

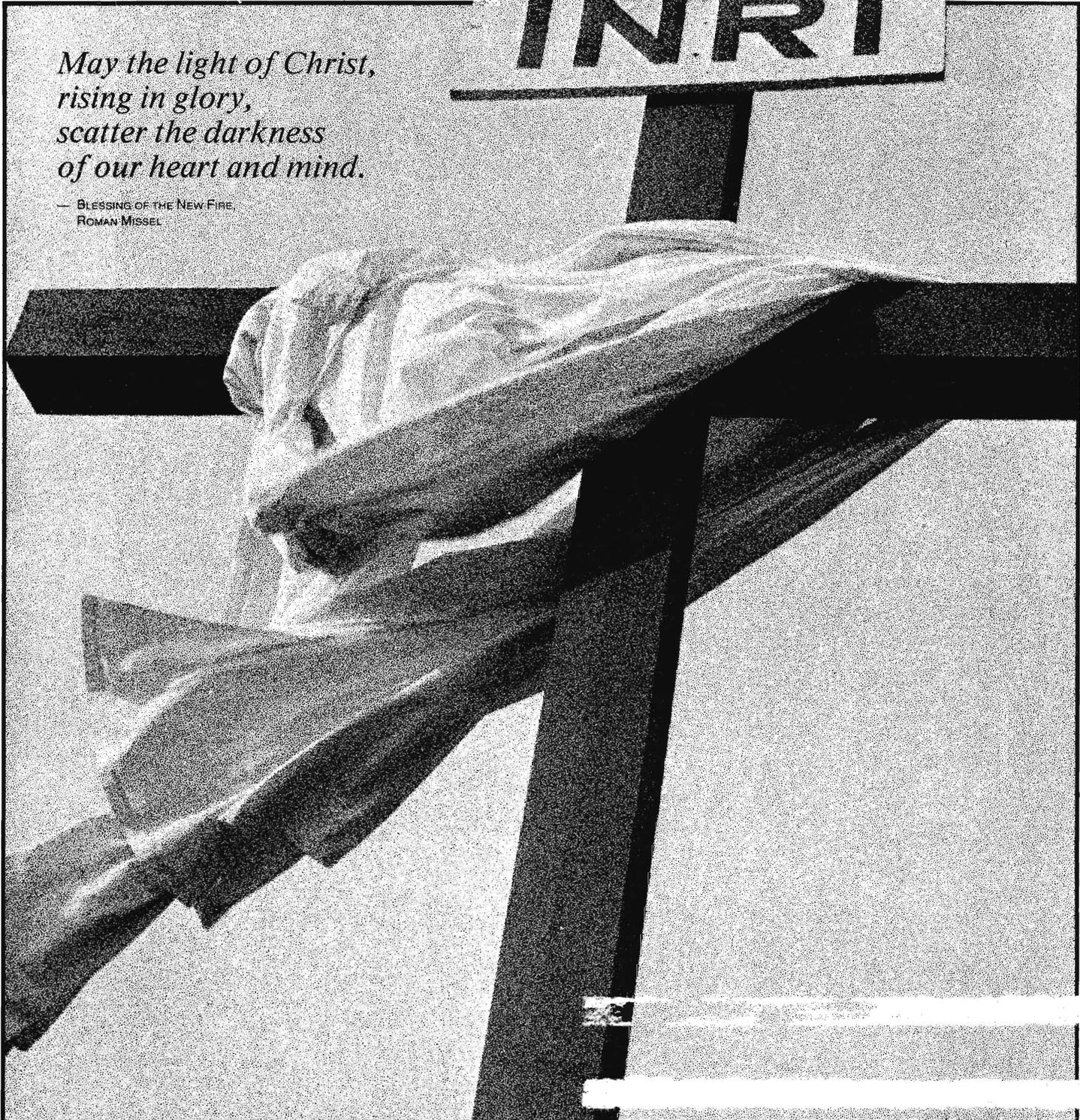
# Mennonite MIRROR

volume 17/number 7/march 1988

*May the light of Christ,  
rising in glory,  
scatter the darkness  
of our heart and mind.*

— BLESSING OF THE NEW FIRE  
ROMAN MISSEL

INRI

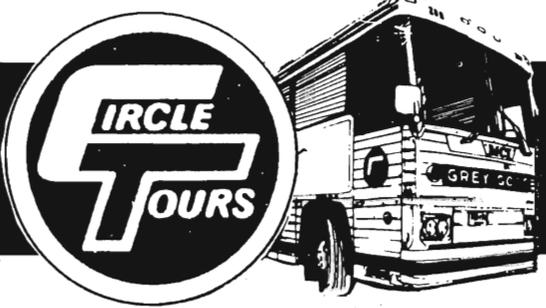


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## FOREWORD

The second part of one chapter of James Urry's forthcoming book *None But Saints: The Transformation of Mennonite Life in Russia 1789-1889*, is published in this issue. Dr. Urry's book is a major review of 100 years of Mennonite life in Russia. The one chapter that is published here recalls the centennial celebrations that were held in Russia. While the celebrations were, as they usually are, congratulatory, there were already undercurrents of change ahead that only the most perceptive would have recognized. Dr. Urry's book will be published later this year by Hyperion Press.

One of the historical features of the Christian church is its ability to renew itself, and one of the ways this is manifest is when new congregations emerge from established ones. This is the case with the Community Fellowship Church in Steinbach. It emerged from a painful split from the Mennonite Brethren church, and now stands as a strong church in its own right. Our second story by Mary Lou Driedger, teacher and freelance writer in Steinbach, published in this edition explores its growth.

Paul Hiebert will be remembered by many as the creator of *Sara Binks*, and for others for his deep examinations of the relationship of spiritual faith to life. He died last fall, having lived more than nine decades. John Bergen a former chemistry student and later friend of Dr. Hiebert, remembers him as a teacher and searcher of truth.

Dr. George K. Epp, who is at the Mennonite Studies Centre, University of Winnipeg, has been paying careful attention to developments in the Soviet Union, a place that is still home to many Mennonites and family members of Manitoba Mennonites. As our resident "sovietologist" he will be contributing his observations to these pages from time to time.

Easter is one of the key dates on every Christian calendar. In this issue our cover, a translated short story called *The Bell Ringer*, two poems, and *Our Word*, examine various aspects of that event.

Two reviews, one on the concert by the Enns family and the other on a book describing ways of tracing family origins in German Europe, provide quite different insights.

Most of us eat food not only because it's necessary to live, but also because we like to eat. But even though food may "taste good" it may not be "good" for us. In an article in this issue, Katherine Martens looks at food, our relationship to it, and its relationship to our health.

The *Mirror Mix-up*, *Manitoba news*, the *Observed Along the Way*, and other features are in their places this issue.

# Mennonite MIRROR

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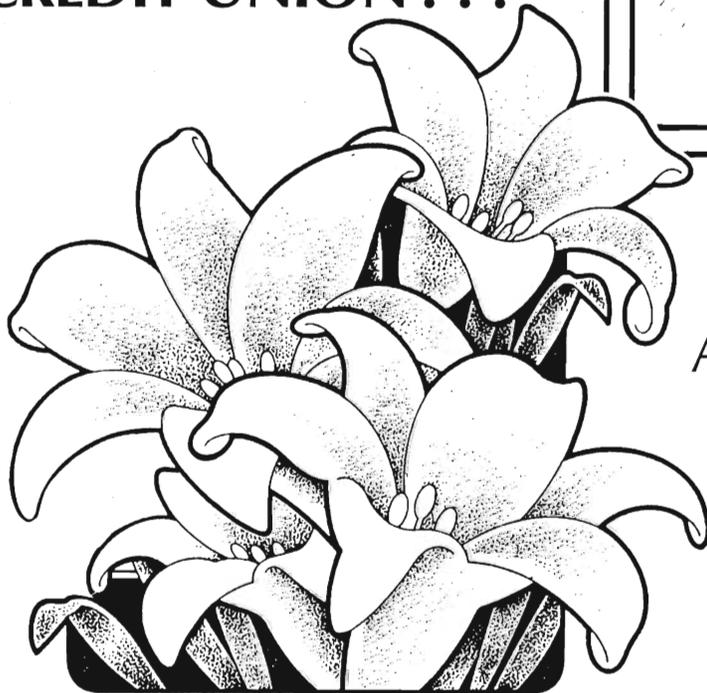
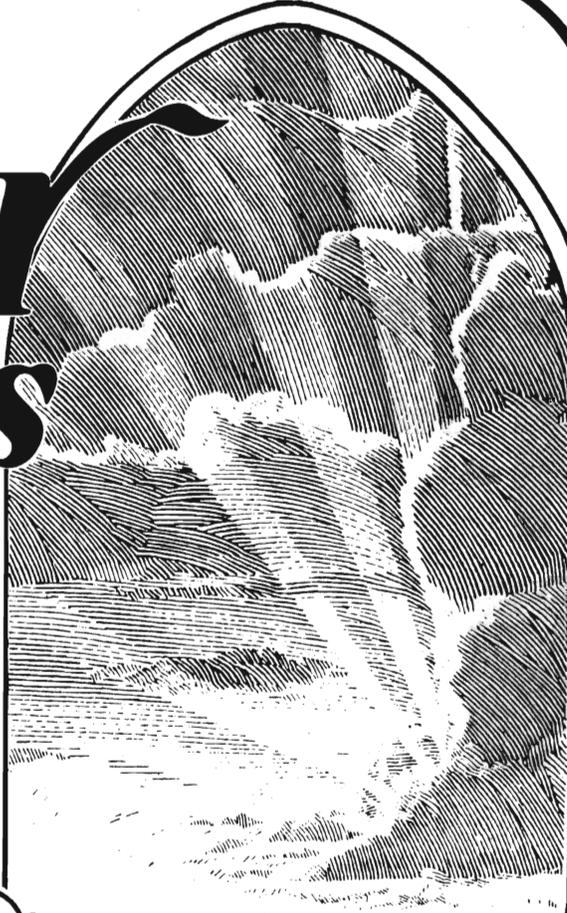
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# Centennial celebrations looked ahead but failed to see the new perils

