

# mennonite mirror

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Helen Janzen.

## Mennonite and More

BY DOUG KOOP

"Some people don't know who they are and some don't care. Others are ashamed of their culture. I have always been very up front about my background. I will tell people that I am an Anabaptist-Mennonite and hope that I may change their view of what it means to be a Mennonite. I know who I am. I have never tried to push my tradition but I have never hesitated to claim my heritage."

Helen Janzen speaks from the vantage of more than 40 years of professional experience. She credits her success in education and in dealing with people to her family background. "I had a very sunny childhood and I attribute this to my mother. She was very loving and had a strong sense of family loyalty. I remember my father for the courage he had of his convictions and his integrity and compassion. He was willing to put himself on the line for something he believed in. I value my heritage. My parents lived as models of sharing and caring."

Helen's elementary years were spent in the district school in Edenthal, one of the Mennonite villages in the West Reserve. She remembers in particular the German lessons and Bible stories that were held after regular classes. When

Helen was 12 the family moved to Gretna. She received her high school education at the Mennonite Collegiate when Mr. Ewert was the principal. "He was the greatest model of a teacher and of dedication and self-sacrifice I have ever known." She has high praise for all of her teachers at MCI. "They were well qualified and made me want to learn. I found myself memorizing many poems in both German and English for the pure pleasure of it."

After receiving her teacher's training and license Helen spent 10 years teaching grades three, four, and five at the district school in Gretna. During the summers she lived on campus while attending the University of Manitoba, taking courses in English and German literature, sociology and psychology. She enjoyed her studies very much and the B.A. degree that she earned seemed like an extra bonus.

The following year she returned to the Fort Garry campus as a full-time student in Home Economics. In two years' time she had a B.Sc. (H.E.) degree and began her career in home economics. Her first position, which lasted for one year, was teaching the Adult Dominion-Provincial Youth Training programs at Binscarth and Eriksdale. This was followed by 10 years where

she taught a complete curriculum of home-making in West Kildonan and Winnipeg. Each summer, if she wasn't teaching an extra course, Helen worked at upgrading her education.

The big break in Helen's career came when she was asked by the Department of Education to be the supervisor of home economics in the province. This was a new position and entailed many responsibilities including visiting schools throughout the province. Having already taught the entire home economics program in both urban and rural settings proved helpful. Though at first she was reluctant to take this new job, she was eventually persuaded to accept the challenge and remained at the post for twenty one years until retiring in the spring of 1972.

Helen has remained extremely active even in retirement. At present, she is the membership secretary for the Winnipeg branch of the United Nations, also a member of the Committee on Disarmament, and of its executive. For five years she served on the executive of the board of MCC (Canada) and then declined the nomination for another term because she feels that younger people should be involved at that level. She was also the Mennonite representative on the Manitoba Inter-

faith Council for five years and for a nine-month period served part time as a lay minister of the Charleswood Mennonite Church.

Another of Helen's retirement projects was the translation of Gerhard Wiebe's *Causes and History of the Emigration of the Mennonites from Russia to America*. She outlined several reasons why she decided to do this work. "Memory bells. I have many memories of stories that I heard in my childhood about pioneer experiences and the journey to Canada. This is a first-hand account by a man who was in large part responsible for the move. Without his efforts we might all be bleached bones somewhere in Russia.

"It is also a very human story. When *Aeltester* Wiebe fails and is defrocked, he has trouble with guilt feelings and at one point he even contemplates suicide. It is a tremendous example of God accomplishing his purpose through imperfect people. After all, there aren't very many of us that are perfect, are there?"

There was another reason, too. "I have many nieces and nephews who don't read German. Unless the book was translated they would miss this opportunity to learn about their past. It would be just another lost historical document moldering away in archives somewhere."

Though she is a resolute Mennonite, Helen has never been parochial in her outlook. "I thank my parents for ensuring that I received a good education. My job enabled me to broaden my perspectives as it gave me the opportunity to do a lot of travelling, including several trips to Europe. Most of my work has been with teachers and academics and being a Mennonite has never posed a problem. I do not like to think in terms of inside or outside of a particular sect or faith, but rather, of working with and for. It's the human qualities that are important. I find that most people have basically the same goals and aspirations that I do and I have learned to respect people of all denominations. I read the *Mennonite Mirror* and *The Mennonite* and the *MB Herald* and more; but I also read the *United Church Observer*, the *Canadian Baptist* and other non-Mennonite publications. Our call is to walk in love; not to be judgmental. We must mirror the love of God and Jesus Christ."

Helen's current activity on the UN Disarmament Committee is right in step with her traditional beliefs. "My father was a conscientious objector and my brother did alternative service in the forestry camps during World War II." She

feels very strongly on this issue and has circulated pleas for disarmament. She also participated in the Peace Walk that was held in Winnipeg last May.

"I am fearful of the sabre rattling that the super powers are doing and of the aggression in so many different areas of the world. I am well aware of the global situation. I know how dark it looks. But, do you remember how long it took for slavery to be abolished and how hopeless the cause must have seemed to the early reformers? I feel that it is our obligation to do what we can to stop the killing of so many innocent people. ."

Helen's commitment goes beyond mere wishful thinking. "I do a lot of background reading and work about half a day each week in the UN office, organizing membership files and other related jobs. I hope against hope that we will be effective. I could not, in good conscience, tolerate being caught in complacency as many German Christians were before World War II. Outside of the confessional church, there were very few who raised their voices even though they could see the holocaust coming. Later, many of them felt that they had not done enough. Is that being Christian? I think of our martyrs who would lay their lives on the line rather than sacrifice a principle or commitment. I hope that I could do the same. The possibility of world peace may seem hopeless but does that justify doing nothing?"

Helen Janzen is energetically involved. Because she is comfortable with her past she can afford to be hopeful for the future. She has the security of knowing where she came from and who she is. This has given her the freedom to be open in her relations with others. Her life may serve as a model of maintaining a proper tension between the demands of her patrimony and of the larger world. mm

#### TO OUR ONTARIO READERS

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— The Publisher

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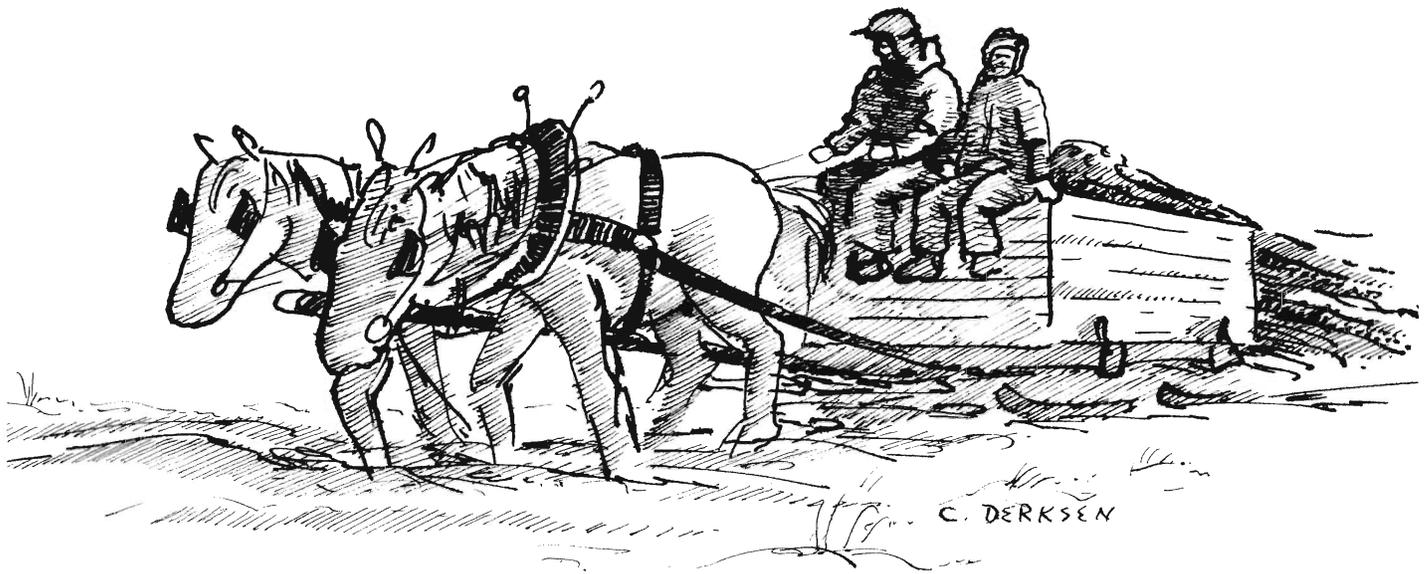
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## Mennonite Literary Society ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Mennonite Literary Society, Inc., will be held Thursday, November 18th, 1982, 6:30 p.m., at the St. Regis Hotel. The agenda and annual reports will follow.

Please clear your calendar now for this interesting and important event.



## Manitoba Sketches VII:

# How Will He Call the Cows Without a Tongue

by Rhinehart Friesen

"Ach Jacob, I wish you wouldn't take the colts; you said yourself they are hardly broken in yet."

"But what would you have me do, wife? Do you want me to keep on using oxen like Onkel Johann? Or would you rather that we didn't go for firewood at all and burn manure instead?"

Margaretha Friesen stood by a few minutes while her husband and sons finished hitching up the horses to the bobsleighs and started off across the prairie. That her husband's words were harsh didn't even occur to her. Life had accustomed her to harshness. When they had settled on the open Manitoba prairie ten years earlier many had said they would starve or freeze to death. But with God's help they were still alive and most of the first Mennonite settlers now had cozy log cabins or frame homes and had turned their original sod huts over to their animals. Her musing continued as she busied herself with the younger children and the house-work. She hoped God would forgive the pride she shared with her husband when they had traded their oxen for a colt to team up with Nellie's baby, Sandy. They now had four horses whereas most of their neighbours had only two, or were still content with plodding oxen like Onkel

Johann Schwartz. Fuel was an increasing problem. The straggly bushes that grew in small patches in low-lying areas had all been used up in the first few years. The trees they had planted with such high hopes were growing, but slowly. And the two or three day expeditions to get larger trees from along the river were hard and unpleasant work because loads of that weight were almost impossible to transport except when the prairie was frozen and covered with snow. But she had so far resisted the alternative, burning dried manure bricks. She had seen this done in Russia and more and more of her neighbours were resorting to it, but she insisted you could smell it burning as soon as you walked through the door.

In the mean-time the two horse-drawn sleighs had overtaken the oxteam driven by elderly Johann Schwartz, Jacob's uncle, who had set out earlier from his homestead nearby. Peter, sixteen, and his younger brother, little Jake, had no trouble controlling placid Nellie and Bob, but for the first few minutes Jacob had his hands full with frisky Tom and Sandy. The colts had their own ideas as to how they would like to enjoy freedom from the close confinement of their rude stable. However, by the time they fell into line behind the oxen they rec-

onciled themselves to the slow plodding pace and knew they could neither shuck off their harness nor get away from the sleigh which followed at their heels. As for Johann, he was content with his patient oxen and felt justifiably pleased to note that it was taken for granted that they would continue to lead the way and break trail over the prairie for the horses.

Before nightfall they arrived at the wooded strip along the river. With sleighs and trees sheltering them from the wind they cared for the horses and made camp. Winter camping was not a new experience and with buffalo and cattle robes they spent a reasonably comfortable night. Breakfast consisted simply of imitation coffee (mainly roasted wheat) in which they dunked *Reeshjke*, a sort of thickly sliced Melba toast.

It happened just as Jacob had finished hitching the colts to the sleigh and was getting onto it. Whether it was a swirl of snow that spooked the horses or his movement behind them will never be known. What had been a peaceful scene was suddenly transformed into one of action and excitement as the young team bolted for home. They careened towards the open prairie at a full gallop. The sleigh upset, miraculously

not crushing Jacob in the process. It came to a sudden stop when Sandy tried to go to one side of a thicket and Tom to the other. For years Jacob used to boast that he had deliberately held onto the reins to show who was master but it is more likely that he couldn't let go because he became entangled.

"Are you hurt, Father?" called Peter as he ran to see what had happened. "Hold the horses, Jake, while I help him up. He's bleeding from the mouth; Oom Johann, look, he's bitten off his tongue!"

"Lie still, Jacob," said the older man, "I will press on it with my woollen mitten. The cold snow should also help to stop the bleeding. Are you hurt anywhere else? Peter, he can't answer; see if you can find any broken bones while I try to stop this awful bleeding."

"He's not bleeding anywhere else, and nothing seems to hurt when I press or move it." Peter reported. "Jake, tie up the horses and come help; Father is hurt and bleeding badly."

"Harejeen! Look at how the hot blood has melted the snow!" It was Jake, who had quickly tied the colts to a tree and joined the group. "I think the harnesses and sleigh are alright."

While Johann was trying without much success to staunch the bleeding he was also attempting to size up the severity of the injury. "I can't really see how bad it is but I'm afraid the front half of his tongue has been bitten almost all off. See how it hangs out of his mouth. If only the bleeding would stop!"

