

# mennonite mirror

volume 8/number 8  
april 1979



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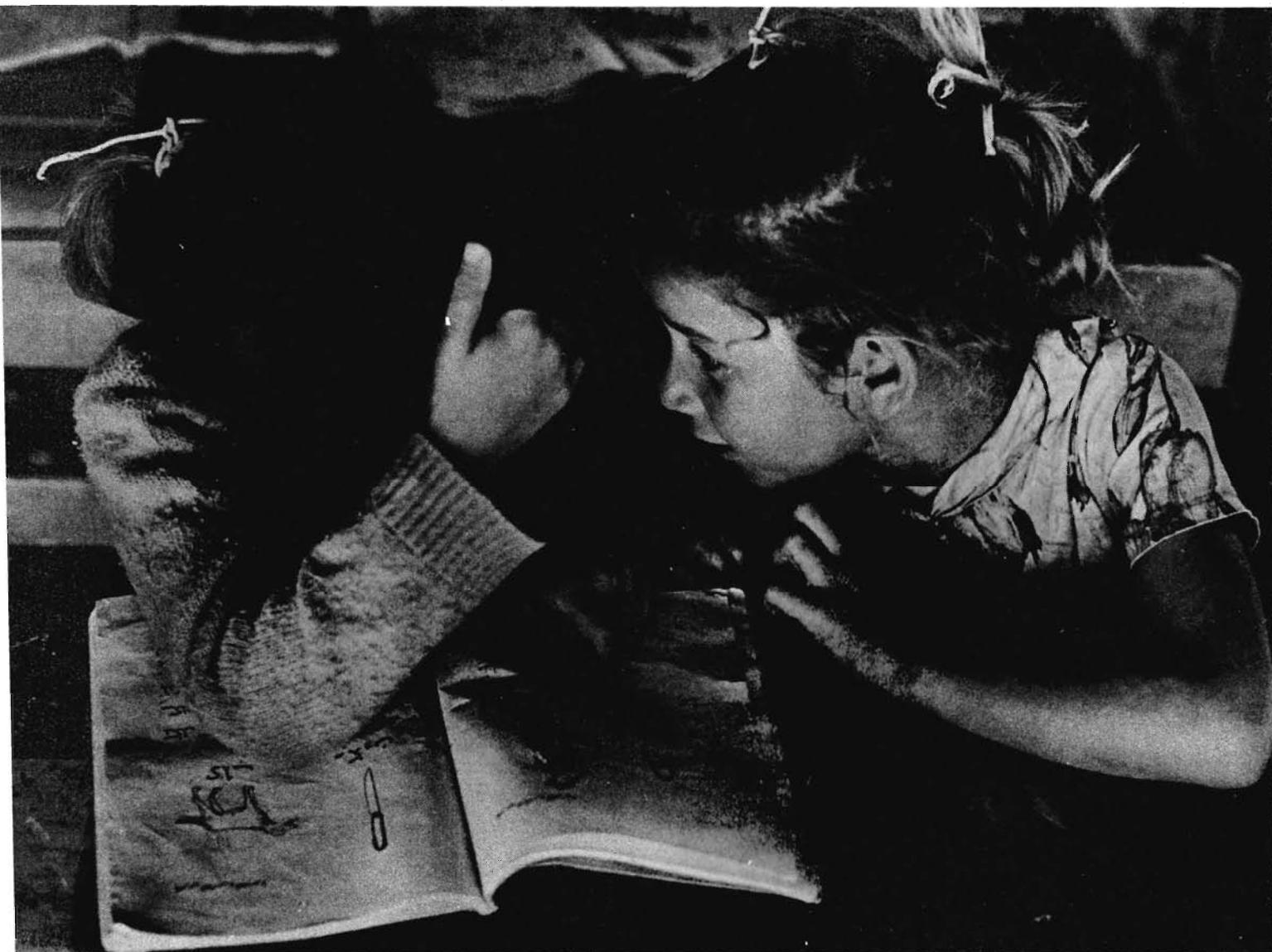
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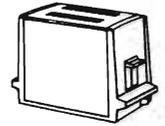
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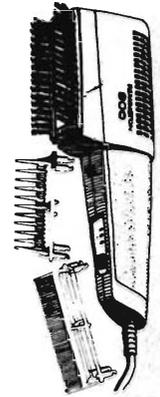
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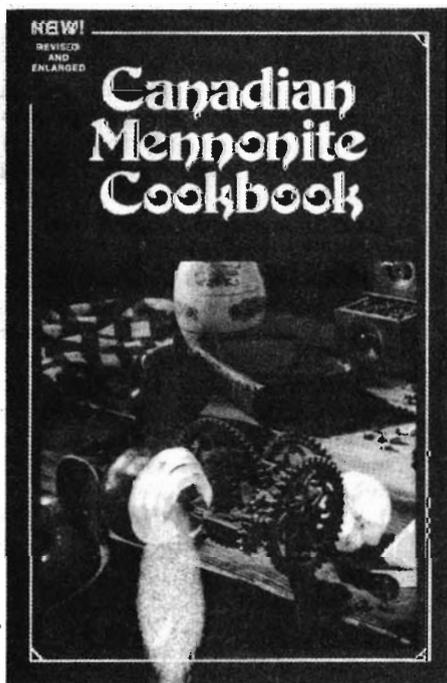
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# A tale of bullets, rifles Red rif-raf, and shooting only "so high"

by Arnold Dyck

Translated by Al Reimer

**Buhr** (to Bergen): You're telling me, Georgi, that in Russia you were actually a soldier?

**Bergen**: I'll say I was. If it hadn't been for me Russia wouldn't have lost so quickly.

**Buhr** (chuckling): Go on Georgi! Would they have won if you hadn't helped?

**Bergen** (thoughtfully): No, probably not, but they might have lasted one whole day longer.

**Buhr** (still laughing): And what makes you think they lost any sooner?

**Bergen**: Well, I helped the Revolution a little.

**Buhr**: You helped! In that case you're a revolutionary and a dangerous guy. We'll have to be on our guard with you.

**Bergen**: Naw, you don't have to do that. I'm not going to play revolution here. It's a bad business, revolution. It's easy to make a mistake with it.

**Buhr**: Did you make one?

**Bergen**: Yeah, a couple of small ones and one big one, which was that I hadn't

taken the butt end into account. And that was the spit in our borscht.

**Buhr** (laughing again): So, why didn't you chop off the butt end?

**Bergen**: Don't think we didn't chop! But it was too late. We just couldn't get it off in time.

**Buhr**: Too late, eh? Just how long should that revolution business have gone on?

**Bergen**: Only as long as it took to end the war and get me home again.

**Buhr** (with a loud laugh): Then you must have been more concerned with yourself than with Russia or anything else.

**Bergen** (surprised): Well, of course, what else! It's always that way in a revolution: everybody's against everybody, and every man for himself.

**Buhr**: And the other Mennonite soldiers thought that way too?

**Bergen**: Yeah, sure, that is, most of them thought about other things too, but nobody talked about them.

(Toews looks up, but doesn't say anything).

**Bergen**: But they all wanted to go

home, and that's why we were so bent on helping the Revolution.

**Buhr**: Aha, and that's where you say the butt end came in. And what exactly was it?

**Bergen**: Well, it was that whole revolutionary mess going home with us. And that wasn't what we had in mind.

**Buhr** (chuckling again): And so you had to chop?

**Bergen**: You betcher life we chopped, and fought—started shooting and digging in our heels, but the butt end just got thicker.

**Buhr**: And you were shooting too? With what, with rifles?

**Bergen**: What else? You think we used blunderbusses?

**Buhr**: And you took a rifle and fired it?

**Bergen**: Well, a rifle's a funny sort of thing. Once you've got it in your hands it goes off all of a sudden without you having to think about it too much.

**Buhr**: And you actually shot at people?

**Bergen**: At people! Come on now. I fired in the air.

**Buhr**: In the air? What good did that do?

**Bergen**: Oh, it helped in an odd sort of way. It made a nice bang, and of course I didn't shoot very high in the air—only about so high (he indicates a height of about four feet). Now it may have happened that some of that Red riff-raff collided with a bullet or stood in the way of one. But I always fired in the air.

**Buhr** (Shudders as he takes it all in): And you saw how the Reds collided with those bullets?

**Bergen**: Yeah, sure, they weren't that far away, after all, when they were running and suddenly slipped over we knew they had snagged on a bullet.

**Buhr** (becoming more serious): On yours too?

**Bergen**: On mine? Naw—well, I don't rightly know, there were so many bullets flying around. I wasn't alone in that kind of shoot-out, and all of us were shooting in the air—always that high (he indicates again).

**Buhr**: And on your side, what were

*In our February issue we printed the first of what we hope will become a series of translated excerpts drawn from Arnold Dyck's matchless Koop enn Bua writings. While it may strike our readers as a bit odd that we should run regular pieces in Low German and then turn around and translate back into English the best Low German writer of them all, our view is that there is now a whole generation of Mennonites who can't read Dyck in the original at all. We believe that Arnold Dyck's literary legacy should be shared by all Mennonites. While Dyck himself believed strongly that Mennonite identity and culture could not survive without his beloved Low German, we would like to help prove him wrong by making him speak to us in English—even if his English accent isn't as rich and pure as his Low German accent.*

*The Koop enn Bua skit translated here appeared in the January, 1936, issue of the Volkswarte. Bergen is a "Russian" Mennonite who with self-deprecating irony defends and justifies the Mennonite "Self-Defense", or militia, which was formed in 1919 to protect Mennonite villages from attack by marauding bandits and terrorists. Bua, who is of course a "Canadian" Mennonite, shows a rather naive moral indignation when Bergen confesses to having taken part in military action to defend his home village. For all its humor and lightness of tone, however, this is a serious treatment of a moral and theological issue which is still regarded as controversial and which is associated indelibly with a tragic phase of Mennonite history.*

they? Were those the Whites?

**Bergen:** Naw, never the Whites; we were all Mennonites. We just didn't want to allow that Red trash into the village.

**Buhr** (thoughtfully): All Mennonites? Did the bullets fly in the air around you too?

**Bergen:** Well, what else? There were a lot more of those Reds than there were of us. And they banged away like crazy. But they couldn't hit a barn door. A Mennonite can shoot better. I don't know why; it must be in the blood. At least that's what our teacher thought.

**Buhr:** What, it's in our Mennonite blood?

**Bergen:** Our teacher claimed our blood wasn't Mennonite; our blood was German, he said. The German people had been knocking heads, he said, with all kinds of folk for a couple of thousand years now, and a lot of that had remained in our blood. That's what the teacher said and he was an educated man and had two German military rifles. Whether he was right I don't know, but our boys were good shots and weren't as scared as that Red scum.