by James Urry  
PART TWO —  
1889 Year of Celebration

The Mennonite universe had obviously widened markedly since the days of initial settlement. Mennonites knew more about Russia than their ancestors and of people and events at home and abroad. The days when knowledge of the wider world ended at the village boundary were gone. In 1887 a new telegraph station opened in Halbstadt, providing direct contact with the capital. While few Mennonites possessed the opportunity, or the inclination, to travel outside their communities, all had access to the wider world through reading books, journals and newspapers, at this period still written predominantly in German. The Russian German-language newspapers carried extensive reports on internal and external affairs. When Russia was at war with Turkey between 1877 and 1878 international news so dominated the pages of the *Odessaer Zeitung* that little was published on colony affairs. The newspapers also provided a window onto the wider world through lead articles on new technology and innovations in the rapidly developing world of western Europe. Through the advertisements Mennonites could glimpse the material wealth of the urban world and the papers also advertised the temptations of popular entertainments, of menageries, theatres, opera and travelling circuses and road shows. The access to serialized novels and other feuilleton in newspapers and journals widened the imaginative horizons of some Mennonites.

The German-language newspapers like the *Odessaer* and *St. Petersburger Zeitung*, however, provided domestic and

international news within a very conservative framework of opinion; both newspapers were subject, as were all publications, to censorship. The papers extolled the virtues of the Tsar and the government's policies, supporting the views of the established elites in western Europe and expressing doubts concerning democratic and republican forms of government. There was little in such ideas with which Mennonites at this period would have disagreed. Since before they settled in Russia Mennonites had held the opinion that it was their duty to support the policy of a just ruler as long as support did not conflict with their basic principles of faith. The just ruler protected and secured the Mennonites' right to exist in peace and to prosper unmolested by evil forces. Their experience in Russia, at least until the late 1880s, had done little to

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**The Mennonite Mirror is pleased to present the concluding chapter (in two installments) of James Urry's important new history of the Russian Mennonites, *None But Saints: The Transformation of Mennonite Life in Russia 1789-1889*.**

**Dr. Urry's book is being published this spring by Hyperion Press for the Mennonite Literary Society. This concluding chapter describes the high point of Russian Mennonite life and culture just before the First World War and the Revolution brought the Mennonite Commonwealth down in ruins.**

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shake such opinions. Indeed, the beneficence of previous Tsars and Tsarinas, as well as the actions of many government agencies, had strengthened Mennonite support for the autocracy. But concepts such as 'the nation' and 'the Russian people,' in spite of the rhetoric of the leading speakers at the centennial celebrations were new ideas for most Mennonites, concepts that for most had only emerged since settlement in Russia. While by 1889 the majority of older Mennonites had only a hazy idea of what was implied by terms such as 'the nation' and 'the Fatherland,' most of the teachers and younger Mennonites educated in the secondary school system were imbued with such concepts and possessed a passing knowledge of Russian history and geography. By 1889 most children educated in Mennonite schools were exposed to the Russian language, Russian literature and nationalistic sentiments through the efforts of their teachers. But for members of the older generation, while there was some realization of the fact that Mennonites had prospered, as one commentator on Epp's *Chortitzer Mennoniten* put it, on 'Russian soil, under Russia's sun,' the effects of 'official' Russification were limited.

On the other hand there were clear signs by 1889 of the effect of more subtle influences on Mennonite life from a century's settlement in Russia and association with things Russian. Russification may have been limited, but the Russianization of aspects of everyday life was more apparent. Nowhere was this more so than in Mennonite eating habits. The

established Mennonite fare of ham, sausage, and *zwieback* (small double rolls) was now augmented with *borscht* (soup, usually made of boiled ham bones and cabbage rather than beetroot), *varenika* (dumpling, filled with cottage cheese) and other tasty items prepared by Little-Russian cooks. Beer was still brewed and consumed, but men also developed a taste for vodka (for 'medicinal' purposes, of course). Clothing also began to change. A Mennonite who emigrated from Russia during the 1870s, but who returned on a visit in the early 1890s, failed to recognize the young son of a relative sent to meet him in Molochnaia until the youth addressed him in Low German because the boy was wearing a Russian peasant shirt. Obviously Russianization had increased greatly since the period of the great reforms.

In spite of all these developments, however, the actual experience of Russian life for many Mennonites was still extremely limited and restricted to contacts with local peasants employed in the settlements, occasional visits to neighbouring villages and towns and meetings with petty bureaucrats. While the Tsar and his courtiers might have been esteemed, they were distant from everyday life and abstract concepts like 'the Fatherland' and 'the Russian peoples' were not easily translated into the Mennonite's real experience of neighbouring peoples. Mennonites had developed somewhat patronizing attitudes toward the local peasantry and to Russian officials they encountered. They considered them socially and culturally backward; peasants, illiterate, superstitious and simple-minded, were best treated as wayward children; petty officials were assumed to be corrupt and inefficient. Mennonites were therefore still 'separated' from 'the world' around them, but this was based less on a sense of religious distinctiveness as it had been for the first settlers, and more on feelings of superiority to those around them. Mennonites were more 'advanced' in material possessions, cultural institutions, knowledge and prosperity than most of their neighbors. In many ways Mennonites felt a closer affiliation in terms of society and culture with the peoples of western Europe and settler societies of North America, than with many groups with whom they lived in the Russian Empire.

By 1889 Mennonites were also conscious that their way of life had changed markedly during the time they and their ancestors had lived in Russia. The most apparent change could be seen in the transformation of the land around them,

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## New church, new vision brings outreach spirit to Steinbach

by Mary Lou Driedger

If you take a drive out to the south end of Steinbach you'll see a rapidly growing neighborhood of brand new custom built homes. Greeting you as you turn off the highway to enter the thriving Southlands Park Development is a large sign with a striking black silhouette. The billboard proclaims that this property is the future home of the Steinbach Community Fellowship Church.

The silhouette on the sign, which was designed by a Community Fellowship church member, portrays people of various shapes and sizes all holding hands, save for a figure near the end who has his hand outstretched. The pastor of the congregation says the sign is symbolic of the church's special vision of its role in ministering to the Steinbach community. They want to be a caring, informal group that reaches out to all kinds of people. Attending the church one Sunday morning I found the ideal of outgoing friendliness to be a reality. After the spirited singing of Onward Christian Soldiers, complete with trumpet accompaniment, a special time was set aside for the congregation to leave their seats and greet one another and especially welcome visitors.

Lloyd Peters is the minister of the Community Fellowship. I interviewed him in his downtown Steinbach office. It is located right next door to the constituency headquarters of Jake Epp, the National Minister of Health and Welfare. Mr. Epp is a member of the Community Fellowship Church. The fellowship now meets in the chapel of the Steinbach Bible College. Their plans for their future building clearly convey a firm commitment to being a church that is open and accessible to the community. "We see no point",

says Peters "in building a half million dollar structure, only to see it sit empty four or five days of the week. That just wouldn't be good stewardship of the facility."

In order to meet their goal of being a community outreach church as soon as possible, the congregation intends to erect its new home in two phases. First, they will build a sort of education wing. Later, when additional funds have been raised, they will proceed with construction of a sanctuary.

Pastor Peters becomes excited when he talks about plans for the initial building project. It will house a large gymnasium. Here the church dreams of sponsoring athletic teams for junior and senior high school students who may not always be included in the public school's more competitive sports programs. Here they would host volleyball and basketball camps for young athletes from the South Eastern Manitoba region. Regular floor hockey nights, exercise classes and mixed volleyball tournaments would provide an opportunity for neighborhood families to enjoy themselves and make new friends.