"Should I bring a glowing stick from the fire?" was a suggestion from Jake. "Like we sometimes do when an animal is bleeding?"

"But Jake," protested Peter, "that would hurt too much; he is our father and not an animal."

"Hurt or not, we have to do something or he will bleed to death. My pressing helps but there is still one place where the blood squirts out every time his heart beats. See!" As the older man partly released the pressure arterial blood spurted a full foot.

"God in heaven, don't let him die!" It was the younger boy, thoroughly frightened by the demonstration. "What can be done, Oom Johann? We can't let him go on bleeding like that."

"As long as I hold it, it is not too bad. Give me some more clean snow; I think the cold helps as well as the pressure." As Johann changed hands to relieve his tired fingers the artery spurted again. "I wonder if we should cut off the loose piece. That might let the tongue shrink and help to close off the blood vessels."

"But Oom Johann," objected Jake,

"doesn't the Bible say we speak with our tongues? How would he call the cows home without a tongue?"

"Better to live without a tongue even if it means not being able to talk, than to bleed to death here in the snow. But I don't know whether cutting the piece off would help or make it even worse. Let me just keep pressing on it for a while."

While Johann controlled the bleeding more or less, discussion continued as to what should be done; a discussion in which the person most involved could take no part. Medical services in the Mennonite settlements in Manitoba in 1884 were primitive. Rarely, a family owned a medical book brought over from Russia but it would contain more folklore and mythology than actual medicine. Obstetrics was looked after

by midwives. Illnesses ran their course essentially unaffected by home remedies which were sometimes embellished by suggestions from an Indian from the nearby reservation. First aid was improvised to suit the nature of the accident and depended on the ingenuity of the available helpers. Longer lasting injuries were treated relatively well by self trained 'bone-setters'. There was no doctor within a day's travel, and like anything else that involved money, his services were almost out of the question in the subsistence and barter economy.

Johann's patience was finally rewarded; the bleeding stopped and the extent of the injury could be more accurately assessed. (Probably the injury increased every time the story was retold, but even when the present writer first



heard it more than fifty years ago it was to the effect of, "Almost the whole tongue bitten nearly all off.") Suffice it to say that something had to be done to keep Jacob from biting off the protruding fragment.

"If you cut it off, won't it start bleeding all over again?" asked Peter.

"Please don't cut it off," pleaded Jake. "Sometimes when he scolded me I wished he would be quiet, but I really want Father to be able to talk to me."

"But there is no way I can bandage it so that this piece will be held in the mouth so that it will heal together again."

"If we took him home would Mother be able to sew it on with a needle and thread." asked Peter.

"Maybe she could, Peter," mused the uncle. "I know doctors use stitches when they do an operation. But they must have special needles and threads. If only I could make this piece fit here, like this, and stay that way for a few days; it would probably heal together again."

"Maybe we could take turns holding

it," suggests Jake. "I would be willing to stay awake part of the night."

Johann paid little attention to him. In this rough land he had often been confronted by a problem whose solution depended on originality and improvisation. He pondered various alternatives. A clamp of some kind? If he had some pins, it would be very painful for Jacob, but —

"Peter, get some thorns off of that wild plum tree. Cut them in such a way that there is a little heel of the branch left on each thorn." While Peter ran to do as he was told, he explained to Jake, "The heel will keep it from slipping off one end. Put more snow on the tongue until I am ready; that should help to numb the pain. Jacob, pray to God to give you strength. Even if you can't say the words I'm sure He will hear you. Here, Peter, these should be good." He selected several thorns and trimmed the heels a bit.

"Now, Jacob, what I am going to do will not be pleasant for either of us. But I know of no other way. Do you want me to try to save your tongue?"

Jacob was a fairly stolid man with a high pain threshold, but there was a mixture of pain and fear of further pain in the imploring look in his eyes as he nodded assent.

"Try to hold still even if it hurts, Jacob. Jake, hold him down by sitting on his chest. Peter, lift his arms above his head and sit on them while you hold his head tightly with both your hands."

Jacob later used to say that the next few minutes were the most painful in his whole life. In spite of his involuntary struggle and muffled screams Johann succeeded in inserting several thorns in such a way as to transfix the dangling fragment to the rest of the tongue.

"Thank God!" There was no profanity in Johann's exclamation; only sincere thanks and relief that the ordeal was over for himself and his patient. "Get some butter to smear on the wound. Now let us hope that it is God's will that your father will recover and that he will be able to speak again. Jake you stay with him and get us if you need us. Peter and I will have to work fast if

we are to get home for Sunday."

At lunch-time things looked pretty good. Although obviously in pain Jacob was up on his feet, tried to drink a bit of coffee, and insisted that he was fit to stay alone so that Jake could do his share of the work. In the evening he helped a little with the camp chores. He was unable to eat, however, or even to swallow any coffee because his tongue was so swollen it completely filled his mouth. At bedtime he wrapped some hot pebbles in a cloth and applied this to his cheeks and throat. But he spent a long troubled night. Thirst bothered him more and more. In a half-dreaming state he debated whether he would like a nice cup of hot coffee or if cold water to soothe his aching mouth would be better. If only he could clear his throat to make breathing easier.

In the morning he was awakened from a fitful sleep by the noise of the others tending to the horses. His tongue was so swollen he couldn't close his lips or stop the drooling from the side of his mouth. Any movement was torture and even if he kept entirely still his pulse throbbed painfully in his face and throat. They tried to give him a drink of coffee or put some snow between his distended lips but nothing got past to where he could swallow it. He wished they would not leave him alone. He wished Margaretha was there; maybe she would be able to make him comfortable. He dozed off and wakened occasionally to the sound of felling trees nearby.

As Johann leaned on his axe for a short rest, Jake expressed his fears. "He hasn't eaten anything for a whole day; how long can he go on before he starves to death?"

"People can fast for forty days according to the Bible," his uncle assured him. "But I think they die in just a few days if they don't have water. That is why I tried so hard to get some coffee or snow into him at breakfast. You are a smart young lad, can't you think of some way to help him to drink?"

"Could he drink through his nose if we poured it in?"

"No, I don't think that would work. I

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think the nose is only for breathing through." Johann picked up his axe again.

At lunch break and again the evening Johann tried unsuccessfully to force food or at least drink past the grossly swollen purple tongue. He noted that Jacob had a fever. For the first time he became seriously concerned for his patient as a whole rather than just for his tongue.

For Jacob the next night seemed endless. Just as he was about to fall asleep he perspired profusely. Although he knew it was dangerous to do so he threw off the robes that kept him warm. Then, when the sweating stopped he could not get warm again until he took off his wet underclothes. His head ached. His entire face and throat throbbed unceasingly. He scraped up some snow and put it on his dry tongue. But he could feel neither the coldness or the wetness of it. He was consumed with thirst. He remembered he had not urinated all day; so more to do something to while away the time than because he felt any urge, he struggled to the nearest bush to relieve himself. To his surprise there was almost nothing to pass, and he noticed that what there was turned the snow almost brown. He could hardly get air past his swollen throat. When he dozed off he dreamt of enjoying a watermelon on a hot summer day. He was glad when he heard his uncle stirring at the first sign of daybreak.

Johann was truly alarmed by what he found when he came to see his patient before starting breakfast. Jacob's tongue was an almost black tumor which bulged out between his swollen lips. His cheeks had a purplish tinge. His eyes were dark and sunken. His skin was dry and hot. His breathing was labored. Something had to be done; that was obvious even to the boys who had joined them.

"Oom Johann," Peter exclaimed, "it is not just his tongue! Why is he so sick all over?"

"It is two days since he swallowed anything. I think he is so dried out. If we can't get some water into him soon, I'm afraid he will die."

"Let's go home." In the face of real trouble Jake reverted from a youth to a child. "Maybe Mother could make him some noodle soup."

"Your mother's noodle soup can cure nearly everything, but first he would have to swallow it," Johann said kindly with the tolerance that comes with age. "If we had some kind of pipe or funnel maybe we could push it past his tongue carefully to where he could swallow

whatever we poured into it."

Peter hesitated a little with his suggestion. "There are some cattails where the riverbank is low. They have hollow reeds. Do you think we might use one of them?"

"That's an idea worth trying. Jake, you go and melt some milk over the fire and warm it up while Peter goes to get some reeds. Jacob, with God's help you will be all right."

When everything had been assembled Johann cut a reed to size, smoothed off the end with his pocket knife, and reamed out the pith as well as he could with a stick. "Get me some butter to make it slide easier." Then, as gently as possible, he insinuated it between the teeth and the tongue and advanced it into Jacob's throat.

"Here, Jake, you hold the reed while Peter pours the warm milk into it. My old hands are too shaky for that part of the job."

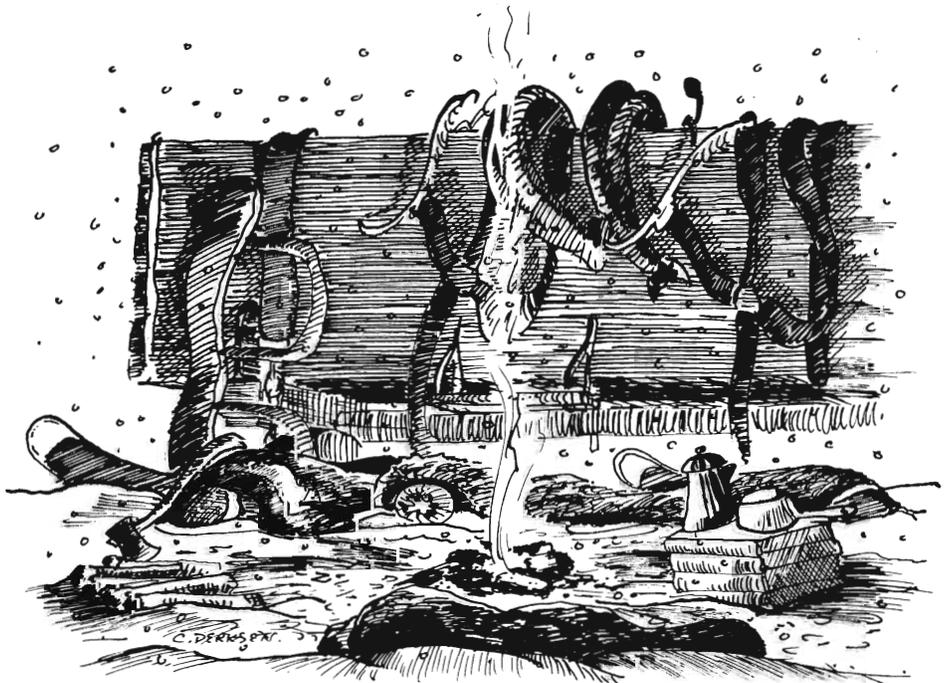
After a bit of gagging the patient tolerated the tube and even expressed his appreciation as well as he could. When they had given him a generous drink and were about to remove it he protested and held it in place himself. However, when they prepared to give him more milk he waved it away.

"You mean you've had enough milk but want to keep the tube, Father?" And when the patient nodded affirmatively, "Would you like something else? some water, maybe?" But Jacob signified he had enough.

It was Johann who realized that their treatment had helped in a way they had not anticipated. "He wants it to breathe through! See how much easier his breathing is. And his cheeks and lips are a much better colour. We didn't know it, but he was nearly choking to death."

During the day they gave him copious drinks of warm milk and of water. During the night they took turns holding the airway in place so that everybody, including the patient, got at least some sleep. In the morning he was much improved and even the tongue seemed to be less swollen. Johann was relieved to see this. The upsetting thought had occurred to him that the thorns might be the main reason for the swelling. He could not visualize how he could remove them until he could see them better. The fluid diet was continued for another day but in the evening the patient could breathe quite well without the airway.

The next day they set out for home. Peter was given the colts to drive with strict instructions not to let them go any faster than a walk. With a team of slowly plodding oxen in front of them and a heavily loaded sleigh behind them, this warning was probably not necessary. A day or two later the thorns were removed quite easily although with a moderate amount of pain. The long-term result was excellent; Jacob could not only call the cows home for milking, but even resumed his accustomed singing at church services. **mm**





# observed along the way

## September

BY ROY VOGT

● It is the Labour Day long weekend and a good chance to go south for a last brief holiday. We take our little fibreglass trailer to Itasca State Park in central Minnesota. This is where the MBCI teachers used to meet for a fall retreat and it is filled with many good memories. It is a beautiful spot. A small stream flowing out of the north end of Lake Itasca represents the beginning of the mighty Mississippi River — another example for those who like to stress the theme of large oaks growing from little acorns. We enjoy some long hikes but it is too cold for swimming.

Once again we are impressed with the courtesy of American serving personnel. In the park lodge one cool afternoon a waitress is busy preparing the tables for an elaborate dinner. We ask if we might order just a cup of coffee. With a great smile she welcomes us in and produces a whole pot of coffee for us. Nothing said about a minimum table charge; no indication that we are interfering with her work. The rangers in the park are equally helpful. We are able to leave our trailer in the park, without charge, while we travel to Minneapolis to visit relatives.