**Buhr** (shaking his head): But how could you bring yourselves to fire—you were Mennonites!

**Bergen:** We were, but that didn't bother us. Standing alone against the Reds without guns wouldn't have done us any good. We could shrug off the war with fine words, money, a little patriotism and our Mennonite charter of privileges, but the charter didn't say anything about revolution and those Reds.

**Buhr** (decisively): Whether it did or not, before I'd let anybody shoot me dead I'd rather remain a Mennonite.

**Bergen** (firmly): Yea, so would I.

**Buhr** (puzzled): You would? But you didn't remain one, though. You went to war against the Reds!

**Bergen:** I did? Naw, I didn't take one step—the Reds' war came to me. And when somebody squeezes my windpipe, then I'll bite and lash out and shoot—whether I want to or not. Our teacher said that was human nature—nature in general.

**Buhr:** And when the whole thing's over you can act like decent Mennonites again?

**Bergen:** Yeah, at least half-way decent, as decent a Mennonite as the average person can be.

**Buhr:** Until somebody grabs you by the windpipe again?

**Bergen** (nods): Look, I've got to go. I've got to see Cornie Hiebert about something. So long. (Leaves)

**Buhr** (jumps to his feet, agitated): Tell me Toews, am I right in thinking that old Bergen has actually killed a fellow human being? It's enough to send shivers up and down your spine! And to come into contact with him—the same as with anybody else. (He moves around nervously.)

**Toews** (unruffled): I don't know, millions of people were killed in the war, and those who did it are living among us and you aren't scared of them.

**Buhr:** Yeah, but Bergen—a Mennonite—how could he do something like that? You shudder to think what that kind of guy might be capable of all of a sudden. And he talks about it as though it was nothing to him—like eating noodles.

**Toews** (earnestly): Don't get alarmed, Jake, I watched Bergen last summer when he warmed the rear-end of his Peter for having torn the leg off a grasshopper. The kid enjoyed seeing the 'hopper taking a header sideways when he jumped. No, Bergen would never harm anybody. (Falls silent, then continues.) And when he talks about the whole thing as though it's a joke... I don't know, but I think he can't talk about it in any other way—it was too terrible. You've noticed the scar on his head. He's got even worse ones on his back.

**Buhr:** But a Mennonite and shooting at people. (Falls silent, then changes his tone.) But those Bolshies must have been pretty rough.

**Toews:** Yeah, and things are getting still worse over there. You know, the Mennonites there have only one church that's still open.

**Buhr** (bangs his fist on the store counter): Darn it all! I can't understand how Christian governments all over the world can allow that. Why don't they just go over there and clean out the whole nest. If they waded in against those Red monsters and knocked off a couple thousand of the worst ones things would change over there and our people would be able to go to church again.

**Toews** (pulling his mouth into a faint smile as he gets up): Come on. It's time. Goodnight. (They leave.) mm

### WHY WAIT?

Children never put off until tomorrow anything that will give them an excuse for staying up late tonight.

### DOGGED PUN

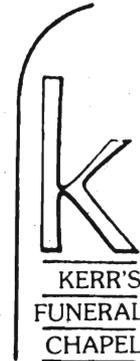
A comedian protested that he was always being told one of his own stories.

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# Restless energy is hallmark of this resourceful man

by Leona Penner

"One of the most resourceful men I've ever met" was the way one friend summed up Ben L. Reimer of Steinbach—farmer, businessman, community worker, churchman, good friend. Son of Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Reimer, he and his six brothers and three sisters grew up in Steinbach except for a few years in Medicine Hat, Alberta where Ben remembers he started school unable to speak English and his Ontario teacher didn't know a word of German!

One of his brothers tells this story of Ben during those growing-up years—a gang of boys, Ben included, were going swimming "*em wota luch*" and Ben was instructed to take this younger brother Richard along and to teach him how to swim. Now you know how that goes over with older brothers so it apparently was no different in this case. When they got to the water Ben shoved a log towards Richard and told him "*Nu stanka, nu stanka mohl ziya*" and he went off to join his friends.

When he was 15 he went to work for Reimer Trading in Giroux where he was made foreman two years later and at 19 he was transferred to their Saskatoon plant. This was a real challenge for such a young man but it meant he could only come and visit his girlfriend Elizabeth every six months. That was in 1925 and that same girlfriend told me now "Of course I was worried and lonesome when he was so far away but I decided that if he wanted me enough he would just have to come and get me!" That's just what he did, and on June 1st, 1928, Ben and Elizabeth were married by Rev. H.R. Reimer at a double wedding ceremony in the old farm home. The other couple being married was her sister Margaret and Frank Reimer.

After the wedding they went back to Saskatoon for another two years until the depression hit and then they sold what they had for a total of \$1,000, taking an old car as down payment on their house. Together with seven-week old Clifford they came back home to work the 40-acre farm near Blumenort that Mr. Penner had given his daughter as a dowry.

One of the most productive enterprises in Manitoba in those days was the cheese factory, and C.P. Reimer asked Ben to come and work with him in the Blumenort Co-op Cheese Factory. This he did and built it up until he became president of the Cheese Producers Association, a group



Ben Reimer

which controlled 21 factories within a fairly small radius. However, after some time the factories began shutting down so Ben turned his energies to poultry raising, first chickens and then turkeys. He kept learning new and more efficient ways to market poultry and in 1953 he helped establish a defeathering plant, then an eviscerating plant, and in 1964 when the government wanted to see poultry marketing become more self-sufficient, the eviscerating plant known as the Friendly Family Farms plant on Highway #12 just outside of Steinbach was built. It came into being because though the government donated part of the money, much of it came from loyal friends and farmers in the area.

There have been disappointments and setbacks but the dynamic personality and perseverance of this man has never let him be stymied for long. One day the manager of his turkey farm phoned him to tell him he had a bit of a problem—could Mr. Reimer please come out and take a look? "Come on, man, tell me what the matter is," Ben said. "Well, there are a few hundred turkeys standing in water. What should I do?" Besides floods, he lost thousands of birds when his barn burned down some years ago.

For 25 years on the Steinbach Bible School board, he has seen the school grow from the first staff of seven to it's

present large faculty, and the enrolment swell as new facilities have been built. He was also provincial school trustee for 23 years.

When a TV documentary on the history of Steinbach was aired a few years ago, Ben Reimer was picked to relate how the town came into being and what buildings and businesses were first established there. This is the kind of capable and interesting man he is.

One day I noticed a picture of him taped on the screen window in the kitchen of his home. I asked his wife what the story was behind it and she laughingly told me that when Ben with his usual enthusiasm was cutting a cardboard box in their basement, that screen happened to be behind it and had a neat square hole cut into it as well! So when the screen was put on the window she had taped his picture over it and "now I can look at him when I do the dishes!" she said.

There has been real tragedy in their lives as well. Ben was on his way to Panama in 1974 with a trade mission with the provincial government when he got word that his son Gilbert, missionary under the GMU in another part of Panama, was missing. After six agonizing days his mutilated body was found on a beach a few miles from his home. The reasons for the murder have never been satisfactorily explained but the family is aware of the tensions that can explode when politics and Christianity are not in agreement. Gil's wife Jean and her two children, Glen, 10, and Betty Lou, 8, remained in Panama till the end of their term, then returned to Caronport Bible School in Saskatchewan where she has been teaching ever since.

Very much a family man, Ben has travelled to Panama a great deal to visit his children there, and though he is officially retired now, he's too restless to stay put very long. Last fall he and his wife went on a tour to Israel and I'm sure that there wasn't much missed on the trip! His interest in and enjoyment of the foibles of mankind make him a very interesting companion I just wish I could have used all his anecdotes in this article!

A good listener, tireless when he takes up a cause, ready with advice and help, his directness can be disconcerting to the uninitiated, but this is a kindly man whose life has been dedicated to God's work.

Ben and Elizabeth celebrated their golden wedding anniversary on June 11, 1978 and as usual brothers and sisters related some of the humorous things that they remembered about these two. Then Ben spoke and we were all moved by the tribute he gave to his wonderfully gracious and warm-hearted wife. Together they have contributed immeasurably to their community and their church.

Leona Penner is a regular contributor to the Mirror.

# No clouds on Eclipse day

by Karin Klassen

Eclipse fever was running high. Visors and welder's glass had already been purchased; informative articles had already been read and digested, in preparation for this event. Even the current planetarium show on eclipses had proved a source of learning and knowledge for us.

It was Saturday night, and the whole family was gathered about the table for a terrific roast beef dinner. All the conversation centered around the phenomena scheduled to occur in a few days—the solar eclipse. Yet our spirits were somewhat dampened and subdued. Local weather forecasters had all predicted "cloudy with snow" for Monday, and prospects to see the outstanding event were termed "dismal".

Suddenly my mother exclaimed, "Why are you all worrying? I know it will be sunny and clear. The eclipse will be plainly visible to us on Monday morning!" We all laughed and pressed her for an explanation! "Well," she continued in all seriousness, "it's like this. I know and believe that God is totally in control of the universe. It is He who has ordained this phenomenal wonder of nature to cross our path. He is simply not going to cover up His own magnificent handiwork with obliterating clouds! Why, people are going to be able to trace the Hand of God through this happening, and perhaps even be drawn closer to Him thereby!"

"But you have to be realistic, mom," my sister countered. "What if it WILL be cloudy on Monday? What will you do or say then?"

"It just won't be," mom firmly answered, and that was the end of the topic. Later on that evening we all joked about mom's predictions once more, and in the activities of Sunday, almost erased them from our mind. To us it was still unlikely that we would actually get to see the last eclipse of the 1900's with our own eyes!

Monday dawned bright and clear. The radio announcers boomed out the extraordinary news—it would be an ideal day to view the eclipse! Weather forecasters were at a loss to explain the sudden change in conditions. Our whole family was dumbfounded—except mother. She only smiled serenely and breathed a quiet prayer, "Thank-you, God. I knew you would do it!"

And thus on Monday, February 26th at 10:47 in the morning, there descended on us in Winnipeg perhaps the most dramatic natural phenomena of our century—truly a spectacular tribute to my mother's faith! Oh to have that kind of faith to move mountains, or, in our circumstances, to remove clouds from the sky! **mm**

# Mennonite Orchestra Richly worthy of support

by Irene Siemens

The Mennonite Community Orchestra's mid-winter concert, held on February 24th and 25th, in the MBCI auditorium was most enjoyable and richly deserving of strong support from the Mennonite community. Although attendance is said to have been good on Saturday evening, I found the less than capacity audience of Sunday afternoon a little disappointing. No doubt unfavourable weather conditions affected attendance from rural communities, but it is important that Mennonite music lovers do not become indifferent now that the orchestra is well established.