One section of the building is designed as a potential home for a day-care centre. Pastor Peters feels this is an area of outreach and service to the community that has perhaps been overlooked by other churches in the Steinbach area. The child care centre would be staffed by well-paid and well-trained professionals.

Another wing of the church is being planned as a family counselling facility. Counselling is an area in which Peters has studied and worked previously. He sees a need for a listening ear and caring help for families who suffer from the many

stresses of life in our North American society.

Tucked into the corner of the architect's plans for the new church is a fireside room where the congregation plans to sponsor video nights with screenings of tapes that would be of interest to neighborhood and church families.

If you let Pastor Peters dream on he can even see the new church becoming a training centre for missionaries or a retreat facility for those church workers who need to relax and recuperate from the pressures of their ministry.

These plans all lie in the future for the

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**"We think, for example, that the church should not dictate that people be conscientious objectors to military service. Individuals should be free to make their own choices and decisions about matters such as pacifism and non-resistance."**

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fledgling congregation. To understand its present vision one needs to sketch its history.

The group began meeting about five years ago. It was started primarily by members of the Steinbach Mennonite Brethren Church who expressed a desire for a smaller, more personalized fellowship group. When, after two years, the Community Fellowship membership narrowly voted to cut off all Mennonite Brethren ties and join the Free Church

conference, many members of the new group left. Some went back to rejoin their former Mennonite Brethren congregation. Some began attending other churches. At present only half of the charter members still belong to the fellowship. Since joining the Free Church Conference the congregation has grown to include about 39 families. On a typical Sunday morning about 120 people fill the Bible school chapel which is the congregation's temporary home.

The church membership reflects a wide cross section of occupations and includes factory workers, laborers, professional and business people. While several older couples attend the church, the bulk of its adherents are of college and career age or are young families with small children. Although most of the church members are of Mennonite background, they feel the absence of the word Mennonite in their name gives the group a wider appeal in both the Mennonite and non-Mennonite sectors of the community. Severing connections with an official Mennonite conference allows for a less traditional attitude towards government and civil service. Says Pastor Peters "We think, for example, the church should not dictate that people be conscientious objectors to military service. Individuals should be free to make their own choices and decisions about matters such as pacifism and non-resistance."

The sermon on the Sunday morning I attended the church reflected that same message of personal responsibility and choice. The congregation was told that while the truest test of a person's Christianity is the change it brings about in one's lifestyle, it is not up to the church to dictate what those changes should be. Christians are not called to make judgments about the behavior of other church members. All must come to their own decisions about the moral and ethical implications of their Christianity.

I was curious as to whether a congregation made up of so many former Mennonite church members had cut off all Mennonite ties. Did they, for example, still support an organization like MCC? "Not officially", Pastor Peters informed me. They preferred to support non-denominational relief groups like World Vision.

Although the Community Fellowship does not consider itself Mennonite in any way, it must still work to find a place for itself amongst Steinbach's many Mennonite churches. The pastor admits that initially relations with the Mennonite Brethren church were strained. The situation over the last years has eased con-

siderably. The acceptance of the young congregation in the local church community is perhaps best exemplified by the fact that Pastor Peters serves as the chairman of the town's ministerial association.

Recently there has been a growing trend, particularly amongst city churches experiencing a decline in membership, to open their doors to the community by establishing day-cares, soup kitchens and drop-in centres. In doing so these city

churches have increased their attendance and experienced a revitalization and a new sense of mission. Perhaps as Steinbach works its way quickly towards a city size population a church with a similar vision of community outreach can find a niche for itself in a town with an already well established network of religious institutions.

mm

Mary Lou Driedger is a Steinbach teacher and free-lance writer.

## Meet . . .



Walter Klassen

- licensed funeral director & embalmer with over 30 years experience
- married, wife Bettie and 1 son
- enjoys cross-country skiing, fishing, volleyball, and motorcycling
- active in the River East Mennonite Brethren Church
- serves on the Executive of the Manitoba Funeral Directors Association



Sonia Gonski

- efficient part-time secretary, but is reluctant to assist at funerals
- married, husband Ray and 3 children
- enjoys reading, baking and games
- is kept busy taking her children to judo, soccer & choir
- attends Windsor Park Evangelical Free Church



Terry Siemens

- licensed funeral director & embalmer
- married, wife Janice and 2 children
- enjoys fishing, camping and home renovations
- active in music at Kil-cona Park Alliance Church



Harry Froese

- licensed funeral director & embalmer
- married, wife Lorna
- enjoys travelling, woodworking and motorcycles
- President of Olive Branch
- served overseas with M.C.C. in Nigeria

*"It is better to know us and not need us than to need us and not know us."*

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# Paul Hiebert taught chemistry but his thoughts about faith are what we remember him by

by John J. Bergen

September 1946. The chemistry lecture theatre in the Broadway Avenue campus of the University of Manitoba was crowded all the way to the top tier of seats. According to my recollection, there were several hundred students, most of whom were continuing their education following the end of the Second World War. In came two gentlemen, one quite short, the other quite tall. "Mutt and Jeff," muttered the student sitting next to me. It soon became apparent that the short one was in charge. He also called the roll, which exercise consumed about fifteen minutes. "We have been instructed by the Registrar to take attendance at the beginning of each class," he said. "However, we won't do it again. You just be here." On a cold stormy winter day he would exclaim, "Why in the world did you come in on a day like this? You should have stayed at home writing poetry!" And on a warm spring day, "You should be out walking in the park."

A laboratory stinking with fumes of hydrogen sulphide bubbling from test-tubes at every student station, each student trying to ascertain whether the unknown substance might contain an element which could be precipitated as a sulphide. Occasionally, Dr. Hiebert would saunter through the Lab to see how his laboratory assistants, senior students on assistantships, were doing, or to stop and ask a student about his progress towards the solution of the problem. Now and then he would demonstrate with deftness, a few drops of this or that, and a shake of the test-tube, how he could quickly identify the elements contained in the unknown substance.

Two years later I once more sat in Hiebert's class, this time a senior course drawing about twenty or thirty students. Hiebert spent more time talking about poetry and philosophy than he did teaching about chemistry. In fact, he covered with lightning speed about three-quarters of the course during the last quarter of the term! At times I wondered why he did not pay more attention to the purpose of the class, yet I never missed a class. Of all my undergraduate professors, I learned more about Hiebert as a person than I could about any of the others.

It was about that time when Hiebert's first book, *Sarah Binks*, was published. I had just bought a copy at the Eaton's book section when fortuitously I ran into

**We turn to Hiebert's writings not for the purpose of seeking authoritative exegesis on matters of doctrine and faith, but to learn how one person exercised his God-given intellectual talents in thinking about matters of belief, yet holding a compelling faith in the person of Christ.**

Hiebert in the store. I asked him to autograph my copy. "You bought it?" he ex-postulated, "Let me tell you something; you got gyped!" Perhaps that encounter caused him to remember me.

Some years later, while I was sitting in my car parked next to the Legislative building, Hiebert happened to walk by and he stopped to talk, of course about anything but chemistry. "I really would have liked to have stayed in philosophy,"

he once said, "but a career in chemistry provided my bread and butter."

Occasionally, when visiting my aging parents on their Stephenfield farm, I would also drop in to visit the Hieberts in their retirement cottage alongside the Boyne in Carman, and also in more recent years whenever I visited my father in the Boyne Lodge. For the past several years, I would barely be inside the door when Hiebert would talk about Christian faith, the only thing that really mattered in life, as he would say.

On one occasion, when Hiebert was about 90, he remarked that he was then "shooting for 95." He was still tending his garden. "Every day I stoop to pull a weed, and say to myself, that will be the last one. Then, the next day, I pull another!"

During my visit in February, 1987, Hiebert excused himself for not rising — he was suffering from arthritis. He needed a walker to cross the room, and he tucked hearing aids into his ears. But his mind was as sharp as ever and no lapse in memory was evident. The theme for another book weighed on his mind but he feared that he would not have the energy to finish it. He discussed its thrust, then added "Why don't you write it?" I thanked him for the compliment, then added, "Only you, Dr. Hiebert, can write your book." That one more book was not to be. "I have been so fortunate," he said, "to have been able to experience the entire span of a long life. Also, I am fortunate to experience some suffering. I don't think that anyone has lived fully unless he has also experienced suffering."

Until then he had also done much of the meal preparation. "My wife is a poor cook," he would say. "Paul is right," she responded, "I'm not a good cook." He amazed me that even during that last

fruitful visit, though approaching the age of 95, Hiebert did not seem to tire in conversation. His mind carried a wealth of ideas, and he enjoyed talking about these.