Our youngest daughter chauffeurs us to Minneapolis. I am reading Sinclair Lewis' book, *Main Street*, as we motor through the small town of Sauk Centre, the home of Sinclair Lewis and the model for the book. Though Lewis' portrayal of the town was not very flattering, the townspeople, in typical



American fashion, have turned a sow's ear into a silk purse. His home is now a major tourist attraction and signs along the main thoroughfare proclaim that "This is the Original Main Street." No writer has a chance against the booster spirit of a local Chamber of Commerce.

● Minneapolis: Winnipeg with lakes, and a warmer climate. Within a few hours of our arrival we are sitting in the new enclosed Metro Dome Stadium, watching a football game between the Vikings and New Orleans, courtesy of my brother. The scene is impressive. The canvas roof is supported by air and revolving doors are used to prevent air from escaping. There is no movement of air within the stadium, and no smoking is allowed. The crowd of 60,000 fits snugly into the building. Everyone is sent home happily when Minnesota scores the winning touchdown with nine seconds remaining. A surge of air literally pushes you out of the building as you leave. This unique structure cost about \$60 million, a tidy sum but less than 1/10 of what it cost to build our

incomplete Olympic Stadium in Montreal. Is there less padding of accounts in Minneapolis?

A boat cruise around Lake Minnetonka, a late afternoon swim — on September 4 — and a delicious dinner round out a very enjoyable visit. Our batteries are recharged for another school year.

● For most homes the New Year really begins in September when children, and even some parents, go back to school. Our nest of five is rapidly diminishing. We recall the words from *Fiddler on the Roof*: we don't remember growing older, when did they? Only one of our three children will be home with us this winter. It is good to have at least one person around the house to help mother with the cooking and cleaning — or are we dreaming?

● The return to university is rather shocking. I walk into my first-year class and find 134 faces staring into mine. With budgets being cut, and enrollment increasing, larger and larger classes become inevitable. We can manage, but what kind of an education will these young people get? Our purpose is not merely to throw some facts at them, but to teach them to think and write and to learn to do some original research. Unfortunately the growth of government expenditures seems to pose a greater threat to the public than the tragedy of an inadequate education.

● Early September is also a new year for the church. Everyone is back, some with better tans than others. The church resounds with the sounds of Sunday school and choir rehearsals. We hear an excellent sermon on the meaning of faith. We are also reminded that a new building program is being contemplated. I am worried. The need for more space may be real, but we ought always to be putting a major part of our personal and financial resources into the support of workers and programs. We may be tempted to build merely because it is a concrete demonstration of activity. I also know from personal experience that once we have paid our bills we long for the chance to put money into something else. A church with debt can persuade itself more easily that it has at least made some kind of commitment.

Do we need a larger church vestibule because we suffer a little inconvenience for about 10 minutes every Sunday? Will we "need" air conditioning next?

● An evening is spent in a home in North Kildonan planning for the MEDA convention in Winnipeg in November.

### Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre

## An Evening of One-Act Plays

Kiwanis Centre  
285 Pembina Highway  
November 4, 5, 6  
8:05 p.m.

John Peters will direct the German comedy *Eigensinn*, about a newly-married couple's first quarrel. Selma Enns will direct a collection of English and German poems; A play in English will round out the program.

Tickets are available from the co-ordinator of the performances, Paul Enns, at 783-5323, from the cast, and at the door.

Several hundred visitors from outside Manitoba are expected for this event. I believe MEDA is an extremely valuable means of bringing our business and professional people together to examine the Christian character of their work and to support those who are struggling economically. Only a few businessmen have taken advantage of the assistance provided by MEDA to those in financial difficulty. Does excessive pride have something to do with that? That would be most unfortunate because a number of business people have offered to help and confidentiality is assured. One problem that surfaces is the degree of community spirit that exists within our brotherhood. Are we willing to pull together only as long as the other person does what we expect of him? Do we stop co-operating as soon as a disagreement arises? We should be able to tolerate, and benefit from, a good deal of give and take in our co-operative work. Otherwise it's hardly worthwhile.

• Another meeting of the Economic Council of Canada, this time to see if we can agree on what should be done with the economy. Talk about give and take. This body thrives on it, because people are strongly committed to certain ideas, but generally speaking they also respect the ideas of others. During the middle of one session a seasoned, usually cool businessman, argues his position forcefully, and then throws his pencil on the table in disgust when he is vigorously challenged by a labour leader. Emotions flare, but a little later the two are again smiling at each other — comrades in battle. That kind of creative encounter is enjoyable and worthwhile. Truth may be discovered in quiet contemplation, but just as often, I am convinced, it emerges through a vigorous but fair contestation between two or more persons who are committed to it. A considerable measure of agreement was reached on this occasion before the end of the meeting.

• An interesting luncheon meeting in Winnipeg with the Canadian representative of Intourist — the official Soviet travel agency — rounds out this month. We are planning a return trip to the Soviet Union in 1984, immediately following the Mennonite World Conference in France. A two-week tour by bus, from Vienna through Budapest to Odessa, Yalta, and the Mennonite colonies is envisaged. It should be enjoyable. Anyone interested? mm

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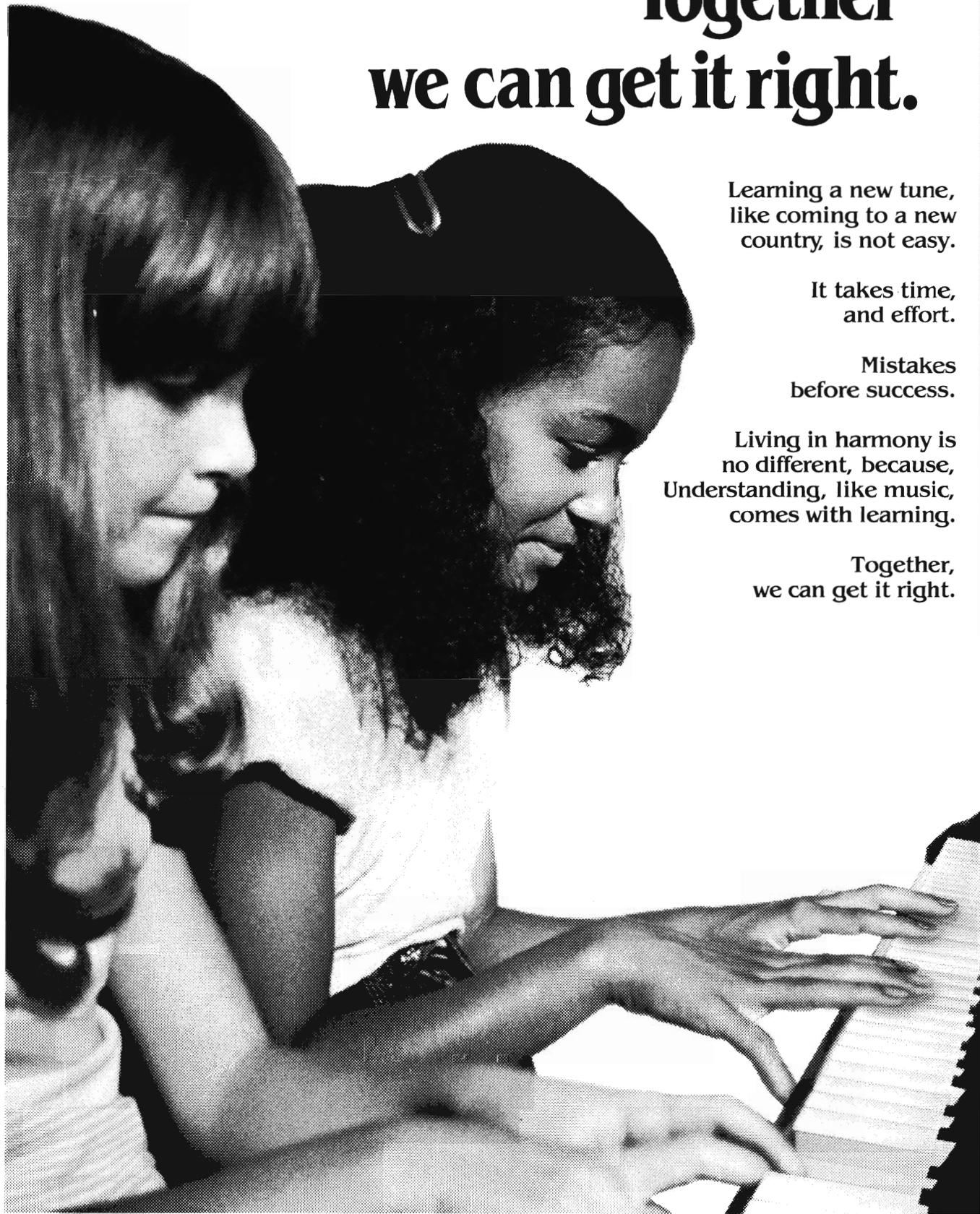
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# MULTICULTURALISM



**Together  
we can get it right.**

Learning a new tune,  
like coming to a new  
country, is not easy.

It takes time,  
and effort.

Mistakes  
before success.

Living in harmony is  
no different, because,  
Understanding, like music,  
comes with learning.

Together,  
we can get it right.



Multiculturalism  
Canada

Multiculturalisme  
Canada

Canada



## ANOTHER NEW FILM FROM ALLAN KROEKER

Allan Kroeker, the gifted young Mennonite film-maker on whom the *Mirror* did a profile in its January, 1981, issue, has completed another feature film. *The Pedlar*, an hour-long film set in Manitoba's inter-lake country, is based on a short story by W. D. Valgardson. Kroeker did a highly successful adaptation of Valgardson's story "God is not a Fish Inspector" several years ago.

*The Pedlar* is to be premiered at the University of Winnipeg on October 29th, at 8:30 p.m. The film will be shown in several rooms simultaneously, and will be followed by an informal reception. Admission is free, but admission tickets are required. Tickets may be picked up in advance at the University of Winnipeg or at the National Film Board office.

**Vernon and Gloria Redekop**, recent graduates of the Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, California, accepted a call to serve as pastor couple at the Thompson United Mennonite Church. Their term started in September.

**Bob Ewert** was recently appointed the first youth pastor of the Bergthaler Mennonite Church in Morden, assisting Rev. William Block. He received his Bachelor of Theology degree at Canadian Mennonite Bible College and his Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies at the University of Winnipeg. His wife Sylvia, received her Bachelor of Theology at CMBC in Winnipeg.

Veteran missionary **Annie Dyck** has served in Colombia for thirty-five years on behalf of the Mennonite Brethren Board of Missions. On July 31 she was married to Samuel Buhler of Saskatoon. She plans to return to Colombia shortly with her husband.

In late August, **D. W. Friesen & Sons Ltd.** of Altona celebrated the 75th anniversary of the founding of their printing and stationery firm.

**Peter Letkeman**, formerly of Winkler, has been appointed acting dean of science at Brandon University. His appointment is for a one-year term. Prof. Letkeman joined the Brandon Col-

lege faculty of science in 1962. He is a member of the Manitoba Research Council and is on the high school chemistry review committee for the Department of Education. Recently he has published several articles on the stability of metal complexes — information which will be applied to cancer research with respect to cancer inhibiting substances.

**Paul Siebert** of Vineland, Ontario, is beginning a 2½-year term of service with Mennonite Central Committee in Bolivia as a special education teacher. He is a graduate of the Mennonite Brethren Bible College, the University of Winnipeg, and the Ontario Teacher Education College in Hamilton. He has taught at MBCI in Winnipeg, and in London Ontario as a special education teacher.

**Mennonite Voices on Nuclear Energy** is the theme of a weekend conference planned for October 29-31 at Conrad Grebel Cllege in Waterloo, Ontario. The conference is sponsored by the peace and social concerns committee at MCC (Canada). The working sessions of the conference will deal with biblical values more than with the statistics of energy and nuclear power. Speakers include Dr. David Schroeder of Winnipeg, Archie Harms of McMaster University, Willie Falk of the University of Manitoba and Abe Paetkau of AECL, Pinawa, scientists working in the field, in addition to Bill Janzen of Ottawa, Len Sawatzky of the University of Manitoba, and Erwin Hiebert of Harvard University. Interested persons should contact Bruno Baerg, c/o MCC Ontario, 50 Kent Ave., Kitchener. (Tel: 519-745-8458).

**Bruno Dyck** of Winnipeg has joined the staff of the Mennonite World Conference office in Strasbourg, France as a volunteer. He is assisting in the planning for the 1984 conference.

**Ron Penner**, associate executive secretary of the Christian education board of Mennonite Brethren in Canada has been appointed executive secretary. He replaces John Unger who resigned after eight years of service.

**The Mennonite Village Museum** at Steinbach has been awarded a grant of \$10,000 by the federal department of

the secretary of state in support of its 1982 cultural programs. A program slated for completion this fall is a series of display panels depicting the Mennonite experience in Europe and Western Canada.



