is to be completed in the fall of 1982.

4.4 Anne Wiebe is writing the Ontario M.B. Conference history. Completion date not as yet confirmed.

4.5 Significant acquisitions in the Centre are listed in each issue of the Newsletter. Of particular significance are the additions of Church minutes and reports.

4.6 A projected project of studying Mennonite Music-making has been initiated. It is hoped that government funding (via Multi-Culturalism) will be secured for the cost of interviewing individuals across Canada who were involved in music-making within Mennonite churches, institutions and communities.

4.7 Microfilming of the Mennonitische Rundschau is underway. A government grant has also been secured for two students to continue the Rundschau indexing project.

5. Historical Society Treasurers Report

Balance June 1, 1980			\$310.50
Membership receipts	\$290.00		
Music research		\$200.00	
Newsletter		\$75.28	
Heimat Donations	\$15,127.00		
Heimat Expenses		\$15,127.00	
Office Expenses		\$44.55	
Winnipeg "Heimat" Showing	\$600.00		
Balance June 1, 1981			\$880.67

6. Restructuring of the Historical Committee will take place after the Canadian Conference. Three members of the Society will be represented on this Committee.

7. Elections of new officers for the Society were conducted. The new officers are:

Chairman: Helmut Huebert Secretary Treasurer: Bill Schroeder (Winnipeg)
Vice-Chairman: Abe Dueck Members-at-large: Harry Loewen and Velma Mierau.

8. Dave Dueck of Dueck Film Productions submitted the following proposal:

That the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Historical Society register its support for the proposed film on the Russian Mennonite Experience.

This motion was accepted.

A second motion by Dueck Fil Productions for a grant of \$10,000 was postponed until it is acted upon by the Executive Committee.

9. Ed Boldt reported on the various activities being planned for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Ontario M.B. Conference.
10. Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Ken Reddig

D.B. WIENS BIOGRAPHY

On February 25, 1981 a beloved brother and co-worker, Rev. D.B. Wiens, went to be with the Lord. His life, as was evident to all who knew him, was one of commitment to the reconciliation and peace made possible through Jesus Christ. Through his ministry he touched the lives of many different people. From 1943-1955 he served as pastor to Russian-speaking churches around Saskatoon, particularly Arelee, Saskatchewan. During the years 1957-1981, since its inception, he served as speaker on the Russian Gospel Light (Swetlyj Lutsch Evangelija). It was a ministry to which he was deeply committed and which proved to be very rewarding to him. He saw his task as being a pastor to those who had no pastor. This is evident in an article he wrote for the Spring, 1981 issue of Backgrounder.

It would seem that one of the priorities in this type of ministry would be to create in your listeners, who are cut off from all spiritual fellowship, a real sense of belonging. They must be made aware of the fact that even though they cannot attend church and see the speaker who ministers to them on radio they are part and parcel of a large family, even the Church of Jesus Christ--the family of God.

Because of the significant impact of his ministry in Saskatchewan, British Columbia and the Soviet Union, the Historical Committee of the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches believes that a biography of Brother Wiens, together with a selection of his sermons would be very much appreciated. The Historical Committee has contacted Erich Ratzlaff, former teacher and more recently editor of the Mennonitische Rundschau, to prepare this volume.

Since May Erich Ratzlaff has been hard at work on this volume. Already the biography is taking shape with a portion of the first draft completed. Publication is being planned for the fall of 1982.

A volume such as this is not without cost. Preparation of the manuscript will require \$2,600.00 in financial support. If you are interested in sending a donation for this project please write your cheque payable to "The Centre for M.B. Studies" clearly indicating that it is for the D.B. Wiens biography. A tax receipt will be issued for all donations.

Send donations to: The Centre for M.B. Studies, 77 Henderson Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R2L 1L1

INDEXING THE RUNDSCHAU

The Centre received another Federal grant this summer enabling it to continue indexing the Mennonitische Rundschau. This grant was received from the Summer Student Employment Program of the department of Multiculturalism.

Employed under the grant were Anna Lee Lepp, formerly from Steinbach, Manitoba (an Honours student in German and History) together with Harry Loewen Jr., a doctoral student from Winnipeg who will be completing his studies in Germany this fall.

With the efforts of these students an index has now been prepared for the years 1920-1931. At the present it is only available for use in the Centre. However, plans are that when the indexing has been completed for the years 1920-1939 this material will be published in book form for use in other libraries and archives.

SYMPOSIUM PAPERS PUBLISHED

The papers presented at the November 1980 Symposium "Influences on Mennonite Brethren Theology," have been published in the July issue of DIRECTION. Due to limited space the papers have been edited in order to conform to the format of this Journal.

If you are not a subscriber to DIRECTION and would appreciate a copy of this issue, the Centre has an additional supply which it is presently selling for \$2.50/copy. Please send your orders to the Centre--address is the same as that of this Newsletter.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

The following books have been received at the Centre and will be reviewed in a forthcoming issue of the Newsletter:

IMMER WEITER NACH OSTEN: SUEDRUSSLAND - CHINA - KANADA, EIN SIEBZEHNJAEHRIGER MENNONITISCHER LEIDENSWEG. Abram J. Loewen. Winnipeg, MB: CMBC Publications, 1981. 120 pp.

The story of a group of Mennonites who flee the Soviet Union into China, where they encounter many difficulties--including the struggle between Tschiang Kai-Shek and the Revolutionary Army.