August 1987. I joined the 45-year reunion of my Winnipeg Normal School Class of 1941-42, then drove to Carman to visit my father and learned that Hiebert was in the hospital. He was extremely weak and seemed to be dozing off as I conversed with Mrs. Hiebert in the hospital room. Suddenly, "Talk louder," he commanded, barely over a whisper. So I stepped closer to the head of his bed so that he could better hear. Then, in a whisper, he thanked me for a paper I had sent him only weeks earlier, the paper I had presented at the Winnipeg conference on the impact of the Second World War on Mennonite education, in which I had also made reference to part of his experience during the First World War as a conscientious objector as recorded in his book *Doubling Castle*. Then he whispered about the ideas about which he would have liked to have written more, had he been granted the time to complete another book. "It is unfortunate that they can't do body transplants," I suggested, "for your mind will be good for another 90 years." Here was a fully active mind imprisoned in a weak and nonresponding body. When I left the room, I felt certain that this had been my last visit with Professor Hiebert.

In Edmonton, Reynold Siemens — who had written the introduction to Hiebert's *For the Birds* and fifteen years ago had arranged a recording of Hiebert reading selections from *Sarah Binks* — and I conducted the Labor Day week-end Sunday morning worship service at First Mennonite. Reynold read from his *Treasury of Religious Verse* and I read theme-related Bible passages. One of the poems chosen by Reynold was Hiebert's "Clock Stay Thy Hand," which ends with,

But Time, O Time, I'd leave within  
your keeping,  
All knowledge, could you leave life's  
only spring.

On Saturday evening I phoned Mrs. Hiebert to inform her about the nature of our service and that a poem of Dr. Hiebert's would also be read. Would she tell him. "He will be pleased," she said. "He will understand, and he will smile, but he may be too weak to speak." He was not to receive that message. Sunday morning, September 6, 1987, at the request of Mrs. Hiebert, family friend Helen Janzen phoned to inform me that he had died during the night.

That Sunday morning we added the reading of another poem, "Last night I walked with God," preface to his *Doubt-*

*ing Castle*, and also excerpts from that same book, concluding with the following testimony of faith: "The one thing I believe with all my mind as well as with all my heart is that Jesus actually existed in human history and that he was what he claimed to be, the Son of God who was sent for our salvation which is the escape from evil."

Unfortunately, many people associate only *Sarah Binks* with the name of Paul Hiebert. Following his death, I re-read his *Tower in Siloam* (1966), which I would choose as his greatest work. It is the product of a scholar knowledgeable in science, philosophy and religion. The book also gives evidence that Hiebert knew his Bible well from cover to cover. In my opinion, the subsequent two decades of scientific discovery have not made his book out-of-date as he dealt with overriding principles rather than with specific details. I believe that students in science, philosophy or religion could still benefit by reading this book.

His *Doubling Castle* (1976), in his own words, "tells something of the desert roads and the winding paths within my own life leading to the clearer vision and wider outlook on reality. It is a sharing of experience with those who travel the same way." Certainly, this book is not meant to be an authoritative treatise on the understanding of Christian doctrine. But it is the testimony of an honest searcher for understanding and truth, of one who believes that God has given us minds so that we might search without fear and seek understanding without feeling that one might be under the shadow of a disapproving God.

*Not as the Scribes* (1984) is Hiebert's last published work. He was then 92 years of age. This book would be most disconcerting to literalists. However, those who also believe that one should not have a mindless faith — such as that of the Mennonite preacher, who, during my high school days, in his sermon hoped to impress us with what real faith was in that if the Bible had said that Jonah swallowed the whale instead that the whale swallowed Jonah, he would believe it — but a faith which allows the mind to ask whether it makes any sense at all to believe certain things, such will find the book helpful. After all, Hiebert might have said: Believe in Christ; not, believe in doctrine. As he explains, "This book makes no effort to argue the existence of God or of his embodiment in human history as Jesus Christ, the Word made Flesh. It is written by a Christian for fellow Christians for mutual strength."

I am not sure whether in my younger years I would have found books such as

Hiebert's helpful or disturbing. The religious teaching I received probably made me disposed to find them disturbing. I think many of our young people today are better instructed in a mindful faith.

Hiebert did not enlist during the First World War. He gives some credit to having been brought up in the Mennonite tradition and a "belief in pacifism." However, he also claimed that he was "too independent a thinker to be moved by the social pressure" even though he felt himself "to be alien and an outcast" as a result. His disposition as an "independent thinker" would not have made him an acceptable member in most Mennonite congregations during his professional years, nor immediately following his retirement. Today he would find "respectable" company in many of our churches. We turn to Hiebert's writings not for the purpose of seeking authoritative exegesis on matters of doctrine and faith, but to learn how one person exercised his God-given intellectual talents in thinking about matters of belief, yet holding a compelling faith in the person of Christ. Hiebert could no more deny the Christ who confronted his mind, than could Paul deny the Christ he met on the way to Damascus. **mm**

*John Bergen was principal of the Winkler School (until 1963) and is now professor emeritus in the department of educational administration, University of Alberta, Edmonton.*

## Bonaventure Travel Inc.

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# New surprises on the way to slow change in the U.S.S.R.

by G. K. Epp

Recently we have heard experts again wondering about the real state of Perestroika, and obviously we all watch for signs. However, let us be reminded that in Russia everything needs time. With the size of the country and the nature of its multi-national state, we can only pray for slow and orderly change. Revolution is in nobody's interest — that has been demonstrated time and again in history.

The question that keeps Western observers busy is: Who is really in control? Repeatedly, Gorbachov has appeared in the company of Ligachov; and Ligachov's seemingly independent opinions have led some observers to suspect that the power struggle is on. That conclusion is neither new nor revealing, because the system seems to be uniquely susceptible to such struggles, especially at a time when there are several bright contenders for the leadership position within the Politburo. Fortunately, the main contenders for that position, Gorbachov, Ligachov, Yakovlev, and perhaps Ryzhkov, the prime minister, are all reformers. Thus, they do not represent opposing political views, although they may have their individual ideas as to approach and timing of certain reforms.

It is interesting to note that, among the reformers, the prime minister, Ryzhkov, seems to take a centre position, with Yeltsin (meanwhile fired) taking the most daring position for a faster move. Ligachov, the second secretary and ideologue of the Party, cautions against the critical stance taken by the Press, while Yakovlev quietly supports the general secretary. It is clear that Ryzhkov supports Gorbachov, but in a most traditional way, by implying that Perestroika is really not that revolutionary, because it is "quite comparable to the New Economic Policy of Lenin." That, in fact, legitimizes Gorbachov's direction.

Even a superficial scrutiny of Soviet papers would indicate that at this time Gorbachov is still in control. In official functions it is sometimes Ligachov and at other times Ryzhkov who flank Gorbachov. Ryzhkov delivered the important speech at the bicentennial of Lenin's birthday in 1987. But the most reliable evidence of Gorbachov's control must again be found on the pages of Soviet papers. Where Ligachov cautions the Press not to be too critical of the past, Gorbachov continues to challenge writers

to be critical, and they seem to like it. In any case, during the months of November–December 1987 and January 1988, *Izvestia*, *Pravda*, *Ekonomicheskaja Gazetta*, and *Ogoniok*, four of the leading Soviet publications, all gave the general secretary front page coverage.

On January 13, 1988, Gorbachov again made a major New Year's speech, which may be compared to the State of the Union Address. Quite significantly, it is titled, "Democratization — The Essence of Perestroika, The Essence of Socialism" (*Izvestia*, Jan. 13, 1988). But how does the Soviet citizen respond to this essence? It would be wrong to assume that only the bureaucracy opposes change.

Gorbachov does not oversimplify the issues and the task of Perestroika, and the people have mixed feelings about the reforms. Every reform also demands sacrifices, but ordinary citizens (just like Canadians), hope for gains without sacrifices. As a result there have been protests against very necessary changes. The introduction of an independent commission to control the quality of products was greeted with enthusiasm by consumers, but only grudgingly accepted by factory workers. (*Osteuropa*, vol. 12, p. 904, 1987)

We can also imagine that not every new "independent" enterprise will be successful in the Perestroika system, but there are indications that some of these new "independent collective enterprises" are doing very well indeed. In *Izvestia*, January 16, 1988, a worker of one of these independent enterprises writes: "No longer do workers have to stand at the window waiting for their pay cheque . . . It is transferred to a local savings bank (for easy access) . . . We have more discipline, initiative, quality . . . and I have a bigger pay cheque." (*Izvestia*, January 16, 1988, p. 1) However, not all participants are equally enthusiastic, because they share the success of their business but also its deficit, and all consequences of poor workmanship.