**Ingrid Karin Toews Dell Agnese** of Edmonton has been awarded the Margaret Ann Brine scholarship in music education. This award is given annually to a student of outstanding merit in the Bachelor of Education program majoring in music at the University of Alberta. Ingrid is the daughter of Arthur and Irma (Konrad) Toews of Brandon and the granddaughter of Mrs. Emma Konrad and the late John Konrad, and Mr. and Mrs. John Toews of Steinbach. Her husband, Daniel Dell Agnese is an Edmonton artist.

**John L. Penner**, professor of science at the University of Toronto, has a newly-discovered bacterial species named after him — *proteus penneri*. He is a native of Portage la Prairie and a graduate of the University of Manitoba.

**Winkler Hawks** recently won the Manitoba Provincial C men's fastball championship. Pitcher **Jack Dyck** was named MVP in the tournament.

More than 700 people attended a **Braun family** reunion at the Winkler Sports Arena on July 31 and August 1. They were the descendants of Johann Braun (1836-1911) and Anna Janzen (1841-1890), who immigrated to Canada in 1878. A family book compiled by Bill Brown and Elsie Brown of Winkler contains the names of over 2,700 direct descendants.

A **community orchestra** has been reorganized in Steinbach. The conductor is Doug Bairstow, principal oboist with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra.

Four Winkler potato growers were honored during the 4th annual potato growers barbecue in Portage la Prairie, Sept. 2. Among those chosen in the "Top 10" for McCain Foods were **Kroeker Farms Limited, Schmidt Farms Ltd., Hespeler Enterprises Ltd., and Suderman Bros. Ltd.**

**Kindred Press** has been adopted by the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Conference as the trade name for all publications. **Gilbert G. Brandt** will be in charge of development, working closely with Don Ratzlaff, Book Editor for the U.S. office in Hillsboro, Kansas.

**Ernie and Anne Braun**, members of Bethel Mennonite Church, have been appointed co-directors, with Ron Isaak, of the MCC (Manitoba) Self Help Crafts program. The Brauns will have responsibilities for promotion and mall displays, while Isaak, recently appointed VSer, will assume responsibility for ordering and stocking; he combines this with work in the material aid section. The Brauns come to the task from a background of teaching and business, and will be serving part-time on a voluntary service basis. They are also assuming responsibility for the continuation of the refugee assistance program.

**Frank and Irma Isaack** were directors of both Self Help Crafts and of Refugee Assistance on a two-year VS assignment; they have not announced plans for the future.

The Self Help Crafts program, providing employment for Third World craftspeople, sold \$150,000 in Manitoba during the past fiscal year.

Twenty-three volunteers and five children attended a Mennonite Central Committee orientation in Winnipeg August 10-20, 1982. This was the second orientation held in Winnipeg this summer. Fourteen volunteers are going to Canadian locations and nine to locations in the United States. Fourteen of these are Canadians and nine are Americans.



**Linda Enns** of Winkler, will be working in agriculture in Bolivia for one year with Mennonite Central Committee as a SALT International volunteer. SALT stands for Serve and Learn Together and is a short-term MCC assignment for young people. She was a student at the

University of Manitoba in Winnipeg and Winnipeg Bible College before accepting this assignment. Her parents are Frank L. and Josie Enns of Winkler, and her home church is the Grace Mennonite Church.



**James and Goldie Pankratz** of Winnipeg, are beginning three years of service with Mennonite Central Committee in Bangladesh, where they will be working as personnel resource people. James has a B.A., and M.A. and a Ph.D. in religious studies, all from the McMaster University, Hamilton, Ont. Previous to accepting this assignment with MCC he was academic dean at Mennonite Brethren Bible College in Winnipeg.

Goldie earned an R.N. degree at South Waterloo (Ont.) Memorial Hospital and has been a nurse at Concordia Hospital and at Meadewood Manor in Winnipeg.

They are members of Fort Garry Mennonite Brethren Church in Winnipeg and have two children, Carmen and Rachel.



**Anna Dueck** of Winnipeg, Man., is beginning three years of service with Mennonite Central Committee in Bolivia working with colony Mennonites. She was previously working with MCC (Canada) as a staff secretary in Winnipeg and earlier worked in Akron headquarters.

Anna is a daughter of Helen Dueck of Winkler, Man., and the late John Dueck, and is a member of the Mennonite Brethren Church in Winkler.

### SALT UNDERWAY

Nineteen young people, ages 17-20, attended a three-day MCC SALT orien-

tation in Winnipeg, September 1-3.

The SALT (Serve And Learn Together) program provides a year's experience in service, in unit living, and in church related work and study.

There are three SALT units in Canada: in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in Kitchener, and in Markham, Ontario.

Each unit is sponsored by a church in which the SALTERs serve as helpers in Club work, as secretaries, in music, and in various other activities. A weekly Bible course provides an excellent learning experience.

The SALT year, begun in September, will conclude in July 1983.

The **Winkler 75th Anniversary Committee** announced that the *Winkler Pictorial History Book* has now been published. The committee during Winkler's homecoming in August of 1981 advertised that they expected to proceed with a history book. The objective was to produce a local history book which reveals and preserves the heritage of our people over the past 100 years of so. The 280 page book contains over 1,200 pictures with captions and is available at the book stores in Winkler as well as the Winkler Civic

### COMING EVENTS

- October 15-17: J. J. Thiessen lectures at CMBC. Speaker: Juergen Moltmann.
- October 15-Nov. 3: MCC players in Manitoba.
- October 23: MCC (Manitoba) Women's Auxiliary Annual Meeting, Kleefeld E.M.C. Church.
- October 30: 2:30 and 8:00 p.m., and October 31, 2:30 p.m.: Performance of Elizabeth Peters' Play, the *Cherry Hedge*, in Low German, in Winnipeg, by the Winkler Low German players.
- October 30-Nov. 3: Elim Bible Institute fund-raising banquets in Winnipeg, Niverville, Winkler, and Brandon. Frank Epp will speak on Anabaptist Faith and the Anxieties of Our Age.
- October 29-31: Mennonite Voices on Nuclear Energy conference in Waterloo.
- November 15: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate semi-annual meeting.
- November 11-14: MEDA convention, Holiday Inn, Winnipeg.
- November 26, 27: MCC (Man.) Annual Meeting, Steinbach Chortitzer Church.
- November 13: Mennonite Male Choir performance with the Mennonite German Society.
- December 10: Westgate Christmas Concert.

### Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre: 1982-83 Season

Last spring Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre concluded its 1981-82 season with a sparkling production of Mozart's *Magic Flute*. It was a fitting climax to a fine season which actually ended, oh wonder of wonders these days, with a healthy profit for the company.

The WMT's 1982-83 season also looks promising, although slightly less ambitious than last year's. It opens with a series of one-act plays to be given on November 4, 5 and 6 beginning at 8:05 p.m. at the Kiwanis Centre of the Deaf at 285 Pembina Highway. Martine Friesen will direct. *Sailing*, in which a middle-aged couple ponders the meaning of life while at their summer cottage. John Peters will direct *Eigensinn*, all about how a young couple learns to live with each other. Selma Enns will also direct a reading of English and German poems.

Those interested in participating in these productions should phone: Paul Enns, the co-ordinator, at 783-5323; Martine Friesen at 452-1207; Selma Enns at 334-1096; or John Peters at 453-7591. Tickets will also be available from these people, as well as from the cast, the board of directors or at the door.

In the last week of April the WMT will present Moliere's great comedy *The Imaginary Invalid* at the Playhouse Theatre. The play has a cast of 12, eight males and four females and rehearsals will begin in January.

**The Home Street Mennonite Church** of Winnipeg, formerly the Winnipeg Bergthaler Mennonite Church, celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary on September 18-19. On Saturday, Sept. 18, sports activities and a barbecue were held on the campus of the Canadian Mennonite Bible College, followed by an evening program of slides, singing, drama, and other events. On September 19, a Sunday morning worship service, led by former ministers, was held at the church, while a communion service was held in the evening. The church began in 1957 with a membership of about forty, and today it has more than 250 members. For many years the church was located at Ross and Sherbrook, but in 1973 the congregation moved to 318 Home Street. Ministers who have served the church are Ernest Wiebe, Edwin Brandt, Clarence Epp, David Wiebe, and presently, John R. Friesen.

The **Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School** has started the new school year in the former Columbus School in St. James. New principal, **Jacob Penner**, reports an enrolment of 81, an increase of 30 from last year. Mr. Penner comes

**Mennonite Brethren Bible College** has a total enrolment of 215, with 118 full time and 97 part time students. This represents a slight increase over the previous year.

from a pastorate in Medicine Hat and has previously had 14 years of teaching experience in the Ontario public school system. New teachers are Elsie Dyck, grade 2, and Henry Reimer, Grades 3 and 4. Transportation is managed with three buses and two car pools. Kindergarten classes meet three times a week. Opening program was held Sunday, September 26.

Opening exercises for the **Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute** were held on September 27 in the school gym. Principal Harry Wall reports an enrolment of 432 students, compared with 450 students for the previous year. Special Faith and Life talks were presented to the students by Henry Schmidt, October 5-7, on the topic of commitment to Jesus, the Scriptures and the Church.

**Westgate Collegiate** reports an enrolment of 259 students, compared with 240 for the previous year. Students participated in a work day on October 8 in order to help to raise money for the school.

**Canadian Mennonite Bible College** has a registration of 175 full-time students, representing a slight increase over last year. There are 76 new students and 99 returning. In addition, 49 part-time students are enrolled. Opening exercises were held Sunday, Sept. 26.

## MENNONITE BUSINESS PEOPLE TO GRAPPLE WITH ISSUES

Few Mennonite gatherings bring together as diverse and interesting a cross-section of the Mennonite family as the annual convention of the Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA). The 1982 convention will be held in Winnipeg, Manitoba on November 11-14 and is expected to attract several hundred Mennonite business and professional people from across the continent.

The convention program itself will focus on the theme, "Full Value: Where Faith and Economics Meet."

The two main speakers will be Calvin Redekop, professor of sociology at Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo, Ontario and Irving Hexham, department of religion and Faculty of Administrative Studies, University of Manitoba. Other resource persons from the Winnipeg area include realtor Jake Rempel, Roy Vogt of the University of Manitoba department of economics, pastor John R.



Home Street Mennonite Church celebrated its 25th Anniversary in mid-September. The anniversary choir is shown under the direction of its former director, Peter Goertzen. Seated are some of the current and former ministers, from left: John Friesen, David Wiebe, Ernest Wiebe, Edwin Brandt, and Clarence Epp.

Friesen, and Jim Penner, owner of a chain of food stores.

All sessions will be held at the Holiday Inn (Downtown) in Winnipeg. Janzen pointed out that there are advantages to registering before September 30 both for the convention planners and

individual registrants. Persons interested in attending the convention should contact MEDA for full information at the Winnipeg office (201-1483 Pembina Hwy., Winnipeg, Canada R3T 2C8) or by telephone at (204) 475-3550.

### CHERRY HEDGE MOVES TO WINNIPEG

The Winkler Low German drama group, directed by Susie Penner, will present a new Low German play, *De Tjoaschen Hatj* (The Cherry Hedge), written by Mrs. Elizabeth Peters, in Winnipeg, on October 30 and 31. Play times are 2:30 and 8:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 30, and 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, October 31.

Tickets are available from all locations of the Crosstown Credit Union and by calling 786-2289 in Winnipeg. The play will be performed at the River East Collegiate, 295 Sutton Avenue. The Cherry Hedge was written for the 75th anniversary celebrations of Winkler and deals with the universal problems of what to do with a piece of property with conflicting claims to it.

**Note:** The windmill picture in last month's article on the Mennonite village museum was taken by Allan Siebert.

## mirror mix-up

EDGAR  
GRADE  
TORUT  
TUTOR  
DUTYS  
STUDY  
THACE  
TEACH  
SLONES  
LESSON



Back to school -- Public, Private, High, Technical, Business, Night and last but not least

**SUNDAY** School.

Winner of the September Mix-up is Mrs. Wanda Neufeld, of Winnipeg, who was drawn from 25 entries.

Answers to September are wheat, yellow, golden, chilly, harvest, and windows.

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

**Entries must be sent to the Mirror office by October 28, 1982.**

Name

Address

City/Town

Postal Code

Send Entries to:  
**Mix-Up Contest**  
**Mennonite Mirror**  
203-818 Portage Avenue  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3G 0N4



**Adolf and Anna Ens** of Winnipeg, are beginning a two-year term of service with Mennonite Central Committee in Uganda, where he will be teaching. Anna studied at Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., has a B.A. in history from Western Washington College of Education in Bellingham, and a B.C. Ed. from Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg. Recently she was involved in researching a family's history in Winnipeg and teaching part-time.

A new Low German Drama

## DE TJOASCHEN HATJ THE CHERRY HEDGE

by Elizabeth Peters

will be performed in Winnipeg

**October 30 and 31**

**River East Collegiate Theatre**  
**295 Sutton Avenue**

Saturday, afternoon, October 30, 2:30 p.m.

Saturday evening, October 30, 8 p.m.

Sunday afternoon, October 31, 2:30 p.m.