The orchestra was fortunate to have Albert Horsch as its guest conductor. He is, of course, well known as a fine professional musician and music teacher of long standing. His familiarity with orchestral music was evident in his confident and strong leadership from the podium. While we missed his excellent flute in the orchestra, much younger flautists, possibly his students, did a commendable job in his place. Carlyle Wilson was a reliable concert master although the absence of some musicians because of conflicting commitments seemed to result in a thinner than usual sound from both violin sections. Both guest soloists, twelve year-old

cellist Tom Wiebe and soprano Henrietta Cornies, gave impressive performances so that the concert as a whole proved quite successful.

The program was an unusual but interesting mixture. Composers ranged through J.S. Bach, Purcell, Ludwig Mendelssohn, Ferne Nagy, Armas Jaernefelt, Mozart Schubert, Felix Mendelssohn, and concluded with a group of three arrangements of more popularly known musical themes. Two operatic arias which were to have been sung by guest artist Henrietta Cornies and the Largo movement from Dvorak's *Symphonie No. 5 in E. Minor, Opus 95* were dropped from the program. This reduced the length of a potentially rather long concert although no official reason for the deletions was given.

The full orchestra was featured in the first half of the concert, that is, with the younger and perhaps less experienced musicians participating. It is heartening to think of the future of Mennonite music-making when one is able to observe some of the still tiny but already proficient members of this orchestra working maturely next to their adult colleagues.

J.S. Bach's secular *Air From the Peasant Cantata No. 212* opened the program. Both it and Purcell's *English Suite* were



## Take a moment to reflect, look in the *Mirror*

Ten times each year the *Mennonite Mirror* publishes a variety of news, feature articles, reviews, and creative writing that relate to Mennonites. It's a magazine intended for people who are Mennonites and who are concerned about what it means to be a Mennonite.

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well played and seemed to suit the size, style and abilities of the group well and Wilson's solo passages in the Purcell were beautifully played. Guest artist Tom Wiebe's performance of the *Student Concerto* for cello written by Ludwig Mendelssohn (cousin to Felix) followed. Though scarcely taller than his cello, Tom played the instrument with surprising maturity of technique, tone and musicianship for someone of his age. The concerto, though obviously not designed to display the technical virtuosity one might expect from a seasoned performer, was always musically satisfying and provided a perfectly suited medium for the promising young performer we were privileged to hear. Dependable and complementary support was provided at all times throughout the concerto by the orchestra so that soloist and ensemble were never at odds with each other.

The idea of inviting a talented junior musician to perform as guest soloist with the orchestra is an excellent one. Hopefully the future has similar treats in store for us.

*Zigany* by Nagy and *Preludium* by Jaernefelt followed. Both were enjoyable. Solo passages by Wilson on the violin and by Peter Wiens, oboe, showed us the high calibre of some of the individual musicians in the orchestra. Especially Peter Wiens' dancing oboe drew many a complimentary remark. "That Pete Wiens sure can play!" could be overheard during the intermission.

After the intermission, the smaller ensemble accompanied Henrietta Cornies in the brilliant and vocally taxing aria, *Exultate Jubilate*, K. 165 by Mozart. Again we heard a completely poised and very excellent artist. My concern that she had selected to sing such a challenging aria vanished as she progressed into her performance with ease and assurance. She did not lose her concentration, so vital to the success of this piece, even when the fire bell sounded early on in the aria. This was a real credit to her professionalism as a soloist. On the critical side, Cornies' tempo may have been just

a touch slow and her performance slightly lacking in intensity or dramatic joy demanded by the *Exultate Jubilate*. These faults were very minor, however, and perhaps largely subjective on my part. Her beautiful purity of voice, consistently excellent vocal technique, fine interpretive abilities and pleasantly unostentatious style combined with a superb accompaniment from the orchestra to give us a most satisfying musical experience.

I look forward to hearing Cornies again shortly as soprano soloist in the combined Mennonite Oratorio Choir's performance of Mendelssohn's St. Paul in the concert hall on March 10. She seems to have mastered some of the inhibitions which so often limit our Mennonite singers. Hopefully we will have the opportunity to hear her often.

Having heard Cornies in the Mozart, I was genuinely sorry to have the Gounod and Puccini arias cancelled from the program. Particularly after the rather long, and I felt somewhat boring incidental music to *Rosamunde* by Schubert, I wondered why it couldn't have been sacrificed in favour of either the two arias or the Dvorak. While the work of the brass sections has generally been quite good, I found them to be a little ragged in the Schubert and some intonation problems were evident from the trombones where they were most prominent.

Alexander Borodin's familiar *In the Steppes of Central Asia* featured some lovely playing from clarinetist Myron Schultz, and by the orchestra as a whole. The even more familiar Mendelssohn's *Wedding March* too was extremely well done. This rousing rendition was again interrupted by the fire bell though obviously no fire had occurred.

The entire orchestra then returned for the group of three lighter numbers which ended the program. Technically and musically these numbers were probably the simplest of the afternoon, but they were not disappointing. The sound of the larger orchestra was excellent. All three numbers were played exceptionally well and received warmly by the audience.

Strauss' *Radetsky March*, the first of the light threesome, was properly folksy and hearty. Mr. Horch next explained that when the music for the Quilter arrangement of an *Old English Folk Song* failed to arrive, young Andrew Klassen of the first violin section offered to arrange his own version of *Drink To Me Only* which forms the basis of the *Folk Song*. Andy's composition, with the cello section carrying the opening melody line, worked well. *Melodies From the Sound of Music* by Rodgers and Hammerstein brought the concert to a resounding finish. We heard *Drink To Me Only* again as an encore and left the M.B.C.I. auditorium with the good feeling of an afternoon well spent.

The final Mennonite Community Concert of the season will take place on April 7 at 8:00 p.m. and April 8 at 3:30 p.m. Bill Baerg will be the guest conductor and the program promises to be an interesting one. It will feature all four movements of the *Symphony in F* by Dittersdorf, M.B.B.C. student Laurie Hunter as soloist in the first movement of the Schuman Concerto in A for piano and orchestra, and *Psalm 68*, a newly commissioned work by M.B.B.C. staff member Carol Weaver, which is scored for two choirs, two pianos and a full brass and percussion ensemble. Perhaps in April the weather will not play havoc with driving conditions so that all who wish to do so will be able to attend what promises to be an enjoyable concert.

*A review of the Mennonite Community Orchestra's mid-winter concert held on February 24 at 8:00 p.m. and February 25 at 3:30 p.m. in the M.B.C.I. auditorium with guest conductor Albert Horch and guest artists Tom Wiebe, cellist, and Henrietta Cornies, soprano.*

*The following are supporters of the Mennonite Literary Society Inc., the non-profit organization which publishes the Mennonite Mirror.*

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# Bergen family trials explored

Gerhard Lohrenz, *THE ODYSSEY OF THE BERGEN FAMILY*. Steinbach, Manitoba. Derksen Printers, 1978. pp. 146.

## Reviewed by Harry Loewen

Gerhard Lohrenz is well known to the Mennonite reading public. His popularly written books about the Mennonites include *Heritage Remembered*, *The Mennonites of Western Canada*, *Storm Tossed*, *Lose Blaetter*, and *The Fateful Years, 1917-1928*.

The *Odyssey of the Bergen Family* was written "In memory of my people who died in prison, in concentration camps, or in exile, exhausted and alone" (p. iii). It is the story of a family which not only endured great hardships in Russia, but which also in the case of some of its members survived and came to live in Canada.

Reminiscent of Alexander Sozhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago*, the book begins with the arrest of the elder Bergen, continues to tell the story of the family's fears, trials and escapes, and throughout the narrative portrays the individual members as struggling against overwhelming odds.

It is difficult to classify the book as to its genre. In the preface Lohrenz writes: "I am not attempting to write a historical novel. . . . What I am concerned with is to relate truthfully, objectively and if I can, interestingly, the story of my people as it developed during the stormy years between 1930 and 1950. To do this I have chosen the form in which this story is presented, unconcerned whether this form meets the laws of this or that literary creation" (p. v).

What the author no doubt means is that his book is not fiction but truth, written in the form of a narrative, including a story line, dialogue and characterization.

The story of the Bergen family is told with insight, sympathy, and a fair amount of objectivity, and many episodes (such as Peter Bergen's flight from the labour camp in Siberia and his hiding in Pavel's hut) are most interesting reading. While Lohrenz obviously indicts the Soviet regime for its brutal victimization of innocent human lives, he seeks to portray the Russian people as helpful and most human individuals.

It is hoped that many affluent and secure Canadian Mennonites, especially those under 40, will read the book and

thus become acquainted with the story of their suffering forebears; the story of the Bergen family is generally the story of the Mennonites in Russia.

Unfortunately, the book contains several misprints and some awkward germanisms, which should be corrected before a subsequent edition is planned.

*The Odyssey* and the other titles mentioned above are available from Gerhard Lohrenz, 261 Renfrew Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3N 1J5.

Harry Loewen is professor of Mennonite studies at the University of Winnipeg.

## Critic puts bite on cookbook

Review of the *CANADIAN MENNONITE COOKBOOK* (Altona: Friesen Stationers, 1978), 261 pages, Price: \$7.95.

### by Irene Siemens

The new, completely revised and much enlarged *Canadian Mennonite Cookbook* is an attractively bound and boxed volume. Its print is clear and easy to read, its Mennonite fare is quite predictable but good, and each recipe appears in both metric and standard measurements.

The new book, renamed some 10 years ago, has evolved through many editions and periodic revisions until it no longer resembles its ancestor the *Altona Women's Institute Cookbook*. As far as I can determine there is no longer any institute involvement, but I assume that the title page reference to "twenty-first printing" and "over 100,000 copies sold" must include earlier editions.

There is now little similarity between the books except that they contain some of the same recipes. Names of individual contributors, which once provided some interest, and the eccentricities of their recipes and cooking instructions are now gone. Ingredients and directions are much more standardized and reliable without the local colour.

I do think, however, that the book has some rather obvious shortcomings. While the colour illustrations are attractive, I was disappointed to find that they are "Courtesy Maple Leaf Mills" and there is no correlation between specific foods illustrated and actual recipes in the pertinent sections they introduce. It might have raised the price of the book a little, but surely Mennonite cooking, either in a

home or at the museum, is as photogenic as any other.

Then there is a lack of consistency in the use of Platt, German or English titles for Mennonite recipes. For example, why *Schmauntkoaki* and then *Pfannkuchen* rather than *Paunkoaki* (even though many southern Manitobans do not use the Ruesslander endings), or *Glums Paska* and then *Kaesepfannkuchen* when cottage cheese is the ingredient in both? Then there is *Stachelbeer Moos* for *Chjress-beeren Moos* and Green Bean Soup ought to have been *Greime Schaubel Zup* with the English translation provided. To help avoid confusion, German and English recipe names might have been used only where there is no known Platt equivalent.