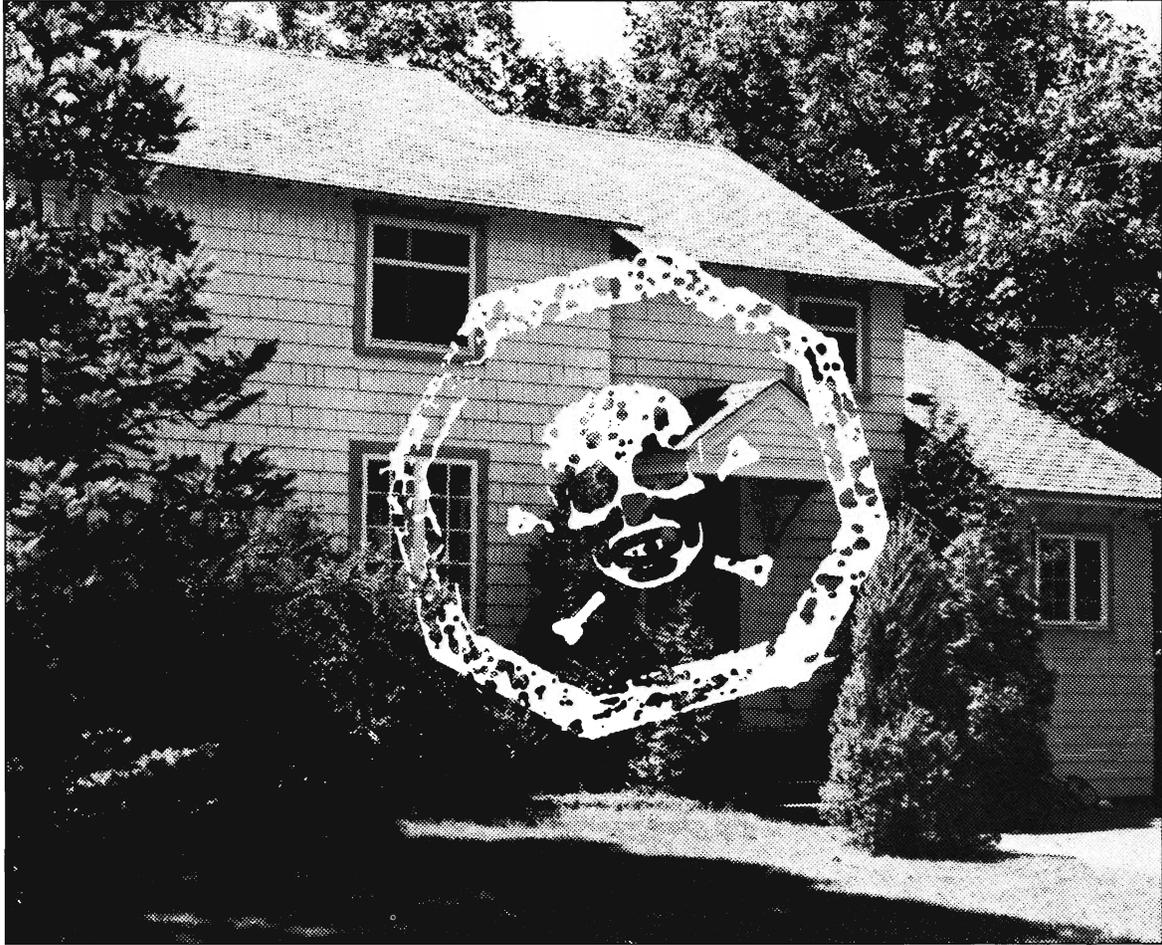
For directors and managers of the new enterprises there are also quite a few new facts to be learned. The director of the Moscow production collective "Fraser" says that to be successful you must control expenses and have the confidence of your collective. Another commented that he was also faced with the problem of investment of profit. His MINAVTOPROM

(MIN CAR INDUSTRY) had a surplus of 350 million rubles, but the industry had no idea as to how to deal with that "unplanned" profit margin. The interviewer adds: "We have to develop credit centres. It is essential that the "khozraschot-income: (of the new independent enterprises) be applied in a meaningful way, but we still have to learn to handle that kind of problem." (M. Berger, *Izvestia*, January 15, 1988, p. 1)

It must be said that Gorbachov does not present his fellow citizens with a simple version of quick success. He has said time and again that "Perestroika is a difficult, complicated, dialectical process which does not have any simple solutions to the country's problems", and he challenges the Soviet Press to look at Soviet society critically. "This is a bitter but unavoidable medicine . . . Forgotten names, and blank spots cannot be tolerated in history . . ." (Speech at the plenary session of the Party, January 1987) On the other hand, on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Revolution he cautioned against a too critical approach to Soviet history. This is obviously a contradiction, but reformers usually have been forced to perform similar balancing acts.

The "experiment" continues at other levels. Recently 80 theatres of the Soviet Union were given approval for innovations at the artistic level. However, Director, Valerii F. says: "This is not an unheard of innovation . . . it is the establishment of normal life (for the theatre). The director and the artists now choose the play and decide how to spend the income of the theatre. But we are also adding an element which truly may be called an "experiment". Each theatre now can map its own course." (*Pravda*, January 16, 1988, p. 1)

It would seem that opposition and pressure for more liberalization are well balanced at this point. The slow de-Stalinization process continues. Trotsky's name can again be read in Soviet papers, although he has not been rehabilitated, but that may come. Bukharin, on the other hand, was recently rehabilitated by the Press when a two-page interview with his wife, Larina, appeared in a leading Soviet journal (*Ogoniok*, November 1987). Thus every month seems to bring new surprises, although Soviet citizens may be getting used to them. **mm**



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# OBSERVED ALONG THE WAY



by Roy Vogt

## The End of An Unusual Winter

• Have you ever reached out for sympathy from your friends, only to be rebuffed? Can there be any experiences in life more crushing than that? This is what happened to my wife and me when we returned to Winnipeg from Hawaii in February. We had been in Hawaii for a whole month and had become completely accustomed to warm weather and gentle ocean breezes. Imagine our shock when we arrived in Winnipeg to -28° weather. My fancy Hawaiian shirt failed utterly to keep me warm as I dashed from the air terminal into a taxi. But did our friends show any sympathy when we told them this sad story? No, of course not, they just laughed, in that snide, derisive way that only a spirit of envy and sheer cold heartedness can produce. I would like to think that among a few loyal readers of this column a tear of sympathy might fall. If not, then just you try and spend a month in Hawaii sometime, and return to Winnipeg in the dead of winter. I promise that I will feel sorry for you (and mighty envious).

• Shortly after our return to Winnipeg we attend a play at the Prairie Theatre Exchange, involving the reflections of two winos on the state of the world. In a fit of make-believe one of them assumes the role of God for a few moments — and her first action as God is to transplant the weather and the palm trees of Hawaii to the Canadian prairies. Here finally is a kindred soul. She suffers from the knowledge that there is an earthly paradise of which those of us seemingly destined to live in the forbidding snows of Manitoba will at best catch only an occasional glimpse. This shared sorrow makes an otherwise dull evening of theatre more bearable.

• Actually, I must confess that a month in Hawaii was wonderful, but at the end of it we were almost ready to come home. Home is where your friends and family are, even if you don't always get along perfectly with them (it is, of course, one of life's tragedies that your family and friends are not perfect). I had even begun to miss some of the work waiting for me here. Our last few days in Hawaii were

made extra enjoyable by a chance meeting with a number of friends from Winnipeg, and a last golden week on the beach. Of the 28 days we were there, 25 were filled with sunshine — not a bad batting average.

• Before I leave the pleasant subject of Hawaii a few personal experiences might interest you. One of these is rather mundane, involving what I thought could be a commercial bonanza. During the winter we often like to watch movies on our VCR at home and shortly before we leave Hawaii I notice in one of the newspapers that a Honolulu video store is selling all of its Beta movies for \$4.95. You can't even buy blank tape for that. I walk down to the place but am somewhat skeptical about how many movies they might actually be selling at that price. As I enter I am overwhelmed: literally hundreds of different movies are on sale along the walls. Eagerly but slowly I scan each row. Surely in this giant movie smorgasbord there will be dozens of good films that we would like to see. But this movie heaven turns out to be terribly disappointing, as such heavens often are (take it from an ardent pursuer of earthly illusions). My eyes are bombarded with titles like, *Return of the Jedi*, *The Living Dead*, *I Want Your Baby*, *Rambo IV* and *Porky III*. I am troubled: here is the heartland of American culture and I am not interested. All that water and not a drop to drink. Actually, I walk out of there with one good buy (and a sad goodbye): the film, *A Love in Germany*, which we have seen before and like very much. Another lesson has been learned: video glitter is seldom gold.