**Tickets:** \$5 (senior citizens \$4 for the afternoon performance only)  
Available may be purchased at Crosstown Credit Union.  
Ticket orders/reservations may be placed by calling 785-2289.

*Performed by the Winkler Drama Group*  
*Sponsored by the Mennonite Literary Society.*

# MASTERPIECE of FAMILY TREE HISTORY

David D. Epp's original work that traces his family from the 1700s to 1957.

A limited number of his original 16-page work are still available.

You may order yours at a cost of \$100 from

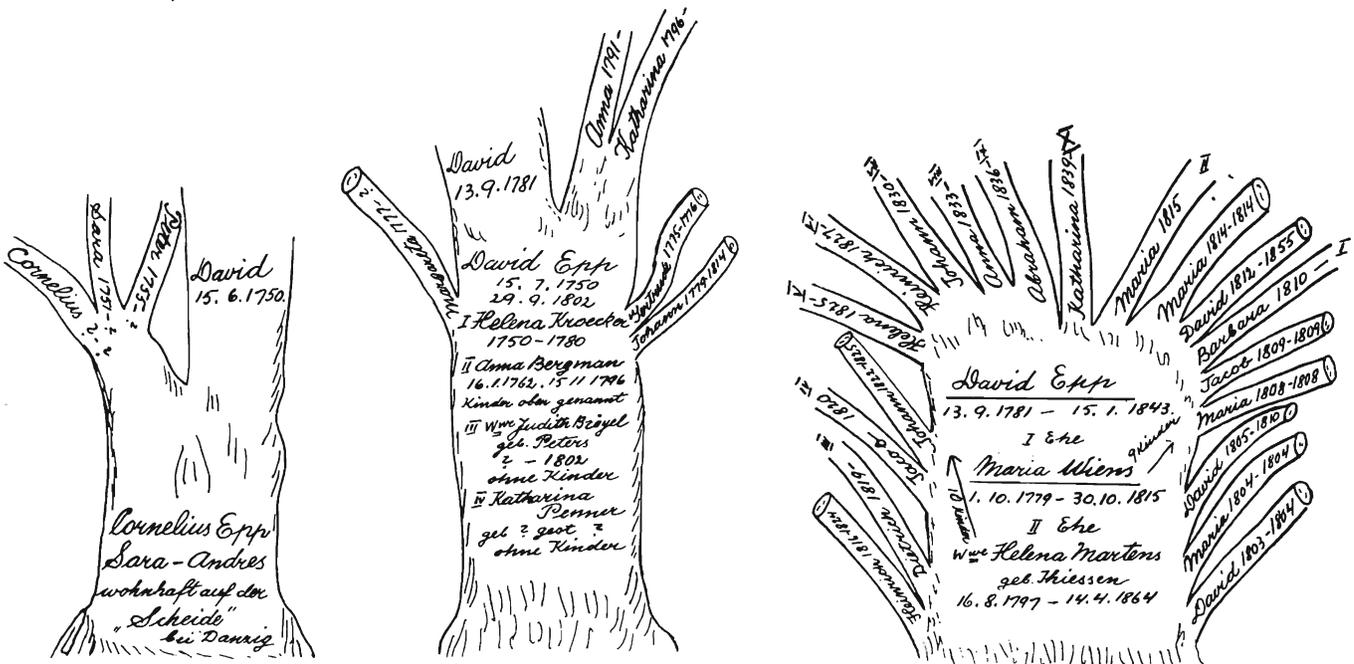
John Epp  
218-2610 Portage Avenue  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R3J 3R3

*Gesammelt und aufgestellt von*

*D. D. Epp*

*Winkler, Man.*

*1952 - 1957.*



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# A long life, a long marriage, a reason to rejoice

by Mary M. Enns

*(This interview was conducted in German and the author hopes that not too much was lost in translation of some of the fine, unsophisticated expressions during a 95-year-old man's reflections.)*

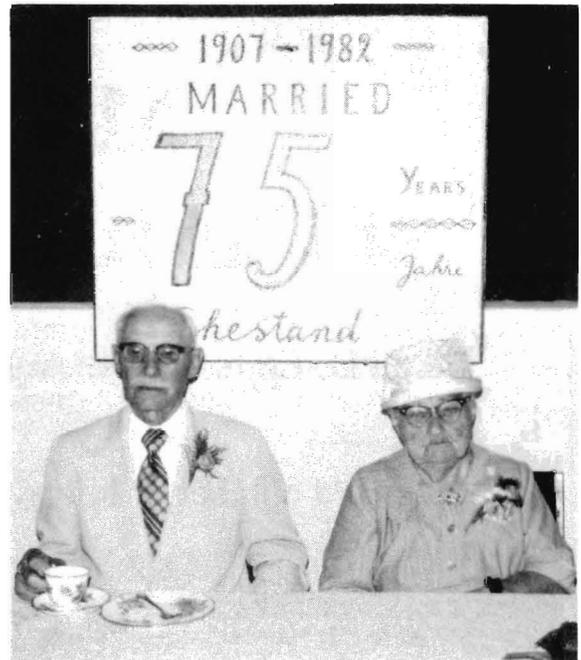
Seventy-five years of marriage may well be considered a zenith, a milestone, a rare culmination in the lifetime of two people. They are the Biblical three score plus fifteen years of sharing every happiness and any successes but also the years of bearing common burdens and tolerating each others' weaknesses and idiosyncrasies. If one thinks of it in mundane, every day occurrence, it works out to approximately 27,375 times that a couple would have faced each other across the breakfast table — very nearly an eternity by today's standards and averages. In the case of Peter and Helen Redekopp of Winkler, their response was: "God was good to us. We always had food to put onto that table."

The Redekopps, both of them 95 years old, celebrated the 75th anniversary of their marriage in August. Today their children say: "It was a good marriage and a truly loving relationship. They were an example to us all of a walk together of righteousness and truth. We saw how important it is to show compassion and patience to fellow humans, striving all the while to learn to do God's good will." Congratulations and good wishes came from the Queen and from government dignitaries in Canada, and the mayor of Winkler — all emphasizing the unique circumstance and the good fortune of such a long lifetime spent together. Tribute was paid to a

man whose influence is still a positive one at 95. Children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren from near and far, friends and neighbours came to share this special day and pay loving tribute.

A month earlier, seated in their quiet, comfortable home awaiting our arrival, the old couple is protected by a fan bravely battling the July heat wave. Our meeting is without fluster or worry because, after all, "if you are a friend of our son Jake's you're our friend." I was to learn straightaway that old age does not necessarily preclude enthusiasm and joy of living. And a thought surfaced; when, if not at 95, does that sad stage of loss of these two qualities set in? And, is it circumstantial or is the individual's state of mind and heart a controlling factor?

"I would need to go back to the earlier years of our life together," says Peter Redekopp in a strong clear voice. "We came from Gnadenthal, 160 kilometers from Chortitza and several hundred kilometers from Halbstadt, Russia. I was a farmer and we'd had some good years. I had served as a medical orderly in the Forestry Service (*Forstei*) in Ekaterinoslav for three years and we, along with many others of our people were working on emigrating to Canada. It was a crucial period in our lives because in our district the Russian officials openly wanted the death of the Germans, the Mennonites. I was considered an informer because I had been seen standing next to a German lieutenant at a gathering. With great difficulty and just in time we escaped and were able to leave Russia in August, 1924.



"We arrived in Winkler with five children and \$25 in our pockets. We were welcomed by the John Enns family. Fortunately for me it was threshing time and I was put to work immediately. I learned the Canadian way of threshing very quickly. I do remember being puzzled when Mr. Enns said: 'Redekopp, there will be a car here to take you to the field.' I couldn't imagine how this would work because the only car I knew was a manure barrow (*Misst-Karre*). I soon found out differently. We lived in a little house on the Wiens' yard, just north of Winkler. Before long we ended up in Gnadenthal and that felt like home since we had just left our home in Gnadenthal, Russia. Gradually we bought, on credit, an old cow for \$3 and two horses for \$25, and we started on our own feeling very rich indeed. In the Spring of 1925 we were offered an option of buying 400 acres of land, not prime property, with money graciously loaned to us. I was overwhelmed at the trust people afforded me. It seems they were impressed because I loved hard work.

"The running of the farm proved a costly business over the years. But eventually we had seven children and they were all willing to work hard and help us. Certainly, if it had not been for our supportive, undemanding children we couldn't have seen it through. I had impressed upon them that while we still had the *Reiseschuld* (our seven fares from Russia) and now all our other debts to consider, we would buy absolutely nothing but barest necessities. They fully agreed. Then there was the day

when I was in Plum Coulee and really couldn't help myself, I just had to bring the children a little surprise — a three-cent chocolate bar for each of them. When I proudly presented them to the children I was thoroughly reprimanded by them for not sticking to our agreement. Those children were our greatest blessing and our good fortune. We lived on the farm for 30 years before we moved to Winkler in 1954. When we were planning our present home, which was our second house in Winkler, the children insisted that it be contracted." Here Jake explains, "Before the contract was signed Dad insisted that a clause be put in that he would be hired as a carpenter working on the house. He was 80 at the time."

Asked which were their choice years in Canada, Mr. Redekopp says without hesitation: "When we were totally free of debt in 1954 and when I could sit all day long at the job I loved better than any other — my book binding. These were the best years of my life." Here his faithful old Helena smiles broadly, "I always knew where my husband was, downstairs at work with his books."

Asked whether thrift, ambition, hard work — somehow inherent traits of the Mennonites as a people — and that quality of not sitting and waiting for God's blessings to fall in showers was a part of his philosophy, he answers: "Decidedly yes, of course; but always with God's help. That and the thought that a debt is an obligation of honour to a commitment."

And their problems over the years here in Canada? Well, you see, there are always difficulties to overcome," and he looks pensive, "but I can't seem to think of many problems." Quite a weighty statement that, in view of the fact that, according to son Jake "the farm was three quarters paid for in the Depression and when we couldn't continue the payments the farm was taken from us. Three months later the government passed legislation forbidding such takeovers. Dad stayed on the farm, renting it and paid it all over again at a much higher price."

"We were very fortunate," emphasizes Peter Redekopp, "that when the going was rough and there wasn't the money to pay the debts on our machinery, we asked to be allowed to pay the interest, at least. The fellows said they were quite satisfied that we were trying our best."

And does he think that difficult financial times can also be stressful times for a church community? The old gentleman reflects: "No, I don't believe so,

because one really needs to rely upon God in times like that."

Theirs was a home where, says Jake, "the fear of the Lord, the Bible and prayer were high priorities. In the early years we would do our chores, then came breakfast and our time of Bible reading and prayer. Very often we would have guests staying with us and they shared whatever it was we had at the time. These were either visiting ministers or beggars who happened through our village, or businessmen. All shared our morning prayers with us whether or not they understood the German language. All rose with our family while father prayed. Talking and laughing at table were forbidden. We were encouraged, rather, to reflect on God's goodness to us, our home in Canada and the food on our table." Mr. Redekopp interjects: "Standing during prayer was something we were brought up with. We stood to honour God. Today we sit to pray as a congregation in church. I wonder sometimes whether that is glorifying God."

How, we wondered, did he ever get to be a book binder, a 73-year-old retired farmer who had earned himself a restful living? Was he always an avid reader or what prompted an ambition like this? "I was no great reader," he says, "nor am I knowledgeable in books. But I've always been curious as to how books were made up. One day my son Jake, who was a teacher here in Winkler for 16 years, came by after school and said: "Dad, you're always wanting to keep busy at something, and

we have so many books needing repair at school. Why don't you learn to repair and bind books?" That was fire for the father's thinking.

At 73 you probably don't procrastinate and he didn't. He went to Winnipeg, stayed with his children and began to search for a book-binding business. The first two that he discovered, fearing an eventual competitor in him, gave him no encouragement but sent him on his way quickly. The third, Henry Wall, a high school teacher who repaired and bound books in his spare time, agreed to have Redekopp watch and learn. Two weeks later, after trial and error, he left for home once again ready to give it a try on his own. He set up shop in his basement, designed the necessary equipment, and had made what he could not make himself. "Here I sat every day, warm in winter and cool in summer, for 22 years and worked at what I loved to do. You see, I had never really wanted to become a farmer, but my father insisted upon it. But I don't live with regret, though I would like to have been a forger or doing some factory work or other."

"A part of father's philosophy seems to have been, 'Think well of others; avoid suspicion'," says Jake, "He was never a learned man, but a wise one." "The 75 years," smiles Redekopp the elder looking toward his wife, "were wonderful years. We worked hard, but we worked together for the same goal. And always we remember to say, it was God's grace." mm

## WIE SENNT TOORISTI

Wie sennt ni Grupp Tooristi  
Dä meist niemools febiestri  
Weel Oomtji Lohrenz feari sett  
Enn wie bloos foari mett.

Mett Reisi ess hee goot bikaunt  
Feat ons fonn Kanada bett Russlaund.  
Doa wud'a jierin ons selwst waut wiesi,  
Oba doa foa wie op Intooristen Jliesi.