Organization presents another problem. The soup, main dishes, vegetable and even the bread sections are discouragingly bare because Mennonite specialties are in a separate section. And yet, "jams, jellies and pickles" is excellent because *supsel*, Wild Plum Jam (which should be *Wille Pluemen Jam*) and all the marvelous dills and watermelon pickles are for some reason, not in the Mennonite section. Some cross-indexing either in the back index or at the end of each section would have been helpful. The cake and cookie sections seem disproportionately large and here an explanatory note about the *faspa* tradition might have clarified an apparent imbalance to the interested non-Mennonite.

*The Canadian Mennonite Cookbook* contains good recipes. With some additional work, imagination, more considerate organization and some explanatory notes its sales might have been greatly enhanced, particularly if, as the preface suggests, appeal is to be "nationwide."

P.S. I just tried the Whole Wheat Bread recipe (p. 64). My bread turned out much better than any previous brown bread I've baked. Perhaps this will offset some of my criticisms.

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## MBCI STAFF OPPORTUNITIES

MBCI invites applications for three staff faculty positions for the school year 1979-80.

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The **Mennonite Historical Society** of Saskatchewan and Alberta, a non-profit organization, has recently been awarded a federal grant to conduct a culture and heritage resources survey of a large area north of Saskatchewan between the North and South Saskatchewan Rivers, identified as the Saskatchewan Rivers Heritage Complex. The survey among other things will examine the development of the Rosthern Cultural Museum as part of the project. Under the general direction of Dr. T.D. Regehr in Saskatoon and Mr. Ed. Roth in Rosthern, Glenda Brown, Warren Clubb, Wayne Gardner and W.A. Waiser will collect information on a variety of heritage and cultural resources from Jan. 15 to April 30.

Mr. and Mrs. **Addison Klassen** of Kleefeld spent 10 days in Kitchener, Ontario recently. Their main interest in the trip centred around visiting various children's homes in the area. They hope to establish a home at their farm in Kleefeld and are interested in seeing what other people have done.

A tenth Mennonite Brethren congregation in Winnipeg, which is to be known as the **Westwood Community Church of the Mennonite Brethren** began its services this January. Founders of the new church with the assistance of the provincial home missions board, are a group of more than 10 couples from the Portage Avenue MB church, a 600 member congregation which has for years thought of starting a daughter congregation in the Westwood area.

The **Conference of Mennonites in Canada** held its annual Council of Boards sessions in Winnipeg on Jan. 25-27. Two significant staff changes were finalized at the meeting. Eldon Krause of Ottawa will replace Frank Dyck as conference treasurer in July. Malcolm Wenger, of Selkirk will join the staff in August to replace Isaac Froese as executive secretary of the Native Ministries Board. While so employed, Wenger will continue to work as a pastor with Elim Fellowship in Selkirk. Further business dealt with the concerns of the native ministries board. It is now waiting for the results of the NM study commission so that long-range planning can take place. In the meantime the group resolved to place a full-time worker in the core area of the city of Winnipeg.

**Dr. William Klassen** from the department of religion at the University of Manitoba with the help of the sponsoring bodies of the Societe Franco Manitobains and MCC (Manitoba) helped to initiate a meeting at St. Anne, Manitoba where French Catholic and Mennonite representatives met for the first time in over a hundred years to discuss common concerns. The opening of the session on Jan. 12 and 13 was marked by the introduction of each community by their respective spokesmen, Armand Bedard of the Societe Franco Manitobain and Henry Gerbrandt, executive secretary of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. It is interesting to note that while the French community strongly stresses the importance of their language, particularly because this right was given at the time of confederation, the Mennonite emphasis has however shifted to faith and ethics where language has not been emphasized. Smaller groups shared with each other myths each community had about the other. By way of illustration evidence of the manner in which the two communities perceived each other as neighbours was given by those who worked side by side with the Manitoba Disaster Service when a tornado struck southern Manitoba last June. Common to each group was the story of a record of broken and twisted promises by federal and provincial governments regarding educational and language rights. A parallel to present day ignoring of native Canadian rights was made. The sponsoring groups were urged by participants to plan further sessions. The sponsors were also asked to extend this type of dialogue to other communities where Mennonites and French Catholics live side by side.

**D.K. Friesen**, chairman of the board of D.W. Friesen and Sons, Altona, was recently awarded the first Altona chamber of commerce Outstanding Citizenship Award for his contribution to the town during the past 20-30 years.

Over 200 participants from Ontario to B.C. took part in the **Church Music Seminar III**, jointly sponsored by MBBC and CMBC on Jan. 26-28. Resource persons were Dr. Mary Oyer from Goshen College and Dr. Lloyd Pfautsch from Southern Methodist University. Pfautsch demonstrated effectively during several rehearsals for a closing program that conducting is more than a technique, it is an art—the art of communication. Mary Oyer shared with participants how her work on *The Mennonite Hymnal* and her

encounter with the music of African Christians had expanded her tastes in church music.

**Russell Klassen**, one of three Steinbach weightlifters who will represent the province in the Canada Games, recently won a silver medal in the Manitoba weightlifting championships at Rosenort. Klassen lifted 125 kg. (275¼ pounds) in the clean and jerk event.

Moderators and secretaries of **Canadian Mennonite and Brethren in Christ** met with MCC (Canada) this Jan. 18 at First Mennonite church in Calgary. Ten conferences were represented to discuss the theme for the year "The Church and the State". Papers presented and discussed were given by Vern Ratzlaff (MCC) Manitoba director, John Friesen, CMBC, Dan Zehr, MCC (Canada) director of peace and social concerns and Newton Gingrich MCC (Canada). Since it was agreed that a meeting of this sort serves as a good vehicle for dialogue between conference moderators/secretaries and MCC (Canada) and among group members, another meeting is being planned for the coming year.

**Lloyd Siemens**, with the department of English at the University of Winnipeg has accepted an invitation to join in international committee of scholars in compiling a "Supplement to Thomas Hardy: An Annotated Bibliography". The supplement will bring together annotated citations of all scholarly books and articles about Hardy published in the past decade, as well as of earlier reviews and articles overlooked by previous bibliographers. While on a research trip to England last summer, Dr. Siemens located approximately one hundred reviews of Hardy's works not cited in previous bibliographies.

Ten University of Manitoba faculty members were among 345 academics who were recently awarded leave fellowships by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Selected from 794 applicants in the fields of humanities and social sciences, those chosen will use the fellowships to "undertake some form of creative scholarship" while on leave. Among those applicants selected were Dennis Dyck, in psychology and Leo Driedger, in sociology.

**Albert Loewen**, veteran trustee from Steinbach and chairman of the Hanover school board has been appointed to the public schools finance board by Manitoba Education Minister, Keith Cosens. Mr. Loewen has served as a trustee for 19 years and has held a number of responsible positions with that body. He is at

present member of an advisory board for the autobody division of Red River Community College. The finance board administers the foundation fund which is financed by the provincial government and by a standard province-wide foundation levy.

**Rudy Baergen**, of Rosthern Junior College graduated with an MA in religion from the University of Manitoba in February. He did his work in the area of New Testament Studies, writing his thesis on the subject of Luke's view of the work and names of Jesus. He was the second student awarded such a degree by the university since the establishment of the MA program in 1976.

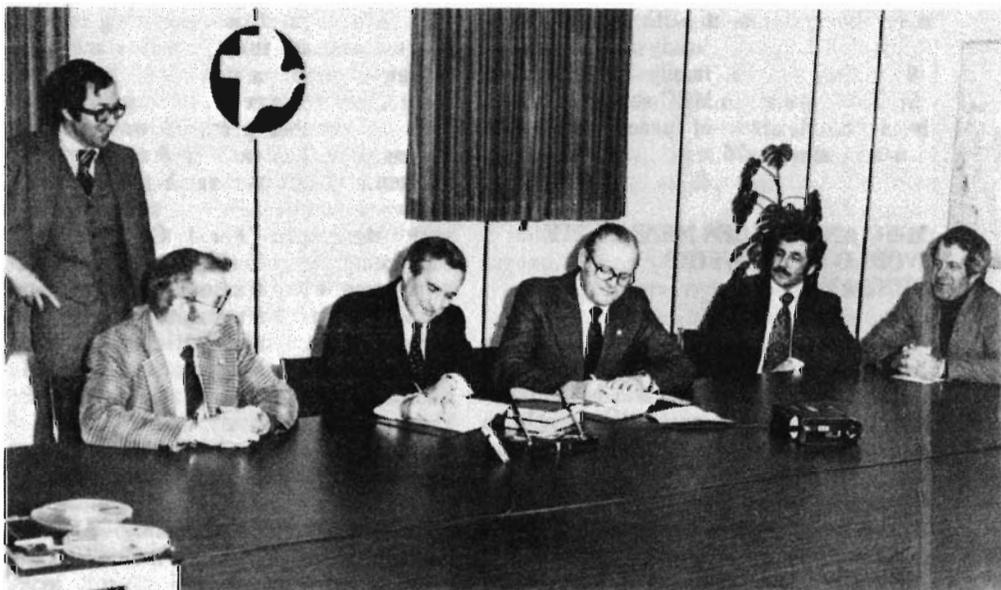
The **Department of Religion**, University of Manitoba, has appointed Prof. Walde-mar Janzen, of CMBC as an adjunct professor in the department of religion. The appointment entails guiding graduate students in their research topics related to the Old Testament, and the supervision of theses in the area. It may upon occasion also involve teaching a course in the Department of Religion, but his work in the university graduate program will be in addition to his regular duties at CMBC.

**Louise E. Pauls**, Winnipeg, a Bachelor of Music from the School of Music, Brandon University, is now performing with the Delft Symphony Orchestra, Delft, Nederland. She is furthering her career by studying with Pleun van der Linden, concertmaster of Gewestelijk Orkest of Delft, Nederland.

**John Friesen** of Lorette near Steinbach this February spent three weeks in Ivory Coast, Africa, where he was invited to demonstrate new drilling equipment. The trip was sponsored by the Ivory Coast government and an Edmonton-based equipment company. Friesen says that the Ivory Coast government plans to drill hundreds of wells throughout the nation so that rural residents may have a better water supply. Friesen works with the family business of Friesen Drillers.

**Elim Bible Institute** is planning a study tour to Mexico, May 4-27 for a second-year Mennonite history class. The tour will include a visit to Old Colony Mennonite settlements near Cuauhtemoc and to area where General Conference mission work is being undertaken. The 11 students will be accompanied by instructors John Thiessen and Rick Friesen.

**H.W. (Barney) Bergen**, general manager of Winkler Consumers Co-op was named Winkler's citizen of the year by the local Kinsmen club at a national heritage day banquet in Winkler. Bergen has given more than 25 years of quiet unassuming service to the community.