• The departure from Hawaii is another interesting undertaking. We are warned by veteran Hawaii visitors, with whom we have dinner on our last Saturday evening, that many passengers go to the airport early on the morning of their departure to book seats. These friends once arrived at the airport two hours before departure only to find that all the seats were taken (some airlines habitually overbook, because they are often faced with no-shows). Our flight leaves on a Tuesday evening at 7:30 p.m. My wife takes the bus to the airport at 8:30 in the

morning, and when she arrives there less than an hour later there is already a line of passengers ahead of her checking in. Everything works out well. She returns with good seats and we have the rest of the day to finish some reading and some sunning on the beach. Later, as we wait to board, we notice again how many older people, some very frail, have been lured to the warmth of these islands. A few of them look suspiciously at us younger ones, the way we look at school-age children who are loitering on the street during school hours, as though to ask, "How did you manage to get here before retirement?" Unfortunately age and frailty sometimes do take their toll after an eight-hour air flight. A few hours before our arrival in Winnipeg the head steward urgently requests a medical doctor over the intercom. After landing, an ambulance pulls up to the plane and our stewardess gives us the sad news that the sick passenger has died. I have a feeling, though, that even that unfortunate soul will not have regretted the visit to Hawaii.

• Winnipeg in February is cold, but several events help to keep us warm. One of these is an excellent production of my favorite comic opera, *The Merry Widow*. The performers are superb, particularly Theodore Barg, the Mennonite baritone from Ontario who seems to have no difficulty with the role of a dashing but reluctant Lothario. Unfortunately the English translation used for this performance is not the same, or as good, as the one from which I memorized many of the lyrics a number of years ago. The result is that I keep tripping over the words and occasionally forget to enjoy the beautiful melodies. The plot to this opera is, of course, completely unbelievable, but no more so than the plots to most of the more serious operas — which nevertheless take themselves very seriously. With this one you can laugh unreservedly — an escape from a cold night.

• Another event with warmth is the 65th wedding anniversary of friends, which is celebrated in Autumn House shortly after our return. They appear to be in good health and spirits, which in his case is somewhat remarkable because as

leading minister of our church some years ago he had to cope with the antics of a younger minister who wanted to reform a whole congregation in less than one generation. Fortunately, while the eyes of this leading minister were directed upward to heaven his feet were planted solidly on the ground, so not too much damage was done. It is a real privilege to share this important milestone with Rev. and Mrs. J. H. Wiebe.

On occasions like this, one naturally reflects on the elements that seem to make up a good, long-lasting marriage. Over the years I have officiated at more than 150 weddings, and in each case, following several "counselling" meetings and the wedding itself, I have found myself involuntarily and silently trying to predict the long-run outcome of that marriage. In one instance I was so disturbed by subtle things that I had noticed in the relationship of the couple that I observed to my wife that I didn't think the marriage would last very long. Unfortunately that prediction turned out to be accurate, though many of the silent ones that I have made turned out to be wrong. Some marriages that seemed to start on a very unsure footing have blossomed into wonderful relationships, while others that showed all the promise in the world later ran into severe difficulties. For this reason I find it very hard to be judgmental of those who fail. Disappointed, yes, but no longer too shocked or angry. Surely, a life-long partnership between two persons, especially between two vibrant people with lively personalities, is one of the most exciting and demanding adventures that life has to offer us. All the elements for unlimited growth, and endless tension, are there simultaneously. Think for a minute: with how many of your closest friends would you like to live in close proximity for a month? I consider it a miracle — one of God's most wonderful miracles — that many people continue to find one other person with whom they joyfully share a lifetime. Others, even after failures, continue to search for such a relationship, and one can only wish them well.

- To round out this winter on a good note we again spend a weekend with friends at the Gull Harbour Resort on Hecla Island, skiing, swimming, and enjoying good food and conversation. After many years I still find the view of snow, trees, and lake from the dining room of the lodge quite breathtaking. This is clearly not Hawaii, but every bit as soul-warming.

- As these last words are penned we are preparing for a week's trip to the

Olympic Games in Calgary, where we will baby sit so that others can get on with the real business of athletics. However, we will also take in a few events, and, of course, catch up on the life of our young family, which is growing again. Our own Olympic Report will be filed in the next issue. mm

**COMING EVENTS:**

**March 24-26:** Mennonite Collegiate Institute fund-raising banquets.

**March 27:** Winnipeg Singers perform Bach's "Mass in B Minor". Conductor, William Baerg. 8 pm.

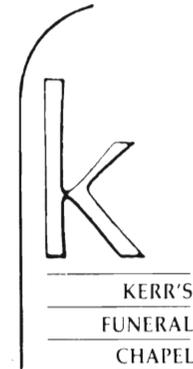
**April 15, 16:** Marriage enrichment retreat for couples married within the past year. Elim Bible Institute. Walter and Hilda Franz, Philip and Juliana Bender.

**April 29, 30:** Convention of Associated Male Choruses of America International Big Swing Convention. Hosted by Winnipeg Male Chorus. Location: Winnipeg Convention Centre.

**April 28, 29:** Prairie Performances. Evening of Viennese Songs. Winnipeg Art Gallery. 8:00 pm.

**May 7:** Westgate cyclathon.

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An Easter story by Korolenko  
Translated by Justina Epp

# The Bell Ringer

**D**arkness has fallen. The village nestling near the river in a forest is surrounded by that strange darkness of spring, when starry nights abound, when a thin mist, coming up from the ground, thickens the shadows of the forest and covers the open spaces with a silver-blue fog. Everything is quiet, thoughtful, sad.

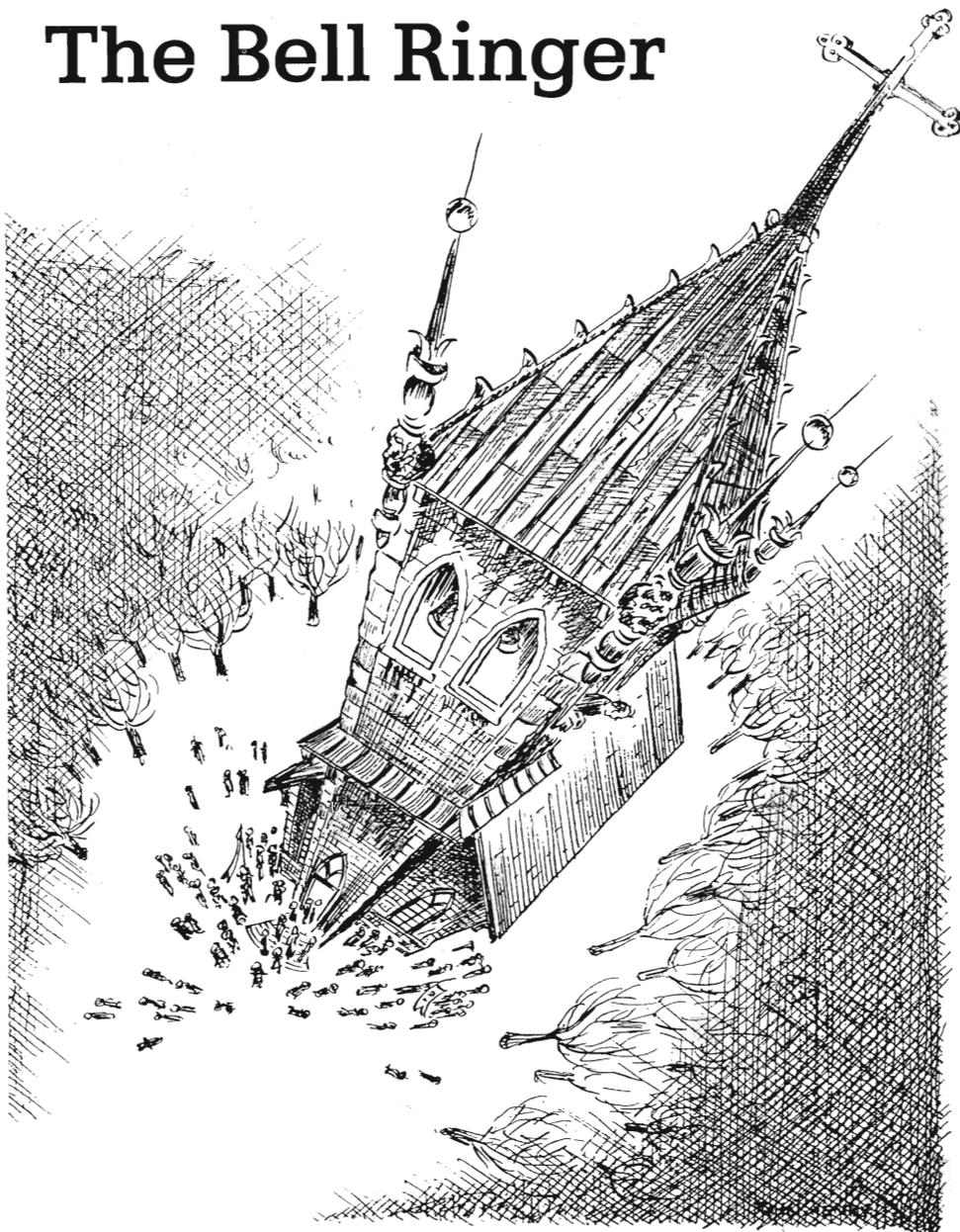
The village dreams quietly. Here and there one can see light; a gate creaks, a dog begins to bark, but stops suddenly. Every once in a while figures of people stand out, coming out of the forest; a rider passes, a cart passes. Those are the inhabitants of remote villages gathering to worship in their church, to meet there on this Spring Holy Day.