Daut jeit dann monchmoal ziemlich groff,  
Dä Bossi wieri oolt, dä Gaussi roff.  
Oba opp eent kunn wie ons filooti  
Daut tjeen Lenin Monument wort utjilooti.

Doch emm ganzen haft ett goot jigooni  
Wann wie uck noch nich festooni  
Emma enni Tiet emm Boss too senni —  
Toom Äte sennt wie pindjlich benni.

— von Selma Hooge



## A stimulating review of two difficult decades of Mennonite life

*Frank H. Epp Mennonites in Canada, 1920-1940: A People's Struggle for Survival* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1982) xvi, 640 pp.

### A Review by Gerald Friesen

Canadian Mennonites will be pleased by the second installment of Frank Epp's history. The new volume is a thorough, forthright and thoughtful appreciation of the Mennonite experience. Its length may seem forbidding but the prose is fluent, the detail is not excessive when one considers the range and complexity of the issues, and the story is always interesting. The book is a firm foundation for future scholarship and a stimulating review of two exceptionally difficult decades in Mennonite life.

The organization of the book is chronological and thematic. It discusses the rise of fundamentalist Christian thought in the twentieth century and its impact especially in Ontario. It examines at length the emigration of 6,000 Mennonites to Mexico and nearly 2,000 to Paraguay in the 1920s, and the arrival of about 20,000 from Russia in the same period. In two long chapters, it surveys the new agencies and settlements created by this population change — the Land Settlement Board, the irrigation experiments, the communities in Peace River and Reesor and Yarrow — and the new congregations arising from Russian-Kanadier differences. One

shocking episode in Canadian immigration history — the 1929-30 decision to refuse entry to 15,000 or more Mennonites who had already abandoned their homes in the Soviet Union — is examined within the larger story of the trials of Russian Mennonites in the early years of Stalin's rule. The economy of Canada's Mennonite communities in the Depression and the failure of several Mennonite economic institutions (especially two Manitoba Waisenamts) receive a full dissection. The increasing division of the Mennonite community between General Conference and Brethren and the rise of yet other movements — especially the Evangelicals and the Rudnerweider — and of new divisions in the established churches such as those among the Old Order are chronicled with precision. One entire chapter focusses upon young adults — including youth movements, Bible schools, city hostels, sex education, university — and the debates about how the faith of these young people could be reinforced. Another chapter outlines the debate over Mennonite culture and especially which aspects were essential to Mennonitism, including a non-conformist lifestyle, the German language and German ethnicity. The last chapter surveys the variety of Mennonite viewpoints upon the world at the end of the two decades — the Pro-German and

Nazi, the dispensationalist, the Anabaptist and the pacifist or non-resistance perspectives, in particular.

The narrative skillfully places Canadian events in an international context and ensures that every Mennonite community is situated within the larger picture. This is not an easy task and Epp deserves full marks for his attention to such detail. The narrative also emphasizes themes that are, one suspects, dear to Epp's heart. He is writing a national version of Mennonite history, quite obviously, rather than a continental or global version. *Canada* provides the context because Epp is a *Canadian* Mennonite. Moreover, Epp's study is rooted in the rediscovery of Anabaptist theology and in the recent rewriting of three centuries of Mennonite church history. Epp emphasizes that, even in the 1930s, during a time of severe challenges to the faith and the institutions of the Mennonite people, Mennonites possessed important unifying elements: a common theological heritage, a common historical experience and a common preference for separation from the larger society in which they dwelt. Though he might have concentrated exclusively upon disunity in the Mennonite community, Epp prefers to treat the schisms and divisions as if they offered "potential for cooperation."

The book is huge and yet it leaves

untouched many issues in the Mennonite experience. The explanation for Epp's decision not to treat themes now popular in the study of social history probably lies in the time and the manner in which the Mennonite history project was begun. In the years since 1967, when Epp commenced his work, social history has become a central concern of Canadian historians rather than an approach of marginal importance. Thus, his emphasis upon the formal history of church institutions might have been revised if he were starting again. In addition, Epp is interested in Mennonite survival. Thus, his questions are organized to demonstrate how churches splintered, when communities grew and what were topics for debate among the committed. One might well ask whether the story would change if Epp concentrated on Mennonite adaptation to a Canadian norm? What if his questions concerned the degree of acculturation rather than the degree of distinctiveness? One suspects that his study would then illustrate Mennonite accommodation to North American industrial capitalism. Even in the

cases where resistance was most profound, as in J. J. Siemens' brilliant campaign to establish the cooperative movement in southern Manitoba, the language and the institutions of the resistance were not purely Mennonite but rather were common to the critics of capitalism in every nation. At the opposite end of the political spectrum, as in the case of Mennonite attacks upon the trade union movement, sixteenth century Anabaptist religious principles probably kept company with twentieth century North American Board of Trade rationales in support of freedom of conscience and freedom of property. None of this new material need change Epp's conclusions. Rather, when it is written, the new social history will enrich the story by showing how Mennonite reactions to Canadian society were even wider in range than just the twenty variations within the church itself.

This is a work of contention. It is itself a contribution to the debate about Mennonite identity and Mennonite roles. The volume ends with Epp's assertion that the elements which once separated Mennonites from the larger world had,

by 1940, ceased to be important. Geographical isolation, as in the village islands of Russia and Manitoba, was impossible. So, too, was the Church's institutional isolation; theologies such as dispensationalism and quietism were irrelevant in the new age, he contends. By 1939, however, Mennonites were still divided among themselves and were giving "mixed messages" to their children and to other Canadians. Epp argues that henceforth they would have to acknowledge their membership in a state, Canada, and to accept their Christian mission. Seclusion or isolation is impossible in the twentieth century, he is saying, and involvement in the world as Anabaptists — missionaries of a peculiar sort — must commence. This book is Frank Epp's Christian witness, to use the language of the church. He has tried to present the Christian message as it should be understood by members of the Mennonite community today. It is a most impressive volume.

*Gerald Friesen is a member of the department of history, University of Manitoba.*

## Green Gables Comes to Rainbow to Warm the Hearts of All

**A Review by Mary M. Enns**

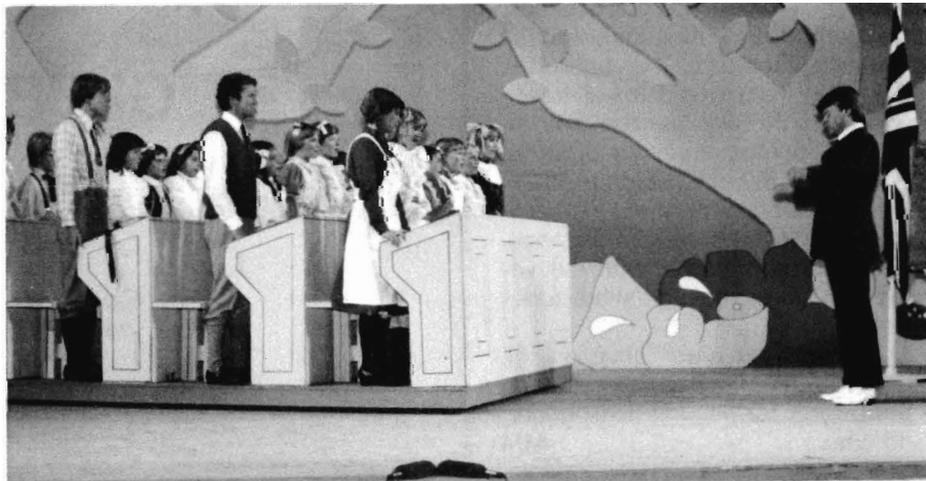
*Anne of Green Gables* — as true blue Canadian as any musical presented in Canada — played to a full house at Winnipeg's Rainbow Stage on the evening of September 2. The only other production was on the preceding evening. This was a cool, rainy evening and, though Winnipeggers might love music, they don't like rain.

*Anne of Green Gables*, this well-loved novel by Lucy Maude Montgomery, has universal appeal, for it has been translated into more than 15 languages. It was adapted for the musical by Donald Harron and set to music by Norman Campbell. The musical was presented in London, and then Nairobi, in 1969. It was first produced in Canada in 1971 at the Charlottetown Festival. The endearing homespun quality of Canada's tiniest province and its people, which so deeply penetrated the very fibres of the novel, was now cleverly woven into the warp of the musical, the play. No easy thing this, for when all is said and done we need to decide as to whether a con-

temporary interpretation, no matter how well-executed of an old-fashioned novel, really does it justice.

Once again, Winnipeg Mennonite Children's Choir, directed by Helen Litz and accompanied by Marilyn Thiessen, demonstrated quality in a production rather different from their usual repertoire of concert. "We really enjoyed doing this," said Helen Litz, "it was a

beautiful outlet of expression for the children. It's the sort of thing I've long wanted to do with them. It's so infectious, and, as Anne Shirley said, 'It gave us a great deal of satisfaction.' " If enthusiasm and pleasure of performing were the key words from first to last this translated, clearly, into delight for a very keen audience. Many of the performers were the early WMCC children



now grown into adults. They were joined by a group of the choir's present members, making it a strong, fine cast. The people in charge of costumes, set design (except for Anne's suitcase) and construction are to be commended for an authentic and pleasing portrayal of that period of time, turn of the century, in Avonlea, P.E.I.

Excitedly awaiting the first sight of the red-haired, freckle-faced Anne Shirley, we were greeted instead by a gaggle of geese, the charming and beautifully gowned ladies of the village, "Workers for the Cause", led by the irrepressible Rachel Lynde (Lori Litz). When an entirely convincing, aged Matthew (Ralph Mueller) appeared he was joined quickly by the pixy-faced enchanting and valuable Anne (Krista Muller), the sort of Anne we had met long ago in the novel. Her performance, on the whole, showed that she had indeed captured the character and charm of the fictional Anne "with an e". Marilla (Doris Mueller) was the well-meaning, frustrated old spinster. Her relief came when she collaborated with her lady friends in "Well, we'd better get rid of it (the incriminating "cordial") here and now." They did, with a relish, and to the hearty enjoyment of the audience. Gilbert (David Taillon) seemed overgrown but played an excellent swain, adored by Josie and rejected by Anne. As to Josie Pye (Lorie Friesen) why Josie was the properly nasty little girl, an exciting, well-portrayed, flouncing replica of the novel, true to life then and now. The golden-haired Diana Barry (Ingra Schellenberg) was the heart of gold image of Anne's best friend. The audience enjoyed Diana and Anne at tea with Diana's "Let's pretend we're grownups and we'll say things to each other we don't really mean." She handled the torn and hanging flounce on her underskirt like a pro.

For pure delight we would have to recall the picnic and school scenes, with the children, young and older, at their most enthusiastic. The contrasting characters of the two teachers portrayed most admirably two different philosophies of teaching and two different teacher types. The ice cream in Anne's face produced audible gasps from the audience. This and the chain of gossip, set clanging once again with the villagers, brought out the little shady tones of Josie.

"Anne" is very much alive on the Island today. We thank a fine company of performers for helping us to understand why. **MM**

## Nazi Sympathies among German Canadians in the 1930's

**A review by George K. Epp**

Jonathan Wagner is the first Canadian scholar to attempt a comprehensive review of the Nazi movement in Canada. There have been references to the phenomenon, but the serious broad study of this shortlived movement in Canada was still missing. In the four chapters of this book, *Brothers Beyond the Sea*, Wagner presents evidence and a surprisingly objective analysis of one aspect of history of the Canadian depression years which some would rather forget. But we cannot run away from history, and this is obviously the author's position, when he attempts to recreate the stage of the depression era, to enable us to see the events from a distance. On the whole, Wagner's insights are very helpful.

Chapter one is devoted to the study of the Canadian German community of the 1930's. The author's conclusion that the large number of ethnic German immigrants from Eastern Europe, who had experienced not only communism on their own skin, but also the animosity and rejection by a society in which they lived as a minority, were very vulnerable to the enticement of a mystical "Volk-idea" presented in one package with anti-communism, is not surprising. Wagner obviously understands the psychology of such mass feelings, but he does not come across as an apologist for any group. He sticks to his scholarly analysis of a political phenomenon, leaving it to others to deal with a number of questions which are the natural

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Chapter two deals with the German effort in Canada, revealing the stupidity of Hitler's policy toward Canada and the United States, although the ignorance of the German Nazi top was not always fully exposed, due to the fact that in the early thirties much of the work was still in the hands of professional diplomats. The reader may find it interesting to discover that Hitler took an American take-over of Canada for granted and that perhaps explains at least partly his absurd policy toward Canada.

Wagner traces quite successfully in this chapter Hitler's policy toward the Germans in Canada and the gradual change of the mood among Canadian Germans from sympathy to enthusiasm, at least in some quarters. The thunder of *Sieg-Heil*, we learn, was not restricted to Germany and many parts of Europe. In the depression thirties it could also be heard in Canadian cities, including Winnipeg. The author also demonstrates how legitimate cultural institutions, like the *Auslands-Institut* and the *VDA (Volksbund fuer das Deutschtum im Ausland)*, gradually were turned into tools of Nazi power. This, obviously, was one of the reasons why many naive and politically illiterate immigrants fell into the trap. They had trusted those institutions in the past and could not see the difference in the goals set by the new masters of Germany.