**J.M. Klassen**, executive secretary of MCC (Canada) and Bud Cullen Minister of Employment and Immigration, signed on March 5th, an agreement which is designed to facilitate participation of the Canadian Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in a refugee sponsorship program: specifically Vietnamese refugees. Food shortages and further crop losses are some causes of extreme hardship in Vietnam. Government policies are also causing many people to leave. MCC at a recent annual meeting, decided too:

- (1) maintain through resident representation, a relationship with the people of Vietnam;
- (2) offer 1,000 tonnes of wheat to assist flood victims, subject to ability to negotiate an acceptable distribution plan;
- (3) encourage the U.S. and Canadian governments to admit more refugees;
- (4) encourage our families and churches to sponsor refugees;
- (5) make available a staff person for a one year assignment to concentrate on south-east Asia refugee needs;
- (6) encourage normalization of relationships between the U.S. and Vietnam.

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**Dan Zehr** has announced his resignation as director of peace and social concerns, MCC (Canada) effective June 30, 1979. Dan and Elaine have accepted instead an overseas assignment with MCC, beginning with language study in January of 1980. Dan and his family have devoted the last 17 years to MCC service. He has been the director of peace and social concerns since 1976.

#### **MWC ANNOUNCES MENNONITE WORLD FELLOWSHIP SUNDAY**

Pentecost Sunday, June 3, 1979, has been designated as Mennonite World Fellowship Sunday. This will be an occasion for Mennonites around the world to remember and celebrate their fellowship together in Christ.

A packet of materials will be provided to the congregations. Leaders are urged to arrange for a special emphasis that will include prayer, sharing of information and enlarged vision.

This annual observance is intended to bind together the body of believers. The tenth assembly at Wichita illustrated dramatically the multi-cultural international character of the Mennonite fellowship. Many people are asking for ways of continuing this awareness and mutual relationship.

The Mennonite World Conference Gen-

eral Council meeting at Wichita, acted to establish a permanent secretariat with a full-time executive secretary and secretarial assistant. This will be one means of facilitating increased opportunities for mutual awareness and interaction.

Since Wichita, there have been many discussions reflecting on the implications of that gathering. Such occasions as the consultation on world mission held in Hesston prior to the tenth assembly have stimulated much thought. The Mennonite World Conference secretariat is circulating a document entitled *Mutuality in Mission* as an attempt to stimulate new models for sharing in mission. The traditional missionary churches of North America and Europe can no longer carry on their work alone. The churches of Asia, Africa, Central and South America, also want to join in that task.

In order to meet the continuing costs of the secretariat, the general council encouraged each participating conference around the world to contribute. A goal of \$.20 per member per year was set with the request that each conference give a minimum of \$.01 per member.

Several conferences will be cooperating with Mennonite World Conference in scheduling an offering on June 3 in connection with World Fellowship Sunday. This will be a means of involving congregations in contributing to the Mennonite World Conference assessment. In addition these funds will also be used for the travel fund.

The Mennonite World Conference travel fund was of major significance in enabling broad representation from the whole world to the tenth assembly. A small balance from Wichita remains in the travel fund. An offering at the tenth assembly also contributed to it. Efforts will continue to develop this fund in anticipation of the eleventh assembly to be held in Europe in 1984.

Observing Mennonite World Fellowship Sunday will enable brothers and sisters around the world to share their joys, sorrows, pain, suffering, and their hopes in a spirit of solidarity and mutual-ity. mm



**Helen and John Doerksen** of Winnipeg have returned from a 2½-year stay with the Umsiedler in Germany. They say of their stay that on about the 11th hour of every week-day one or more buses arrive at the 'home' or base at Unna-Massen with new immigrants to West Germany. Among these are usually found a number of Umsiedler of Mennonite background who come from the Soviet Union. It was the Doerksens privilege to relate to these people on behalf of other Mennonites in North America and Western Europe and to assist them in a task of reorientation. In their fervent desire to emigrate, a number of these people have placed themselves into self-imposed isolation. Whenever exit permits are withheld in the larger Mennonite communities, people choose to move to distant places in order to possibly sooner be granted permission to leave the country. Sometimes this works. The risk however, of losing their faith is high.



The **Winnipeg Mennonite Children's Choir** recently donated approximately \$4,600 to the MCC India Cyclone Disaster Fund. This gift of money was gathered during last summer's tours. Under the direction of Helen Litz, the 40-voice choir performed on two tours: July enroute to and from the Mennonite World Conference and in August enroute to and from the International Music Educator's Conference at London, Ontario and the International Youth Choral Festival at Washington, D.C.

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## DATES

**April 8:** Bethel Menn., Palm Sunday services at 8:00 p.m.

**April 9-12:** Bethel Menn., Passion week services, 8:00 p.m.

**April 13:** Good Friday, First Menn., St. John's Passion. Henry Engbrecht, conductor, 7:30 p.m.

**April 21:** M.B. Women's Conference at N.K.M.B. church.

**April 22:** Elim grad. exercises, at 2:30 p.m., Altona Bergthaler church.

**April 22:** 8:00 p.m., First Presbyterian at Portage & Canora Organ recital, Peter Letkeman with CMBC madrigal choir.

**April 22-29:** Rev. Marney Patterson crusade, Wpg. Convention Centre, Sundays at 3:00 p.m. Apr. 22 and 29, Evenings 8:00 p.m. April 23-28.

**April 24:** Tues., First Menn., Westgate banquet. Speaker, Mrs. John Friesen in a lighter vein on houseparenting kids in Germany, 7:00 p.m.

**April 28:** 8:00 p.m. CMBC gym, Spring Concert, Chamber choir and ensemble.

**April 29:** 10:30 a.m. CMBC gym, grad. exercises and baccalaureate service; 2:30 p.m. Home St. church, CMBC grad. services.

# Bethel spearheads new idea in elderly care

by Hilda Matsuo

Bethel Place hopes to become not only Bethel Mennonite Care Services Inc., a non-profit organization sponsored by Bethel Mennonite, Burrows Bethel, Charleswood Mennonite, Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship and Home Street Mennonite churches but also a caring community.

The necessary parts of the caring are clearly there, although actual construction is to commence this spring. The very fact that members of five churches have managed to pool their resources in the planning of Bethel Place indicates that people care enough to set aside any differences for an ideal.

What is Bethel Place? We can think of it as building at the south west corner of Stafford Street and Weatherdon Avenue. It is to consist of three areas owned by Bethel Mennonite church, portions of a closed lane and a street and land leased from Winnipeg hydro. The residential building, together with Bethel church and Sunday school, is to surround a pleasant treed courtyard which in summer can be used for outdoor dining, displays, art shows, poetry readings or other events. The south end of the four-storey building is designed to step down so that it can relate to the height of the existing buildings on the church site. A small cloistered garden will separate the two. The closing of a part of Carter Avenue will make this possible.

People hate to see the elderly, all in a row in recreational areas of nursing homes. They dislike long impersonal corridors. However, to cut costs, this type of construction is ideal. Bethel Place hopes to do better than that. Fortunately it can. First of all, planners chose as an architect, one familiar with this type of a building in eastern Canada. He is Victor Heinrichs of Robinson and Heinrichs Associates, in Toronto. Then there is Ted Petkau of Concorde Projects, a construction engineer who will oversee the different jobs which are to be let out to construction firms not embroiled in time-consuming disputes. Very important has been and is

the continuing role played by C.N. Friesen, project manager, who expedites the project, looks after interim financing, after schedules and the job monitoring for quality, etc. Robinson and Heinrichs have in Winnipeg also, Harold Funk, an associate with their company, who will assume many of the architectural concerns.

Although given a good management group, there still was the problem of financing. There were government rules and regulations to consider, to work with, or to circumvent, before financing approval became a fact. When applying to CHMC for a loan to cover 90 per cent of construction costs, the group was asked to accept design conformity geared toward economy, (long corridors, etc.). However, before scuttling their ideal, the planning group put forward the idea of financing the project by working on a concept of ability to pay for accommodation, based on income, rather than the usual, the assets of the individual. Once convinced of the feasibility of this type of financing CHMC gave the group more leeway. As it stands, residents will pay no more than 25 per cent of their income and government subsidies will augment the fees paid by those on a lower income.

Now that funds raised to cover the additional 10 per cent of the building costs are growing and most of the official red tape is out of the way, it seems feasible to offer the public a closer look at the facilities afforded.

By way of background, since Bethel church initiated the project and because the housing unit is tied in with the church's property, Bethel assumes a greater responsibility in the project. Of the group of five churches, Bethel also has the largest congregation. For Bethel Place residents, having the church near by, can be seen to fill an immediate need in terms of participation in church activities. However, the church also hopes to benefit indirectly by having a group of surrogate grandparents 'across the way' for children in a day nursery now on the



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church's premises. Better still, more adequate facilities for the children are to become part of the new centre.

Long halls? Plans for a more costly but more pleasing design have been made. The architect, in his design made an effort to break any expanse with something like a lounge, plant corner or bookshelves. The dwelling units also are different. There are plans now for 142 one and two bedroom units. Studio units were no longer considered necessary after financing was worked out in a more satisfactory manner.

There will be things to keep the residents happily occupied and people from the five churches will serve on committees to implement these activities. There is to be a workshop downstairs and a cafe where tea can be served by the residents to visitors. Mr. C.N. Friesen, project manager of Bethel Place has spent a great deal of time looking into what other people have done. He has found the tea room off Broadway, run by the elderly, a particular delight. There will be a place where crafts can be sold and arrangements will be made for meals on wheels for those who need them. In addition, there will be a larger dining room away from the hub of everyday life where meals for special functions can be served. In fact, while the cafe area is to hold a planned for 50 diners only, an additional 150 can be seated in the larger dining area situated next to a fully equipped commercial kitchen.

What else? There is to be a projection room and theatre which can be used by the church's youth group as well. Even the chapel area can be used for other purposes. Then, rather like the new catholic nursing home on Redwood, the planning group sees that there may be a way of providing care for grooming in creating beauty and barber shop facilities. There is hope that qualified people from

technical schools can man a place like this.

At the ground level, provisions for some six paraplegic units complete with low cupboards, drive in showers, etc. are to be made. Potential residents have already come forward. It is in this area that the government has given permission for people as young as 55 to become part of Bethel Place. Often too, there is a case where an applicant for housing finds two bedrooms necessary. This happens when the infirmities of one or both people in a partnership or marriage create a need for the extra space. Sometimes, due to restrictions in other subsidized housing units, one of the partners in such a family unit can't enter this type of facility by reason of being too young. Here, however, the crux of the reasoning may dwell on the point that often better, and less costly care can continue where a caring unit of two people is not split.