The church stands on a hill in the very middle of the village. The windows shine brightly and the bell tower — old, high, dark — reaches up into the silver-blue atmosphere.

The stairs creak. The old bell ringer Mikheyich is climbing the tower, and soon his lantern is hanging like a star in space. It is hard for the old man to climb the steep stairs. His old feet do not want to serve him; he himself is worn out and his eyes do not see well. It is time, high time for him to go to rest, but God does not send him his death. He has put to rest all his sons and many of his grandsons; he has taken leave of old and young friends — but he himself has remained alive. It is hard. How many times has he met this spring holy day; he cannot count the years. How many times has he waited for the appointed hour to die here on the tower. But God once more has let him see another spring holiday.

Where will he be a year from now? Will he again climb the steep stairs to the bells in order to waken the sleeping night, or will he be lying there, in the corner of the cemetery under the cross? God knows, he is ready — meanwhile God has granted him to experience this holiday once more — blessed be the Lord — he says, and looks up at the millions of stars in the sky, and crosses himself.

"Mikheyich — ah Mikheyich!" an old voice is calling from below. It is the old deacon who is trying to see whether Mikheyich is on the tower. What do you want? I'm here — says the bell ringer — don't you see me? "No, I don't. Isn't it time to ring?" Both look up at the stars. Thousands of lights shine down on them from on high. The Big Dipper has risen.



Mikheyich is calculating. "No, wait a little. I know when to ring." And he does know. He doesn't need a watch. God's stars will tell him when the time comes. He has lived here all his life.

And now his past comes to life. He remembers the first time he came up these stairs with his father. How long ago; how long! He is a blond boy, his eyes shine. The wind brushes his light hair with its invisible wings, and the forest recedes; far below tiny people are moving, the houses too are tiny; the clearing in which the village lies is so large, almost endless.

Yes, says the old man, so is life. In our young days we do not see life's end, it seems to have no end. Here on the tower it is quite visible: from the beginning to the very end, even to the place which he has chosen for himself in the corner of the cemetery. Well, blessed be the Lord, it is

time to go to rest. A hard road has been traversed honestly — and the earth will be his mother. Soon, very soon.

However, now it is time to ring the bells. Looking once more at the stars Mikheyich takes off his cap, crosses him-like ripe grain under the wind, bend down. Instantly the night air trembles under the blow; another, and yet another; one after another they fill the dreaming holiday night with the singing, sounding tone of the bells.

The ringing stops — and in the church the service begins. In former years Mikheyich always climbed down and stood in the corner of the church in order to pray and listen to the singing. But now he stays here on the tower. It is hard to climb the stairs, and he is strangely tired. The tower is faintly illuminated by his lantern; the bells are lost in darkness; from the church comes from time to time

the sound of singing, and the nightwind moves the ropes.

The old man, his head sunk to his chest, hears parts of the songs and sees himself in church. Children sing, and the people, like ripe grain under the wind bend down in prayer and get up. All are familiar faces — and all are dead long ago. There stands his father, there his older brother, and there he stands, young and full of happiness. Where is it now, his happiness? His mind wanders — work, hardship, worry. Where is happiness?

There, to the left among the village women, quietly bending her head, stands his young wife. She was a good wife, may her soul rest in peace. How much sorrow she had to carry. Want, work and a woman's grief have destroyed her beauty and an expression of constant fear of life's blows have changed her completely. Where is her happiness? One son was left — their hope and joy — he too is no more. All is gone; all left behind. The whole world is left for him now, this dark tower where the wind blows, moving the ropes of the bells.

"Mikheyich, ah Mikheyich! Are you asleep?" They call from below. What! — and the bell ringer gets up. Lord! has he really fallen sleep? Never in his life has such a thing happened to him. And quickly, with steady hands he takes the ropes. Down below, like ants, the crowd is milling around the church; the banners are flying in the wind. Now they have completed the procession around the church and Mikheyich hears the call, "Christ is risen from the Dead!" And the call echoes in the old man's heart. (It seems as if the wax candles shine brighter, the crowd is moving faster and the banners are flying higher until they reach out and combine with the ringing of the bells.)

Never has Mikheyich rung the bells as he does now. It seems as if his old heart has brought the dead metal to life. The bells sing, laugh and weep, and the

sounds go higher and higher until they reach the sky. The stars seem to shine brighter, the sounds mount higher and come finally back to earth with a loving caress.

The bell ringer has forgotten that he is in the old bell tower, that he is alone in the world like an old tree stump broken by the weather. He listens as the sounds sing and weep, as they fly to the sky and come back to this poor earth. And he sees himself surrounded by his sons and grandsons — those are not the bells ringing but the voices of his loved ones — all of them have gathered to sing to him about happiness, such as he has never known in his life.

He continues to pull the ropes, and the tears streaming down his face, his heart full of happiness. The people below listen and say: Never has Mikheyich rung the bells as he is ringing now.

All at once the big bell stops and the smaller ones break off.

The old ringer falls on his bench, his last tears quietly rolling down his face.

God has granted him his wish. **mm**

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## YOUR WORD

### Low German relish

I have enjoyed every issue of the MM during the past two years. I particularly relished the Low German article by Agnes Wall. Among other things she truly demonstrated, without being derogatory, the saying: "Andre Laender, andre Sitzen." I did not visit relatives but found the Russian **people** warm-hearted and hospitable when I visited that country in the seventies.

Mrs. Margaret Albrecht,  
North Kildonan, MB

### POET WRITES

I have enjoyed sending poems to the *Mennonite Mirror* and seeing them come

out. I have had poems accepted recently by *Kansas Quarterly*, *Wind*, *Christian Century*, *Mennonite Brethren Herald*, *The Christian Leader*, *Mennonite Life* and other magazines.

I look forward every month to reading the *Mirror*. It serves a purpose no other magazine would serve.

Sincerely,  
Elmer Suderman

### NOT ENOUGH AGONY

I look forward to receiving your *Mirror* with anticipation. However, I have had a growing concern about the facets of Mennonite life the *Mirror* reflects or more aptly stated what it doesn't reflect. An outsider reading this paper may well get the impression that all Mennonites are either exceptionally successful entrepreneurs, accomplished professionals or artists. How great we are, how letter perfect; we really have arrived. But what do we do with our shadow? We eulogize our history, our suffering past and even castigate the self-centered exploits of our forefathers but are loathe to comment on our contemporary wantonness. The *Mirror* and other Mennonite papers for that matter as well, reflect little of the church, community and family agony and stress as we try so hard to accommodate ourselves to the urban yuppie lifestyle. What about the dark side, i.e. family breakdown, identity crises, the casualties of the various material and chemical abuses? What are average Mennonites in general doing with the *Welt Schmerz*? In a society where we can't all be winners, what are we doing with our vulnerability? Isn't our true strength realized more by also embracing the other side, developing integrity by accepting our brokenness rather than emulating secular society where we must all be achievers in order to rate?

Sincerely  
James Janzen  
Vancouver

### REVIEWER REVIEWED

Thank you for reviewing the Mennonite Community Orchestra concert in the January paper. But because your reviewer ignored the *first piece* on the concert (Vaughn Williams Folk Song Suite) we are led to wonder if the reviewer was late? Surely the reviewer was present! It might be wise to write reviews with a copy of the program at hand. The 26 extra strings played for selections 2, 3 and 4 on the program not the *first three* as your reviewer stated.

Sincerely  
Bertha Klassen  
Winnipeg.

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# REVIEW

## The Enns Family Singers Present "The Good Times"

A review by Al Reimer

*Prairie Performances Manitoba Inc. presents The Enns Family and Friends Singers "In Allen Guten Stunden" ("The Good Times"), February 10, 11, 12, 1988, at the Muriel Richardson Auditorium, Winnipeg Art Gallery.*

Like Old Man River, Kurt Waldheim and *The Mousetrap*, the Enns Family Singers just keep rolling along. This year's program, their fourth since 1982, was billed as *In allen guten Stunden* ("The Good Times") and so they were for three rollicking evenings at the Art Gallery. So popular has this amateur group become that two evenings no longer suffice to accommodate all the Mennonites (and others) who flock to hear them. And all three concerts played to full houses.

Having used up all my favorite superlatives in previous reviews of the Enns clan's artistry, I'm forced to invent new ones or risk repeating myself, something the Singing Ennses never seem to do. As in previous concerts, Brother Ernest, the clan leader (*dee Eppaschta fonn dee gaunse Schwoarm*), looking more patriarchal than ever, got the evening off to a flying start with his witty opening remarks and vigorous conducting of the opening song.