The chapter on Canada's pro-Nazis is of particular interest. Although it will bring back painful memories for some of the still living actors of that period, after fifty years it is definitely time to forgive, but also time for a critical analysis of that inglorious period. We cannot benefit from history if we refuse to face our mistakes. Although it is clear that the Mennonite community, with its large share in post-1917 immigration from Eastern Europe, was not directly involved in the political movement, it is nevertheless embarrassing to read that along with most of the German press in Canada, the *Mennonitische Rundschau* and *Der Bote* are mentioned as papers with a pro-Nazi bias. More disturbing is the accusation of the author that the Mennonite papers manifested not only anti-communism but also anti-semitism. The causes for this late and relatively shortlived phenomenon among Mennonites will have to be discussed at some other point, suffice it to say in this context that the Mennonite community as such has never approved of absurd statements and behavior of a few individuals. Mennonites were primarily loyal to the church and that explains

why relatively few among them became real "followers" of Nazism, while the number of those who sympathized with things German (not Nazism) was significant.

In his last chapter Wagner discusses the opposition to the Nazi movement in Canada and the failure of this movement. The author points out that until 1937 the only serious opposition came from the Canadian Jewish Congress and from communists, the two groups most directly threatened by the National Socialists. However, if the Nazi movement failed in Canada, in spite of the fact that "until late 1937 and early 1938, the majority of Canadians, both within government and without, were evidently either not interested in hearing about the Nazi danger or too hostile toward those attempting to point it out . . ." (p. 121), the reader is led to conclude that in spite of the depression and the large pool of German immigrants from East-

ern Europe, who could have been easy prey for an anti-communist ideology, Canada of the 1930's was not the soil for a Nazi movement or any other political extreme.

The author has presented an objective study of a subject that deserves our attention, especially at a time when nationalism and extremist movements are very much in fashion once again. The work is well researched and documented and the more serious reader will benefit from the helpful bibliography provided. This book should interest historians, but there may be others who will pick it up out of curiosity and then not put it down before they have read it, for in spite of its scholarly quality it is also quite readable.

*Jonathan F. Wagner: BROTHERS BEYOND THE SEA. National Socialism in Canada. (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1981), pp. 150, hard cover, \$9.*

## "WORDS, WORDS, WORDS"

A review by Jacob Thielmann

David Augsburg's *Caring Enough to Hear and be Heard* is the third in a series of publications which deal with pastoral counseling. (The other two are *Caring Enough to Confront* and *Caring Enough to Forgive/Caring Enough to Not Forgive*). Like its predecessors, this combines biblical and psychological language and insight into inter-personal relations. "The purpose of this volume is" according to the author, "to evoke new understanding of the power of equal listening, attending, hearing, leveling, risking and caring in relationships, and to invite new experiments and experiences of being with others in

equal communication and equal regard" (p. 7).

The book might be used effectively in small study groups, provided that at least one person in the group is acquainted with human relationship skills and can stimulate discussion along the topics suggested by the chapter headings of the book. The author no doubt identifies the need of caring for one another correctly, but whether this book will give the reader the necessary motivation and skill is questionable.

In many ways this book is disappointing. It seems to be a compilation of quotes and notes from various sources,

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and while the author acknowledges at the end of the book the works used, there is insufficient documentation throughout the chapters. Moreover, many statements and discussions with regard to counseling are presented without adequate contexts and settings. The reader has to really "care" in order to "hear" what is being said. The preacher-psychologist often repeats himself, preaches and uses psychological jargon which becomes annoying. Here is an example of his style:

We have so much in common as persons. The life pilgrimage awakens the same basic needs for trust and acceptance, for saying yes and saying no, for play and imagination, for the abilities to work, to choose, to be intimate, to be productive, and to integrate all these into a pattern called wisdom. We search for the same values. We cannot live without hope. We become a self through will. We venture into life with purpose. We strive for some competence. We search for identity. We long for love. We learn to care. We discover wisdom. We share these steps and stops along the life pilgrimage with every other human. The variations of outcome at each step are as many as there are humans. Each is a unique constellation created by innumerable conscious and unconscious choices (p. 18).

There seem to be contradictions in Augsburg's advice. On the one hand he quotes approvingly Wendell Johnson who counsels "to speak fully without fear of self-reproach" (p. 123), and on the other hand he implies that it is "wrong" to say "I enjoyed the evening with you — but I wished I were somewhere else." The last statement apparently puts the other person down, but, it may be asked, what happens to the person who feels that way? If Augsburg believes in "the transparent self," should he not allow a person to express what he/she really feels, believes and is?

There may well be such a thing as "the art of communication" (pp. 7-8). However, it seems to me that the biblical writers and the unsophisticated Anabaptist-Mennonites spoke and heard the truth simply and in love. There was little if any "art" but much communication in their inter-personal relations.

*David Augsburg, CARING ENOUGH TO HEAR AND BE HEARD (Scottsdale: Herald press, 1982), 175, pp. \$5.95.*

*Jacob Thielmann is a pastor in the Cedar Valley Mennonite Church, Mission, B.C.*

## Cherry hedge is catalyst in "bilingual" comedy

*THE CHERRY HEDGE/DE TJOASCHE HATJ, a drama in three acts written in Low German and English by Elisabeth Peters and presented by the Garden Valley Collegiate Drama Club in English in February 1982, and in Low German by members of the Winkler community in April.*

**Excerpted from reviews by Peter Paetkau**

*The Cherry Hedge* was the main attraction during Cultural Days at Garden Valley Collegiate last February.

*The Cherry Hedge* was commissioned by the Winkler 75th committee to commemorate Winkler's anniversary.

G.V.C. Drama Club is first to produce the play in its English version to capacity houses. And no wonder! They were truly spirited productions. Actors played their parts superbly — no need for prompting. The make-up of one male role played by a girl was so very convincing I would not have known had I not looked at the program sheet later. Though a hilarious romance, every role was executed with such skill and real-

ism that, though one's sides were aching from continuous laughter, not even the curious antics and broken English of Great Aunt Mary Hiebert I and II seemed out of place.

*The Cherry Hedge* opens with an introductory speech in which the speaker poses as a composite of all who will ever have lived in Winkler, seated appropriately on Crocus Hill, a little knoll near the cemetery where a small creek runs and pussy willows grow. This vantage point affords "a good view of the spot where they who once lived near here have found a final resting place".

As a list of Winkler's once prominent citizens is rattled off a spell seemed to be cast over the audience. I too realize that my own family and I have had more associations with the people of Winkler than I had thought possible.

The story really is simple. The entire plot revolves around the cherry hedge located between two properties owned by cousins, home to the birds of the air and a never-used love-seat, and cause

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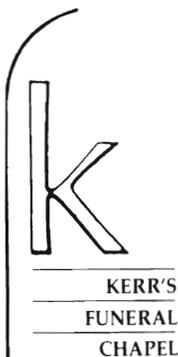
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of endless problems especially irritable to Helen who seems to bear most of the consequences and therefore does not like anything made from choke cherries but is desperate to remove the hedge, even if she has to lay the axe to it herself. Nobody else really wants to be rid of it, least of all Uncle John, an elderly somewhat disabled bachelor staying at Helen's, his niece. Great Aunt Mary Hiebert, long a widow and owner of the hedge, must first be consulted before removal but nobody knows exactly where she lives in Saskatchewan.

The secretive actions of Helen and Jessie, her cousin living on the adjoining lot, to separately invite Great Aunt Mary Hiebert to their home in Winkler from Saskatchewan sets in motion a train of irreversible events they come to regret. Uncle John, because he wrote to the real Great Aunt Mary Hiebert, whose address he recalls after the others have mailed their letters. When two supposed Great Aunt Mary Hieberts arrive for a stay the excitement mounts.

From hereon the excitement centres around Uncle John, who has been mooning about his lost love, the real Great Aunt Mary, whom he was "too block-headed" to ask for her hand in marriage 50 years ago. The action is fast now and building up for a showdown, especially the agitated conversation of Great Aunt Mary I and II in wierd broken English. The chief concern of Uncle John is that these two be out of the house by the time real Great Aunt Mary, whom he has invited, arrives and the story as to why they have all been invited must come out.

After the real Mary Hiebert arrives the scene soon turns riotous as the two ungainly aunts return early from their *Frindschoft* at the other end of the street. Expectations have been gradually built up and it has been an excellent plot, never losing the interest of the audience. The author has once more proven that she is an expert at storytelling. Even in the final scenes, though the action diminishes, anticipation of what may happen next does not subside until the curtain is drawn. The final scene is touching in the way the cherry hedge really does not matter any more.

The community production of the full-length Low German version drama became a reality nine weeks after the Collegiate Drama Club presented the revised and shortened English version.

Like that earlier performance this production played to capacity crowds and delighted audiences during all three nights.

Naturally there are some primary dif-

ferences between the English and Low German versions. Low German simply lends itself more readily to expressions of humor as we have known it in real life. Having seen and thoroughly enjoyed both versions, I somewhat missed the antics and broken English of Great Aunt Mary I and II in the GVC production.

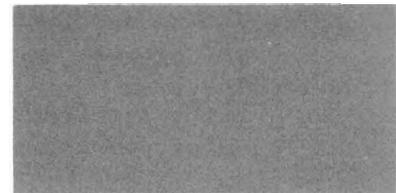
The introductory speech seemed a good deal more believable read by an older woman, who standing there on Crocus Hill, is actually capable of knowing intimately most of those prominent people she is referring to, more becoming in the Low German as it is. Here the language is truly an asset.

It may well be uncertain to most of us just how mixed up and intermingled the languages that we speak are. Perhaps the "*Mitchjemums*" in their quaint language and simple considerations of "*daut Frindschoft en Mexico en de British Honduras*" rather than of events in Washington is what really matters and determines who the "edu-cated" are! Obviously some of the quaintness is intended to show the listener just how quaint we sometimes have been.

Nonetheless the Low German premiere of this drama must be considered an indisputable success. mm

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# Russland in Herbst und Winter



Otto und Gertrude Schowalter.

Gedichte von Otto Schowalter

Vorbemerkung von Roy Vogt

Viele der Mennoniten die während der letzten chaotischen Monate des Zweiten Weltkriegs von Preussen oder Russland nach Deutschland flüchteten, oder kurz danach in Norddeutschland ansiedelten, machten in Hamburg Station. Die Stadt war verwüstet, aber in dem Stadtteil Altona stand ein grosses Gebäude unangetastet: die Mennonitenkirche Hamburgs. Manche Einwohner die ihre Häuser verloren hatten waren der Auffassung, die Kirche wäre absichtlich von den Alliierten Bomben erspart worden und sie verdächtigten die Mennoniten als mit dem Feind im Spiel. Trotzdem wurde die Mennonitenkirche eine Herberge vieler, weil es ganz geblieben war.

Einige Mennoniten die jetzt in Winnipeg wohnen, denken dankbar an die Zeit zurück, als sie von Frau Otto Schowalter, die Gemahlin des Predigers am Ort, Hilfe erhielten. Sie gab ihnen in der grossen Kirche einen Platz und besorgte was sie brauchten. Zuerst arbeitete sie allein, bis ihr Mann aus dem

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Krieg zurückkam und auch mithalf.

Im Jahre 1961 führte uns unser Theologiestudium nach Hamburg. Auch wir bekamen einen Raum in der Mennonitenkirche. Otto Schowalter war noch immer der Ortsprediger aber seine Frau war zu sehr erkrankt, als dass wir sie hätten kennenlernen können. Sie starb bald darauf. Wir lernten einen sehr zurückgezogenen, traurigen Mann kennen, der von der Kanzel gedankenreiche Predigten lieferte, aber sehr menschenfeindlich wirkte. Wie überrascht waren wir, als er uns eines Abends zum

Essen einlud.

Der Abend bei Otto Schowalter war uns unvergesslich. Er schlug zuerst Musik von Beethoven vor, die wir aber in strenger Stille geniessen mussten. Dann folgte eine schmackhafte Mahlzeit und wir setzten uns ins Wohnzimmer. Das Gespräch war erstaunlich warm und persönlich, wobei er von seinen früheren Wünschen, Künstler zu werden, erzählte. Dass er dann doch Theologie studiert hatte und was er im Kriege, als deutscher Soldat erlebt hatte, erzählte er mit trauriger Miene.

Anfangs habe er zwar geglaubt, Deutschland müsse Russland besiegen, aber die Riesengrösse der Steppen und der Mut der russischen Soldaten hätten ihn umgestimmt. Bald zweifelte er an der 'gerechten Sache' der Deutschen.

Seine Gefühle als deutscher Soldat in Russland äusserten sich in Gedichten, die er uns an jenem Abend in Hamburg vorlas und die uns tief beeindruckt haben. Als er später starb erhielten wir von Verwandten die Erlaubnis, aus diesen Texten etwas zu veröffentlichen. Hiermit erfolgen zwei dieser Gedichte.

mm

## I Nachmittag im Vorherbst (Ukraine)

Schon sind die Äcker leer vom Halme  
Und geben alle Ferne frei;  
Nun lobt das Land mit einem Psalme,  
Was ewig alt und ewig neu.