There also are planned for hostels. Here again similar reason is employed. It is less expensive and more comfortable for all concerned if a family member can temporarily move into a hostel unit when some intensive care is needed to get a Bethel Place resident back on his feet after an illness or injury. The planning group also feels that people could live independently for much longer in a housing unit like Bethel Place if they could get a few hours of help here and there from a younger person, too old for full time work but quite willing to give a few hours of time to those less able to get around. With a planned for very basic groceries to be run by Bethel Place members, on the premises, one can see every reason for people to live out their old age with grace and a sense of independence and that one essential component, a certain degree of interdependence.

The sheltering home which the abstract U-shaped Bethel Place is meant to be will

no doubt become a reality. People within the community of the five churches are already planning the landscaping, solariums, roof gardens, a library, sauna, decorating, spiritual needs, a medical office, transportation services and parking. With all this happening the place has a better than average chance to become a real home for those who will live there.

mm

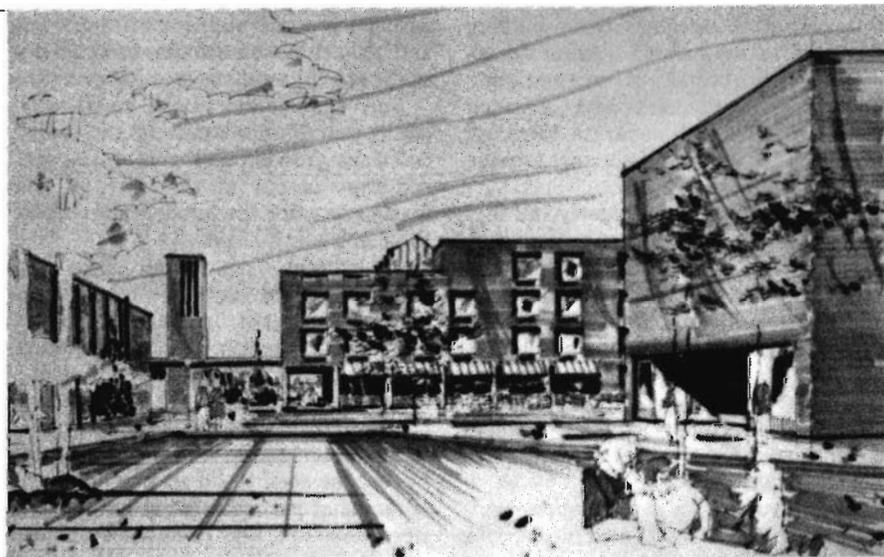
## German gypsy baron

The Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre rehearsals are now in progress for its forthcoming production, *Der Zigeunerbaron* (*The Gypsy Baron*), which will be presented in the original German. The operetta is under the musical direction of Henry Engbrecht and the artistic direction of David Riesen.

Johann Strauss' most melodic operetta, *The Gypsy Baron*, features the glorious tenor arias of Barinkay, a romantic Hungarian exile, and the comic songs of Zsupan, a jovial pig farmer. The hauntingly beautiful gypsy melodies of Saffi, Barinkay's beloved Child of the Night, and the softly singing Arsena, her rival, add a further musical dimension to this wonderful potpourri of Strauss waltzes, polkas, and Hungarian czardas.

Members of the cast include the following Winnipeg singers: John Martens as Barinkay, Henriette Cornies as Saffi, Bob McPhee as Zsupan, Margon Sim as Arsena, Irena Welhasch as Czipra, John Bartlette as Ottokar, Bill Goertzen as Carnero, Erika Dyck as Mirabella, and Frank Peters as Hominay.

Performances will take place at the Playhouse Theatre on May 4th and 5th at 8:05 p.m. Tickets are available from members of the Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre, the cast and crew, as well as the following outlets: Redekopp Lumber, 1122 Henderson Highway, 668-4470; Independent Furniture, 499 Notre Dame Avenue, 775-4401; and Haddon Hall Men's Wear, 288 Kennedy St., 942-6892. Ticket prices are: \$6.00, \$5.00, and \$3.00.



Artist's view of Bethel Place.

# Arctic mirage: on a cold day you can see around the bend

by Carol Atwell

In days of yore, when hardy Norsemen roamed the shores of Scandinavia and Britain in fearsome dragon-headed ships of wood and hide, legend had it that the world was flat, and that the island, Earth, swam in a saucer of seas beyond whose rims lay the dreaded Abyss. Near the edge of the world was the far and murky region of Thule, where the whirlpools, Scylla and Charybdis, raged in eternal swirlings which pulled the ocean waters into the ground through submarine channels where they re-emerged as the rivers and mountain streams of Earth.

The Nordic sagas described the discoveries in what was essentially the perilous region of Thule, really accidental, or did the ancient mariners have an inkling about what lay ahead?

Prof. Waldemar Lehn of the department of electrical engineering and Prof. H. Leonard Sawatzky of the department of geography, at the University of Manitoba propose that Erik the Red, and Gunnbjorn and other Viking explorers had actually seen the distant shores through a phenomenon known as the arctic mirage.

The arctic mirage can be seen in regions of high latitude usually over expanses of cold water or ice. The mirage occurs when the air becomes progressively colder as it gets closer to the earth's surface. The increase in temperature with elevation is known as a temperature inversion and with these conditions, light rays don't travel in a straight line but are bent or refracted around the curvature of the earth. The stronger the temperature inversion, the greater the refraction of the light rays. When the ray curvature equals the earth's curvature, it creates the optical illusion that the earth is flat. A more extreme case of temperature inversion, which is not uncommon, makes the earth's surface appear saucer-shaped

and objects which are normally out of sight, such as coastlines, are raised into view.

The early Norsemen referred to this type of arctic mirage as *hillingar*, a term still used in Iceland. The effect can be very deceiving because it has such a natural appearance, that the viewer often doesn't realize that what is being seen is due to the mirage.

The mirage can be seen on Lake Winnipeg, especially in late spring, when the daytime temperatures are in the 20's but there is still ice on the lake. "At Grand Beach," said Prof. Lehn, "you can frequently see across to Gimli. The *hillingar* effect is the most innocent-looking because everything looks completely normal. The eye has no way of telling that it's seeing farther than it should."

Prof. Lehn and Dr. Sawatzky often take sightings from the Lake Winnipeg area, or try to. At certain times of the year the mirage occurs more often than not. "I went out for three days in May," Prof. Lehn recalled, "and it was difficult to get a normal sighting. I finally went to the map where I could determine the elevation and calculate the normal line of sight."

The *hillingar* effect could account for the Vikings' islandhopping exploration and settlement from Britain to the Faeroe Islands, from the islands to Iceland, from Iceland to Greenland and then perhaps to Baffin Island. When Erik the Red set off for Greenland, he started from his home on the northwest shore of Iceland. From there he might have seen the coast of the giant isle rise up over the horizon from time to time. Without this visual incentive, Professors Lehn and Sawatzky are hard put to justify his course of action, or to attribute it to luck and the winds.

Departing from Breidafjord, Iceland, on a northwest heading, Erik the Red appears to have taken the shortest distance between Iceland and Greenland.

The winds and the ocean currents would have been against him and since the Vikings' ships had some difficulty sailing close to the wind, it would seem as if his crew would have had to row most or all of the way.

"The distances from Europe to North America are smaller than people think," said Prof. Lehn, "the jump from Iceland to Greenland is 300 kilometers. The sagas tell of accidental, storm-driven voyages, which is very exciting, but it seems more logical that living in the area, the explorers would have seen some mirages that would have said that there was land. They were observant people and lived close to the land."

It has been documented in 1939, that the arctic mirage has enabled a sea captain to accurately identify the *Snaefellsjokull*, a mountain on the west coast of Iceland, from a distance of 500 kilometers.

Trying to discover the origin of the word Thule, Professors Lehn and Sawatzky have come as close as the Celtic word "tell" meaning "raise" or "to raise oneself." "Tel is the root of the Irish words "telach" and "tulach" which means "height or mound." It should be mentioned here, for those who are a bit rusty on their Icelandic history, that the Norsemen found Irish hermits on Iceland when they discovered and took possession of the island. The hermits soon departed, but they could have conceivably left behind the legend of Thule, a legend that could have been frequently supported by the arctic mirage.

The arctic mirage doesn't always manifest itself in the subtle form of the *hillingar*. It can take the more obvious and often frightening appearance of the *hafgerdingar* which means sea fences. In this case the mirage presents itself as a wall or double horizon. To a sailor on the open sea, there might appear to be walls on all sides. Even more terrifying the

mirage might shift. At sea this could look as though the walls of sea water were gaining height as they moved in on the viewer.

This effect coupled with the relatively high rate of ships lost at sea provides a likely source for hairraising Nordic legends.

The study of the arctic mirage as a possible rationale for Nordic exploration of the west began several years ago, when Dr. Sawatzky approached his colleague in engineering to find out just how far one could see with the effect.

"This apparently simple question had never been answered by the scientific community," said Prof. Lehn, "The answer did not lie in standard textbook explanations. In fact, no one in North America had ever addressed the problem at all. I decided to analyse and explain

the effect. The optical theory had to be developed and a computer model of atmospheric refraction has to be set up. Subsequently some useful references were located in the German literature. Some early analytical explanations had been attempted, but since the 1920's the problem has been virtually ignored.

"Without mathematical analysis, no significant prediction could have been made that extended the mirage observations to conditions pertaining to the Vikings. This analysis has been continued because a better understanding of the optics is necessary if other possible applications are to be investigated."

Given the right conditions the mirage can occur over land. Having grown up in southern Manitoba, Dr. Sawatzky remembers seeing a mirage on his long walks to school in the winter.

"... It is flat country, with relatively few trees. On crisp mornings in late winter, I would look into the distance and the next villages would be neatly staircased, one on top of the other," he recalled. "I can remember seeing the big grain elevator at St. Agathe, which was about 40 miles north of us."

"As the sun got a little higher, the ground would warm up and the air would also get warmer and lose its refractive capability. "The light fails to reach you," explained Dr. Sawatzky, "so you have the effect that the bottom of the buildings had dropped off." The people who lived in the area were quite aware of the mirage. There were even jokes about it.

"Oh, yes," said Dr. Sawatzky, "they used to say that if you wanted a great day to move grain elevators, you just had to wait for the bottoms to fall off and then you could back your truck in underneath and drive'em away."

The heat inversion can create a mirage powerful enough to deceive even the knowing viewer. David Thompson includes an account of his experiences with an arctic mirage in the narrative description of his explorations of western North America. Although Thompson knew the lake on which the mirage occurred, the effect was so strong that he reached for his snow shoes, so that he could better handle the "slope" that his eyes saw and his mind denied.

The question being posed by the researchers today is whether the mirage seriously affects transportation in the north. Do northern navigators, whether on land, at sea or in the air, make allowances for the hillingar when they take their markings? Could some of the navigational problems and even accidents that have occurred in these areas be attributed to the hafferdingar?