PEOPLE OF THE WAY: SELECTED ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES. John A. Toews (Edited by Abe Dueck, Herb Giesbrecht, Allen Guenther). Winnipeg, MB: Historical Committee of the Canadian Conference of M.B. Churches, 1981. 245 pp.

A book of essays and speeches by the late John A. Toews reflects his churchly concerns: The Nature and Life of the Church; the History and Theology of the Church; Peace and Nonresistance; Unity and Faithfulness; Work and Witness. The book includes a brief biography of Toews, written by David Ewert.

DIE MENNONITEN BRUEDERGEMEINDE IN RUSSLAND 1925-1980. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte von Heinrich Woelk und Gerhard Woelk. Winnipeg, MB: Historical Commission of the General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches of North America, 1981. 229 pp.

Just released in September this book was written with the encouragement and guidance of Dr. J.B. Toews--Fresno. Written by two brethren who lived through these traumatic years it is the first account documenting the struggle for survival of Mennonite Brethren Church in the Soviet Union between the years 1925-1980.

SOVIET EVANGELICALS SINCE WORLD WAR II. Walter Sawatsky. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1981. 527 pp.

This volume chronicles and interprets the forty-year experience of believers' churches in the Soviet Union since World War II. Sawatsky probes the history of three major groups--Baptists, Mennonites, and Pentecostals--in great depth. He provides keen analysis of the Soviet evangelical movement up to the present time.

PLAIN BUGGIES: AMISH, MENNONITE, AND BRETHERN HORSE-DRAWN TRANSPORTATION. Stephen Scott. Lancaster, PA: Good Books, 1981. 96 pp.

The most interesting, most complete book ever published describing why thousands of Amish and Mennonites drive horses and buggies instead of cars has just been released.

Plain Buggies: Amish, Mennonite, and Brethren Horse-Drawn Transportation has been published by The People's Place, Intercourse, Pennsylvania as part of their educational series.

The author is Stephen Scott of Lancaster County, PA. Himself a member of the Old Order River Brethren, Scott has been researching the 90-some vehicles used by the various plain peoples for the past fifteen years. Many of the dozens of photos in the book were taken by the author.

"The plain people believe that everyday life cannot be separated from religion," Scott states. He explains the religious convictions behind the practices of these people.

Scott has divided the buggies into four main styles among the Amish of North America: the Pennsylvania style, the Ohio style, the Indiana style, and the Swiss style. The Old Order Mennonites have a variety of open and top buggies also.

The Pennsylvania Amish style, for instance, may be found in grey, yellow, white, or black. The Ohio style is the most popular.

Scott includes a detailed map of where these various groups live and a "church tree" which illustrates their relationship to each other. He also includes a table which compares the prices of buggies in various communities.

Scott claims that an Amish or Mennonite buyer can tell a lot about a horse's personality by studying its face. He details how horse-drawn vehicles are governed by law and are vulnerable to harassment.

The second half of this book pictures and describes dozens of the main buggy styles used from state to state across this country, as well as in Canada and Mexico. It is complete, fascinating, and sympathetic.

Stephen Scott takes the reader so deeply into the Old Order world that one almost wonders why everyone doesn't live that way. It's a book not easily forgotten.

RECENT ACCESSIONS

1. Back issues of the VOICE donated by Peter H. Peters.
2. Church minutes and reports of the Alexander M.B. Church (Manitoba). Approximately five linear inches of materials. Donated by Peter J. Doerksen and Albert Baerg.
3. Minutes and financial reports concerning the operation and dissolution of Fellowship Bookcenter. Donated by Fellowship Bookcenter.
4. A 34 page personal account of Herman Jantzen, Netherlands, and his experiences in the Soviet Union. Donated by Mrs. Cathorine Klassen.
5. Complete Family Tree of Johann Dick (1830-1903). Purchased from Arnie Neufeld.
6. Personal Diary of Peter Neufeld (1917-1918); The Mennonite Settlement Near Vanderhoof in the Nechako Valley, BC; Brief Information on Mennonites; published and purchased from Jacob V. Neufeld.
7. Diary of Mrs. Ida Penner (nee Hiebert) 1925-1933. Donated by Mrs. Ida Penner.
8. Several hundred books and pamphlets, mostly German and many Mennonite. Donated by Mrs. Catherine Klassen.
9. Yearbook, Spectrum of MBCI, 1949-1961. Donated by Mrs. Bergmann.
10. Minutes of the Crestwood M.B. Assembly, Medicine Hat, Alberta. Donated by the Church.
11. Photographic collection of Mr. Jacob Mantler. Donated by Jacob Mantler.
12. Music pamphlets, photos and other materials relating to the Mennonite Symphony Orchestra. Donated by Mr. William Neufeld.

This NEWSLETTER of the Mennonite Brethren Historical Society of Canada is published four times a year, by the Executive of the Society, at the Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies in Canada, Winnipeg. All correspondence regarding the Society or the NEWSLETTER should be addressed to:

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Editor of the NEWSLETTER, Ken Reddig.

If you know of someone who would be interested in becoming a member of the Society and receive the NEWSLETTER please have them fill out the following form:

NAME: _____ STREET ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____ PROVINCE: _____ POSTAL CODE: _____

Send form together with the yearly membership fee of \$5.00 to the Society Secretary in care of the above stated address.