Die Wolken wandern aufgelöster  
Unter dem offenen Himmel hin,  
Und Bäume und Wälder stehn entblösster  
Im ungeheuren Raum darin.

Ich lieg im Grasse tief verborgen  
Und schau dem grossen Wandel zu.  
Wer bin ich selber, bin ich morgen,  
Nach eines Abends kühler Ruh?

Im Zickzackfluge die Libellen  
Umschwirren mich, ein Kranz von Licht  
auf ihren schimmernd silberhellen  
Flügeln, mir grade vorm Gesicht.

Und eilig laufen alle Käfer,  
Die Spinne webt ihr Netz geschwind;  
Von Tausenden kein einer Schläfer  
Von all dem kleinen Werks gesind.

Es hat sie einer angetrieben,  
Ein Freund des bleichenden Gebeins;  
Und wie sie auch das Leben lieben,  
Er streitets ihnen: es ist seins.

Ein Wind steht auf nach grosser Stille  
Und heisst die Käfer alle stehn.  
Gebt acht! Gib acht, du Zirpegrille,  
Dir wird das Zirpen bald vergehn!

Ich raffe mein Gewand beihanden,  
Obwohl es heller Tag noch ist  
Und wandre fort, aus diesen Landen,  
Wo sich das Leben selbst vergisst.

— von Otto Schowalter

## II Winterreise in Russland

Wer sind wir noch in dieser schauervollen  
Und wie zu Eis erstarrten Winternacht?  
Indes die Räder unsres Wages rollen,  
Umrieselt unsern Leib wie kalte Pracht.

Wir sitzen regungslos, wir hocken nieder,  
Ein Bündel nur zu Bündeln eng verstaut.  
Und das, was an uns, unser Leib und Glieder,  
Wer war mit seinen Gliedern noch vertraut?

Doch fahren wir. Und mit uns zieht ein Klingen  
Von Frost und Schnee und heimlich dargebracht  
Doch wills zu einem Liede schwer gelingen  
Und ist wie Hohn auch nur auf Tag und Nacht.

So fahren wir, und gehts auch von der Stelle,  
Die Wege bleiben lang, das Ziel noch weit.  
Aus Tag wird Nacht, aus Nacht wird Morgenhelle:  
Erstarren Raum und Zeit zur Ewigkeit?

Wo ist ein Hauch, der nicht zu Eis gerinne,  
Wo ist ein Ruf, den nicht die Stille schluckt,  
Wo ist die Hand, wo die lebendigen Sinne,  
Die wie im Traum nicht schmerzlich aufgezuckt?

Der Sturm peitscht über uns die Regenplane  
Und reisst sie hoch, obschon sie fest verschnürt.  
Sie klatscht und flattert, eine wehnde Fahne,  
Fast wäre sie in Sausen uns entführt.

Wir sehn uns an mit sprechend stummen Blicken  
Und knabbern wie die Mäuse am gefrorenen Brot  
Gleichmütig sieht man uns dies alls beschicken:  
Des Lebens kleinste Notdurft wird zur Not.

Die Augen schliessen sich vor weisser Grelle  
Und die Gedanken gehn ins Dunkel ein.  
Das Dunkel ist uns gut, die einzige Stelle,  
Die uns verstattet, noch ein Mensch zu sein.

O bleibe wach, Herz, Geist, Gemüt und Seele!  
Die Elemente toben sich noch aus,  
Besteh den Kampf mit Waffen ohne Fehle!  
Aus Russlands Hölle rette Dich nach Haus!

— von Otto Schowalter

To Readers: Due to circumstances beyond our control the first two installments of Max und Moritz do not follow the new **Plautdietsch** spelling adopted by the **Mirror**. We can assure readers that the remaining five episodes will. Onse schuld. Wie Prachere auf.

by Wilhelm Busch  
translated from the German by Jack Thiessen



Woavon see besondasch schwuamt  
Wann dee scheen ess oppjwoamt.

## Max und Moritz 2: Tweeda Schowanack

Aus dee Boltsche noh dem Hiele  
Fong vom Schaldoak väätouziele,  
Docht see nu, sou han enn häu,  
Waut nu woll daut baste wea.  
Wou kunn eena noh dem Jräme  
Enn Eahre von ahn Aufscheed nähme?  
Gauz emm Stellen, göut jeroede,  
Opp tou äte, noh dem Brode.

Jo, dee Trua wea doch grout,  
Enn plock dee Heehna opp'e Schout.  
Nu sou gauz enn goa, doa bowe  
Tjitjt dee Boltsche noh dem Owe. —  
Noch emma wea daut vää tou groff,  
Heehna, dee opp ähren Hoff  
Koakeld, späelde, sou scheen ranne  
Enn von dee mustt see sich tranne!

Max enn Moritz ritjte Brode  
Schwind nu opp'em Dack jeschote.



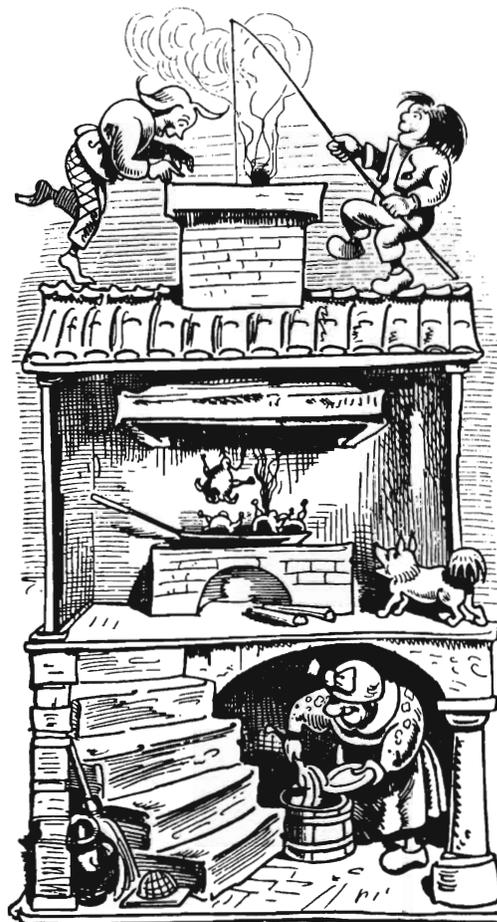
O, dee Boltsche hield vom freschen  
Doch kaum bould ääh Hund doa tweschen.



Derjch den Schorstein mett Vejneaje,  
Tjitjte woa dee Heehna leaje



Ohne Gorjel, ohne Kopp  
Brode, schmoade enn-em Topp. —



Boltsche jintj nu schwind emm Tjalla  
Mett dem Schleef enn mett'em Talla,  
Surenkommst toum Heehnabrode  
Ess ahr emma göut jeroede.

Doch entweschen opp'em Dack  
Sennt dee Junges bie dee Sach.  
Max, dee wea sou vääbedocht,  
Haud 'ne Angel mettjebrocht. —

Harre Gomms, doa woat noh bowe  
Aul 'ne Hahn hinoppjehowe.  
Oba jicha, Numma Twee;  
Enn nu jicha, Numma Dree;  
Enn nu tjemmt uck Numma Veea,  
Harre Gomms, doa sennt nich meea! —  
Doch dee Spitz, dee tjitjt jeneiw,  
Bald sich jreen enn schwuat enn bleiw!



Bould nu sennt see unje wada  
Wajch enn rauf von ähre Lada. —



Nu daut noh Spektoakel tjribbelt,  
Tjemmt de Boltsche aunjeschibbelt;  
Aunjewartelt bleef see stohne  
Aus see noh dee Paun wull gohne.



Aule Heehna weare foat!  
"Spitz!!" — daut wea ääh easchtet Woat.  
"O, du Spitz!" — fangt see tou loame,  
"Etj woa die daut Fall oppwoame!"



Mett dem Schleef, sou grout enn doll  
Heiwt see ahm daut Lada voll;  
Heiwd opp ahm sou onjeduldich,  
Spitz piepad oajch — feeld sich nich schuldich.



Max enn Moritz sich vestoake  
Ut'em hauls statjt ahn een Knoake. —  
Ennjeschlope ohne Datj,  
Lidje see doa ver'e Hatje!  
Ditt wea dee tweeda Schowanack,  
Dee dredda tjemmt foats ut'em Sack!

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## A PLEA FOR COMMON DECENCY

Decency may not be the highest Christian virtue. It may not even be a Christian virtue as such. But decency, especially when allied with common sense, has long served as a standard of acceptable social behavior: decency as plain, sensible human conduct based on respect and tolerance for others. Decency means doing unto others, etc. It may even be thought of as a form of love — not hot, demanding love, but cool love, a respectful love. A decent person is self-possessed, not self-righteous, understanding and tolerant rather than self-serving and militant.

Not a bad way to be, we must admit, even for Christians. Including Christian Mennonites. But more and more, decency and common sense seem to be thought of as cold potatoes in our overheated world. What we get instead are burning issues, flaming crusades, causes with the furious finality of thunderbolts. All around us various fanatics, perpetrators of crusades and political pressure tactics, as well as just plain crackpots are harassing and oppressing decent-minded people and putting them on the defensive. And it doesn't help to know that some of these groups call themselves born-again Christians. Not when they take such unreasonable, intolerant, violent positions on a whole range of issues. Christians, we may allow, have been bold and militant from the beginning. They had to be in order to survive and spread the Word in a brutally hostile world. Perhaps a virtue like decency was considered too tame and lukewarm to fit properly into the dynamics of Christian faith. Perhaps.

But consider the emotional excesses that many so-called Christian groups resort to. What is a decent, sensible person, whether Christian or not, to make of born-again athletes who pray fervently in their locker-room for victory, then go out on the field or rink and try to knock off the heads of their opponents? Is that Christian conduct? Or take the smartly-groomed TV preachers with their expressive actors' faces who preach love and faith eloquently while smoothly working their electronic audiences for millions? Or such an organization as the Moral Majority, which wants to restrict everybody's freedom but its own?

And what are we to make of born-again Christians who argue emotionally against even therapeutic abortion and in the next breath cry loudly and vindictively for the return of capital punishment? Again, a merely decent and sensible person might have trouble understanding why some people find it so much easier to love and show concern for an invisible fetus still buried in the womb than for a convicted murderer waiting in a cell on death row. Perhaps for the same reason that many people find it easier to love and respect a man lying in his coffin than when he was still alive and fallible and threatening.

Or what about the hysterical pressure groups who take it

upon themselves to "cleanse" high school bookshelves of what they consider to be mind-contaminating books? It doesn't matter to them that the books they ban may be among the greatest, richest, most moving accounts of the human condition we possess. To ban a book like *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*, for example, which tells us more about the monstrous evil and tyranny of the Nazi period than all the histories of the Second World War put together, is such an irresponsible affront to the very spirit of enlightened civilization as to leave a decent person speechless with outrage.

And the uncomfortable position that decent people find themselves being maneuvered into these days is not helped by well-meaning Christian spokesmen who tell us to bow our heads meekly to all this mindless abuse and insult to our intelligence in a spirit of Christian love and reconciliation. A person who believes in fundamental decency and justice will never believe that evil, malice and hypocrisy must be swept under the church pews in the interests of Christian harmony, that when scandal surfaces in Mennonite circles, say, it must be pushed under again until it drowns quietly, that the cracks and stains that inevitably develop in Christian organizations can be neatly glossed over with pious cant about love and forgiveness.

Isn't it about time that Christians who believe in fair-play, honorable conduct, respectable cultural standards, traditional ethical and moral values, stopped letting destructive frauds and tunnel-visioned do-gooders put them on the defensive? We should not allow ourselves to be herded into ghettos of thought-control and guilt by these smug tyrants. We need not accept their bogus spiritual and moral claims simply because they are made in the name of Christ and couched in the sacred language of Scripture. We Mennonites seem to have a special weakness for accepting with uncritical reverence anyone who professes to follow Christ and who knows how to use the verbal formulas that touch our hearts and consciences.

I say again, we need to act with more decency towards each other. A decent person is a tolerant person, and dear God how we need tolerant persons just now. Not persons who will tolerate everything and everyone because they don't really care one way or another, but persons who really do see the other person's side of the argument, who really are well disposed towards others and wish them well whatever their views or prejudices.

That's not being unChristian. "I believe in the ultimate decency of things," wrote Robert Louis Stevenson. That is not the same as believing in the Kingdom of God. But if you practise decency you will at least refrain from harassing and bamboozling and hurting other people who are also on the road to the Kingdom.

— Al Reimer

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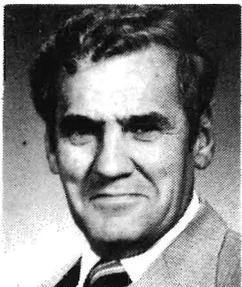
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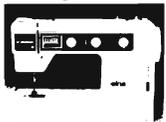
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