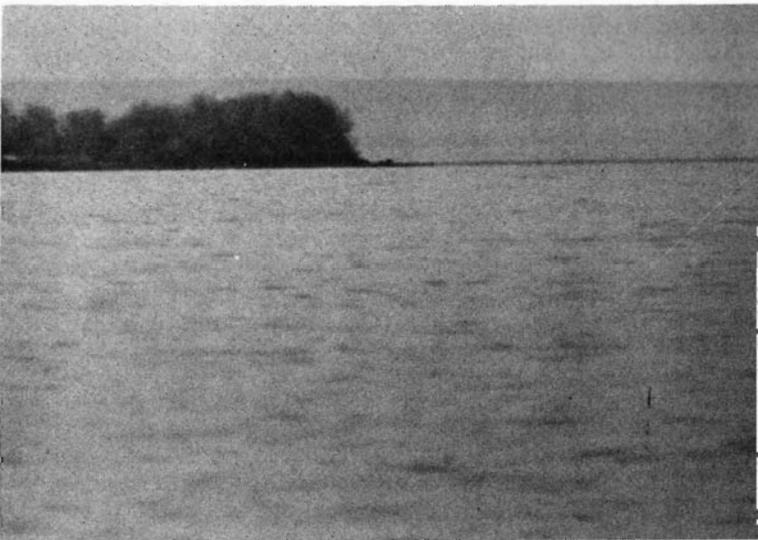
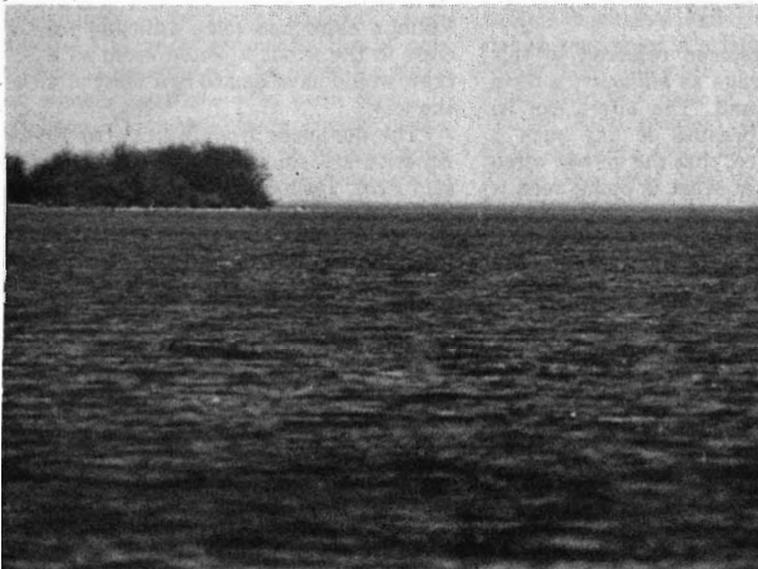
"While it is true that the legends helped us in getting into this work," said Prof. Lehn, "our present problems are going to be solved, hopefully, by mathematical analysis, computer simulations and field observations."

Professors Lehn and Sawatzky plan to continue their studies of the most intriguing arctic phenomenon since aurora borealis. **mm**

*Reprinted from the University of Manitoba bulletin.*

#### LIGHT LOGIC

A customer with an overdue hydro bill received this message: "We would be delighted if you would pay your bill. You will be delighted if you don't."



Top photo shows what is normally seen; bottom photo shows the effect of the arctic mirage. The faint land mass across the centre of the picture is actually beyond the horizon.



## Childlike peek into the past

*REBECCA'S NANCY, A story of a little Mennonite girl, by Joan Reimer Goman, Sand Hills Books Inc. Box 352, St. Jacob's Ontario, illustrated by the author, Hard Cover.*

### Reviewed by Betty Dyck

*Rebecca's Nancy* is the third book in Sand Hills' Waterloo County collection, and the first one especially for children. For many people, the delightful story will be like a peek into the past when the simple rural life gave pleasure. For Old Order Mennonites living in Waterloo County, the telling portrays the realities of today—where their children still enjoy a relatively uncluttered life, free from outside influences.

While numerous contemporary children's books tend to cater to space age topics, Joan Reimer Goman gives a glimpse into the Waterloo county where children attend a one-room school, warm their mittens in winter on an old fashioned space heater, and mother sits quietly sewing on a patchwork quilt in the evenings.

In the story, Rebecca misplaces her rag doll and the unhappy incident colours her whole day. Normally, she would feed the farm animals after breakfast, dry the dishes quite happily and then go out and watch her father milk the cows before she set out for school. This day she is worried about Nancy.

The author shows everything through Rebecca's eyes, delivering a simple, well-written story, which would be ideal to read aloud to preschool children. Indeed, Ms. Goman is a kindergarten teacher, and the creativity throughout the book gives testimony to the fact that the children whom she teaches are fortunate.

Elementary school-age children will read *Rebecca's Nancy* themselves and pour over the delicate black and white illustrations composed of cut outs of crayon rubbings, the various textures of which Joan Reimer Goman created from a variety of wood textiles and other surfaces.

Review books are often passed on to friends' children, but *Rebecca's Nancy* will remain in my private collection. **mm**

# Russian-born son a product of a special family

by Hilda Matsuo

*"It's nice to be important, but it's more important to be nice."* A trite principle, perhaps, but one which appears to have shaped the life of a Russian-born Canadian.

He is Jakob Warkentin Goerzen, or Jim, a boy born in the village of Nikolai-feld, Sagradowka, Russia, son of Jakob Heinrich Goerzen and Margaretha, (nee Warkentin). Although both parents influenced the development of the sensitive boy, it was the mother perhaps, who fostered in the child a bent for languages. Students of the 17 villages which comprised the settlement of Sagradowka, where Jakob lived until the age of 10, regularly took part in an examination aimed at fostering scholastic excellence. At one such examination, Margaretha, then known as the local Mennonite Brethren preacher's daughter, attained highest standing in an oral language examination of Russian. Only a few years later, grandpa, the preacher, sadly entreated his children to flee the new Russia. Therefore by 1927, the family exchanged a gregarious village life for the loneliness of a farm in Alberta.

Cultural pursuits however, did not die. Regular contact with neighbours, or more particularly, a well-educated group of new Canadians from Germany, gave Jim the incentive to master the German language. In order to understand the developmental process of this second child in a family of seven, we must understand his environment. He had parents wise enough to allow each child to develop according to his or her inclination. A relative who visited the home as a child, found the family special, interested and interesting. Perhaps similar to that refined quality one senses in the J.W. Goerzen family today.

However, in order to better understand the process of Jim's development in Canada, one must really look at his book of lyrics. The lyrics trace the development of an inner self—a development fostered by the loneliness of the rural scene. By so doing the reader may be led to better understand the man. We are interested in the child and youth because Goerzen the man expanded an early interest in language into the work of a lifetime. Prodigious energies were expended to provide a unique legacy for the



*Jakob Goerzen*

Mennonite world in the form of a scholarly Ph D thesis on the Low German language as we know it, and, in addition, a delightful book featuring in Low German, excerpts from the Bible.

Goerzen began to record the impressions of his world in Low German, English and German, while yet in his teens. One of the most telling descriptions of his world appears in a prose fragment, done in Low German, in which he describes life in a quiet glade. He reiterated those feelings in an English poem, entitled, 'The Lane'. 'The Lane' exhibits an early sensitivity to language, for Jim, at the time of its writing, had less than four years of English schooling. One also is struck by his love for nature, an attachment which he shares with a few farm children only. His inner musings call to mind a prairie poet who chronicled the homely joys of the land albeit in a manner simpler than Goerzen's. There were those who denigrated her skills, but king and prime minister read her poetry with admiration, for they felt in her pen the pulse of the people. Goerzen however, could be said to reflect more closely a generation of our kind of Canadians

who were influenced by the poetry and prose of their several cultures. Every now and then, his verse beats with the cadence of a poem read and re-read or heard in our yesterdays. This is not unpeculiar, for the educational system of the day encouraged the committing to memory of quantities of poetry which gladdened the hearts of many in hours of solitude. Goerzen relates that later, on entering university, he became enchanted with the poetic potential of the vernacular or Western Low Prussian. As a result of that interest, his later verse appears more often in that language. He also honed, through the writing of poetry, his linguistic skills, as he recorded his impressions of the isolated reaches of the Canadian west when serving as a conscientious objector, during the war.

It is when Goerzen turns to Low German as a poetic medium that he is at his best. His Low German lyrics not only present a picture of his inner growth, but also show the potential of that language for use in aesthetically satisfying verse. Goerzen feels that the language is euphonic and not as guttural as High German and as such is meant for greater things than the portrayal of crude humour. He wrote and likes to recite a delightful Low German verse to that effect.

It is however, as an educator, a person, a face, that Goerzen springs to life. A bit of an enigma, he is not a man of convention. He teaches French and German at a high school level, rather than at the expected, a university. He believes in a universal mercy of God toward man. His face is strong and kind. His family of a wife and seven daughters is special. There is a feeling of gentle grace and piety there. Several daughters also pursue the study of language. However, as a strong yet sensitive soul he has not always been understood by his fellowmen. People in other Mennonite groups have experienced years ago the same type of opposition that for this man, has not been resolved. Time and forbearance on the part of everyone will no doubt cure these difficulties.

Fortunately, students, through the years, have best appreciated the gifts of this man. They return to Goerzen and express their gratitude over lessons well learned and over interests in the study of language raised, for Goerzen, in addition to the three Germanic languages, has studied or taught French, Russian, Greek and Hebrew. He makes things interesting! Jim's brother says of him, "he could make a walk down a cow path seem like an adventure". A cousin, as a child was enthralled by the description of a beetle's make-up, all the systems necessary to maintain animal life, in a tiny red beetle!

A teacher par excellence. Mennonites will learn to appreciate this Edmontonian's skill at making their language come alive by turning to his books. **mm**

## Isaak Platt en aundre Menschen

von Victor Peters

Em latzten Tjrich prowden de meschte mennische junge Menschen wont ene Army sullen, aus COs to goanen. Vaele Junges, so bie 20 Joa olt, weare noch nich jedept. Aunfangs wul de Government de aula foats ene Army nehmen. O nae, saeden onse Predjasch, so leicht es daut nich. Daut sent uck Mennoniten. So leaten tjlene Koatjes drecken, doa kunn son Jung sienen Noamen nopschriewen, en doarunja wea schwoaat jedreckt: "I am a Mennonite."

Bie Morris jrep de Polis eanen Jungen de en Beisikel jestoalen haud, en aus se am faustnehmen wullen, wess he an siene Koat. Oba emma holpen de Koatjes uck nich.

De Government leat sich nich so schwind om'e Naes leiden. Na dann, saed de Government, motten aul juene Junges wont en dem Ella sent daut se ene Army sellen noa Court koamen en sich veteidjen.

Etj wea to de Tiet en Landmark. Daut es so teschen Steinbach en Winnipeg. Oba de Government fung mie uck doa. Uck etj sull noa Court. Aule Junges von Landmark bat Steinbach sullen noa Ste. Anne koamen. Na etj uck han.

De Court wea volljepackt met Menschen aus etj hankaum. Etj wea gauns aulleen op mienem Ford hajefoaren. Nue wearen doa hundade Menschen: Holdemauns met Baeta en Tjlenjemenda ohne Baeta, Chor-titza en Ruslaenda, en han en wada

uck en Jehovah Witness, oba daut wea den nich autosehnen. En medde mank wearen Predjasch uet aule Jemende de aere Tjotjeschoap en baet prowden Roat to jewen.

Gauns vearen, op'm Kathda en baet von-en-aunda auf sauten twe strenge Ohmtjis. Daut wearen de Rechtasch. Ena het Adamson en de aundra het Bowman. Jieda haud en groaten Desch fer sich en uck eanen Schriewa. En besied stunden rode Mounties, daut aules uck schmock noa de Ordnin jintj.

Judge Bowman haud den Roap daut he jescheit wea. Oba Judge Adamson, saede se, kunn sea hunjsch sennen. De wull de Junges ene Army haben. Etj haud daut Jleck daut etj fer Bowman kaum. "Nae," saed etj, "etj glewd nich aun Menschen ombrinjen. Mie haud Mutta aundret jeleat." Daut gauf ene lange Vetall en schliesslich leat Bowman locka en saed ok.

Platte Isaak musst oba fer Adamson. Isaak wea nich sea belesen. Worum sulla uck. He haud den Tjrich nich aujefonge. Loat de feiten wont feiten wellen, he wull neutral bliewen. Predja Hendritj Reima saed to am noch: "Isaak bliew staundof. Loat die von dem Adamson nich engruellen." Isaak naum sich daut uck faea. Siene Mamme haud jesacht feiten wea schlacht. Daut haud he uck so uet'm Katechismus jeleat. En nue saed Onkel Reima daut uck. He wud Adamson sajen:

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"Etj woa bloss nich goanen en wann jie mi doatschloanen."

Adamson kunn sea hinjalaestich sennen. Met Isaak fong he gauns em goaden aun:

"So, Due wesst nich em Tjrich?" Isaak tjitjt von Adamson noam Mountie. De haud siene straume rode Jack aun, eanen bredden Belt, en doaraun hong en Revolva. Uck sienen Hoat haud he op'm Kopp. Isaak wort en baet flis. He tjitjt sich en baet om noa Predja Reima, en saed kort: "Nae".

"Due best ne groate Oschuld," saed Adamson nue frindlich, "denkst Due daut Truckfoaren ene Suend es?"

"Nae," saed Isaak. He wea froh daut Adamson so jescheit wea an nich vom Tjrich raed. Von Trucks vestund he waut, en daut stund uck en tjenem Katechismus daut Truckfoaren Suend wea. "Nae," saed he, "Truckfoaren es tjene Suend."

"Na sitst," saed Adamson, "en wetst Due, aules waut Due em Tjrich vielleicht doanen bruckst es Truck foaren." Isaak wea en baet konfues. He haud Trucks emma top met foarmen jedocht, en nue brocht Adamson Truck foaren top met Tjrich. Isaak musst en baet nodentjen. "Truck foaren joa," mehnd he, "oba Truck foaren em Tjrich daut jeit to wiet."

Nue wort Adamson jeduldich. "Due best en groata, jesunde Tjedel, en Due wurscht die jefaulen loaten daut aundre Junges fe di feiten sellen? Daut wud di goad-jenoach sennen?" "Nae," saed Isaak, "de brucken uck nich fe mi feiten. Tjena bruckt fe mi feiten. De Junges sent op'm Holtwach. De sullen tues bliewen. Menschen sullen sich goot sennen en nich feiten. De lewe Gott es aule Menschen goat, en kratjt de wel nich haben daut de Lied egoal feiten."

Oba Adamson wea en lestja Foss. "So, so," laed he nue wada loss, "Gott es aule Mensche goat. Jlewst Du Gott es uck Hitla goat?" He docht nue haud he Isaak ene Enj, oba daut weas wo weinich he Isaak tjand.

Isaak fehlt sich op eamoal gauns safe. "Joa," saed he, de lewe Gott es uck Hitla goat." En donn tjitjt he Adamson frindlich aun, en saed gauns leftoalich: "De lewe Gott es sogao Di goat."

En donn gauf Adamson op.

### Plaudietsche Sprichwead

- Muuskje saut, Kuurnkje betta
- Kort bedocht, lang jelaede
- Kort jesajjt, lang jedone
- Kort entschlote, lang besorjt
- De Baeare wausse nich aum Waig
- Schlaichte Norecht haft lange Been
- Baeta lot aus goanich
- Eena daunzt aus de Aundra piept
- Fer et Jewaesne tohlt de Jud nuscht
- Waut hee enjereahft haft, mott hee uck utfraete
- Waea jestohle haft, daem brennt de Metz
- Waea tiedig oppsteiht un hoat schauft, kjemmt too waut
- Waea nich spoare deit, daem halpt et vael Vedeene nuscht
- De schwierigste Reis oppe Welt es dee ut Russlaund
- Gjleew nich aules waut du laese deist, Papia latt sich irjend waut noppeschriewe
- Wann et noch gjrattere Dommheite jeft, moak wie dee uck
- Wann de leewe Gott 'en Noa habe well, latt Hee 'en Maunn de Fru stoawe
- Wann de Maunn daumlich es, haft de Fru de Schaund
- Waea de Fru goot es, latt daeah toohuus
- Wann de Fru mau pienig es, kome se too waut
- toopjesaumelt von Reuben Epp

## SPRING MUŚIC BY MENNONITE ORCHESTRA

The Mennonite Community Orchestra will give its spring concert, under the direction of Bill Baerg, on Saturday and Sunday, April 7 and 8, at the Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Auditorium, 173 Talbot Avenue. Time is 8 p.m. Saturday and 3:30 p.m. Sunday.

Works to be performed include Carol Weaver's setting of Psalm 68 for two choirs, brass ensemble, and percussion; the Concerto in A by Schumann, the Symphony in F. Major by Carl von Dittersdorf, and other music.

Admission is \$3.50 and \$2.50 for students and senior citizens.

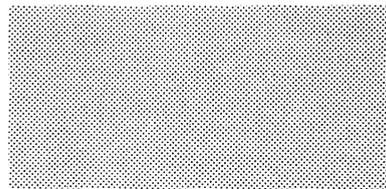
### CATTY REMARK

At the supermarket a woman pushed ahead of another customer. "I hope you don't mind," she said, "all I want is this can of catfood."

"Not at all," replied the other, "you do look hungry."

## Have you ever moved and forgotten your mirrors?

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## WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH OUR PROPHETS?

*"He who receives a prophet because he is a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward" (Matthew 10:41).*

Someone has said that the purpose of the church is to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comfortable. We all need to be comforted at times because we fall short even when we try our best. We also need to be afflicted at times, because we are inclined to feel comfortable with ourselves long before we have tried our best. It is easy to be grateful to those who comfort us in our need. It is not nearly so easy to be grateful to those who afflict us in our comfort.

Jesus knew this better than anyone. He saw in the history of His people the tragic fate that awaits those who speak a critical word on behalf of God. Such divine afflictors—otherwise known as prophets—were either ignored or persecuted. Jesus placed Himself in that prophetic tradition. He came both to comfort and to afflict, but He knew that it was the last role that would lead Him to the cross.

*"Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not!" (Luke 13:34).*

The events of Good Friday, which confirmed that sad prediction, should cause us to reflect on our attitude today to those prophets that God seems to be driving into action in our own midst. We are impressed by the courage and integrity of these prophets.

There is Peter Ediger from Denver, Colorado, who is now on probation because he laid his body across a railway track in order to prevent the movement of military missiles. There is Cornelia Lehn in Newton, Kansas, who threw the General Conference Mennonite Church into a flap because she didn't want it to pay the military portion of her tax. There are dozens of young and older people in the United States who have chosen to simplify their life style in a radical way so that they won't contribute to what they consider to be the military madness of their country.

We are somewhat surprised by the demeanour of these persons. We had always imagined prophets to be more hot eyed and maladjusted. We find that the prophets just mentioned are, by and large, extremely reasonable, quiet-spoken individuals. They feel unusually strongly, however, about issues that glide by the rest of us more easily. They also don't seem to be bothered by our desire to be logical and consistent. So what if we are all involved and implicated in some aspect of our country's militarism, and that we are all part of a vicious circle from which we cannot fully extricate ourselves! They want to break that circle somewhere, they want to put a finger into at least one hole in the dam even though we point out to them that the water is pouring through other holes as well. Let's face it: their function is not to be consistent but to be consistently cajoling. Whether their warnings are justified will be clear only in the future. If the truth was evident now we wouldn't need their warnings. When a new wagon began to roll through Germany in 1933

most German people hailed it as the wagon of deliverance. A few prophets, like Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Martin Niemoller, called it the wagon of death. They were imprisoned and Bonhoeffer was killed for that perception. Who was to know that they were right?

Well, we can only know if we listen. As we personally have listened to what our prophets have to say to us today we must admit to a certain disturbing feeling that once again they may be right. Should we manage to blow up our world a few years from now we can imagine the human race gathering somewhere to discuss what went wrong. At that moment we may suddenly perceive that the strange voices of Peter Ediger and Cornelia Lehn were really the sane voices in our midst, and that the seemingly sane pursuit of greater military security by nations like the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. represented the acts of madmen engaged in the ultimate destruction of their world.

We are inclined to believe that. We are not moved enough by it at the present time to engage in acts of resistance ourselves—but we feel that those whose conscience is pricked more than ours, and who are not as bothered as we are by the ambiguities of our situation, deserve not only our attentive ear but our support.

Unfortunately our church conference meeting in Minneapolis a few weeks ago was not prepared to give such support. We were inspired by the debate that took place at that time but the final resolution showed that we are far from willing to grant to our prophets the understanding and encouragement they need. The resolution that was finally adopted was in itself unfortunate. It seems that people wanted to salvage something from their afflicted conscience. We went there to test ourselves, to examine our sensitivity. We ended up by deciding to test the U.S. government instead, by asking it to remove the tax-collecting burden from the church. This deflection of purpose seemed hardly to be noticed, probably because it had become apparent by the end of the conference that the majority was not prepared to grant the kind of support that had been requested. In our opinion it would have been more honest, and more appropriate if, instead of approving a resolution which will do nothing to assist our prophets, it had simply been recorded that at this point in our history that is how we feel about these things. Let us acknowledge—as the Findings Report essentially did—that we will not persecute our prophets, but neither will we receive them. The church has often done worse. Some day it may do better. R.V.



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