As usual the five Enns brothers set the performance pace for the rest of the group. And just when you think you know exactly what these five can do on stage they surprise you with something different. This time two of them — Sig and John — demonstrated that they don't have to

take a back seat to sister Selma and her husband Peter when it comes to reciting poetry. Anybody who can make that old school chestnut "The Ships of Yule" sound as interesting and dramatic as Brother Sig did knows something about the fine art of recitation. And Brother John followed with an excellent reading of Salus' German poem "Kammermusik." Not that Selma and Peter Enns were upstaged. Not even the combined presence of Marilyn Monroe, Elizabeth Taylor and Mae West in their prime could ever have upstaged Selma. Her sensitive rendition of "Kennst du das Land wo die Zitronen blühen" was movingly contrasted with Peter's rendition of the parody "Kennst du das Land wo die Kanonen blühen."

Brother Harry, his bass voice as robust as ever, sang "Song of the Dnieper River" in Ukrainian, and Brother Henri not only served as conductor but sang several beautiful solos and combined with folk-singer Don Milne on a couple of humorous folk ballads. All five brothers combined for a spirited version of "When the Roll is Called up Yonder." And deserving of a special mention is Vera, Sig's wife, who as piano accompanist never once faltered in playing a dazzling array of musical styles and forms.

The younger generation of Ennses and friends also shone. Noreen Gafic, daughter of Irene and Ernest Enns, conducted the ladies section of the choir with all the flair and élan of her father. Eleanor Isaak

sang the dramatic song "Der Rote Sarafan" with good effect while her husband regaled the audience with the solo parts of "The Hippopotamus Song." Catherine Enns skilfully read an excerpt from *Cyrano de Bergerac* and husband Paul participated in a hilarious reading of "The Owl and the Pussycat." Other effective soloists were Alfred Penner, James Schellenberg and Abe Peters. The concert was brought to a hearty close with a medley of Canadian folksongs from all the main regions of the country.

What continues to intrigue me is not only the fine, disciplined artistry of the Enns family, but the impressive variety of skills and repertoire they can muster as individuals and collectively. Not only are they completely at home with English and German, not to mention forays into *Plautdietsch*, Russian and Ukrainian, but they have an intuitive grasp of a wide variety of musical and literary forms — from their beloved German folksongs to Negro spirituals, from classical poems to nonsense verse. A simple, sincere, straight-to-the-heart style and treatment are the magic ingredients that make this family of amateur entertainers so appealing. The program notes state that this might be the last of these wonderful concerts. I can fully appreciate the enormous amount of time and energy required to bring off these seemingly artless evenings. And even the Ennses repertoire isn't inexhaustible, extensive though it is.

But say it ain't so Ernest, and Sig and John and Harry and Henri and Selma and Peter and Marlies and Irmgard and Vera! We need you all to remind us every year or two that not everything in our confusing world is changing beyond recognition, that some things remain the same and even get better, that our old sane, safe Mennonite ethnic world has not yet faded irrevocably into the crude bedlam of pop culture and TV monomania. We need you to share with us, periodically, "I'm Kreise der Liebe" in "This Golden Land" "In allen guten Stunden" the artistic riches and cultural values you have accumulated and nurtured over the years.

*Komt boold wada, jo?*

# REVIEW

## Searching for your German roots

A review by André Oberlé

*Baxter, Angus. In Search of Your German Roots: A complete Guide to Tracing Your Ancestors in the Germanic Areas of Europe. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1987. Paperback, 122 pages, U.S. \$9.95.*

Those readers who are interested in investigating their background — and who is not these days? — will find this very practical new book immensely helpful. The subtitle of the work claims that it is a "complete guide". While no single work on such a complex subject can seriously lay claim to such a scope, this useful little book comes surprisingly close to its stated claim. Of course, Angus Baxter has already established for himself a solid reputation with his other important works on the subject of Genealogy, notably with those on British and Irish roots and on European roots. In fact, the present book grew out of his many years of labour on these other works.

*In Search of Your German Roots* covers every aspect of genealogy. After a brief general introduction to the process involved in searching for one's roots and a concise outline of the rather complicated history of German-speaking communities in Europe, including an account of the many migrations that took place, the author presents the reader with a step-by-step guide to researching a family tree. He points out that one does not need to have a lot of information at the outset. Often proceeding on a mere hunch or an old family rumour can prove to be most productive. The important thing is to go over each step with care. Through the example of a typical case history the reader is taught valuable techniques in researching his own family tree. All this need not be an expensive process, as the research can be done by correspondence in most cases.

The most valuable aspect of the book is undoubtedly the fact that the author provides the reader with innumerable valuable hints on how to contact the various

archives and other sources of information and that he lists an astonishing number of very useful addresses of the authorities, both in North America and in Europe, who can help the casual researcher significantly. The archives listed include both secular and religious institutions in Canada, the United States, Germany (both West and East) and other European countries. Baxter is able to help the casual researcher, who is often untrained in the necessary skills and only motivated by his keen desire to find out about his past, by providing him with many useful hints and shortcuts. He instructs the reader not only in where to write but also shows him how to write the kind of letters that will get satisfactory and speedy results. An impressive list of German Genealogical Associations, an excellent bibliography of helpful books and a handy index round out the work.

Angus Baxter's guide is written with an appealing down-to-earth approach in a simple and easy to understand style. His work is first and foremost a practical how-to guide which limits the theoretical considerations to the necessary minimum. The work is primarily addressed to individuals who have no previous experience in this often complicated science but are motivated by a strong desire to find out more about their ancestors. With the aid of this handy guide they should find it much easier to achieve their goal.

*In Search of Your German Roots* is to be highly recommended to all those who have always wanted to research their German family history but have lacked the courage or the know-how to begin this arduous but fascinating and rewarding process. Readers with less specific goals who have a general interest in Genealogy will also find this work fascinating reading.

*André Oberlé is Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Germanic Studies at the University of Winnipeg.*

## 1988 Departures

### Lisbon/Madeira

Dr. David Riesen is taking his fourth tour to Portugal because Lisbon and Madeira are such incredibly beautiful places to visit. There's a lot to see, a lot to do, and it's not too expensive to stay in a five star hotel.

March 27 to April 1

### Caribbean Cruise

Here's another chance to sail the blue waters of the warm Caribbean. A real "school break" that leaves.

March 25

### Middle East: Holy Land

Four nights in Cairo, Egypt, followed by six nights in Jerusalem, Israel, and ample time to tour sites of historical and Christian significance. Henry Visch, host.

April 30

### Australia and Expo '88

A month-long excursion "down under" to Sydney, Melbourne, Alice Springs, Ayers Rock, and Brisbane with its Expo '88. New Zealand cities of Auckland, Queenstown, Christchurch and others are also included. Bernie Wiebe, host.

July 10

### Soviet Union

Leningrad, Moscow, Karaganda, Alma Ata, Frunze, Zaporozhe, Amsterdam. Menno Wiebe, host.

July 11th to August 1st

### Poland and Soviet Union

From Warsaw and Gdansk in Poland, to Moscow, Karaganda, Alma Ata, Frunze, Kiev, Zaporozhie, and Leningrad, in the Soviet Union. Lawrence Klippenstein, host.

May 11

### Europe — Church History

Rome, Florence, Venice, Innsbruck, Zurich, Worms, Cologne, Pinguim, Witmarsum, Amsterdam, Hamburg, with special emphasis on Mennonite historical sites. George Epp, host.

July 6

### Japan, China, Hong Kong

Tokyo and Kyoto, in Japan, Shanghai, Suzhou, Beijing, Ki'an, Guilin, and Guangzhou, in China, concluding with a final two days in Hong Kong. John H. Neufeld, host.

August 1

### Soviet Union

A unique tour of special interest to those with an interest in Mennonite history with tour leaders Al Reimer and James Urry.

August 4.

### Europe in 1989

A study tour to examine labor and management relationships in The Netherlands, West Germany, Spain and Portugal. Roy Vogt, host.

May 2

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## To the question of whether food "tastes good" should be added another: Is it "good" for you?

by Katherine Martens

**A** Mennonite is someone who belongs to a Mennonite church and eats Mennonite food like *borscht*, *verenika*, Altona sausage and *Tweeback*, right? And those who no longer go to church but still eat the food are half-Mennonites. To my surprise I rarely use my Mennonite cookbooks, so the percentage of Mennonite in me is getting lower. When I lost some weight, I joked that I'd lost my Mennonite fat. For a long time my tastes ran to the kind of fare that earned me the label of "health nut," because I did not tolerate sweets very well. That fact alone brought me into conflict with Mennonite society when faced with a *Faspa* table laden with sweets. Watching me eat nuts instead, a curious person asked, "Is that health food you're eating?" If there is such a thing as health food there must also be sick food.

Scattered reports from various Mennonite families suggest that many families now have one or more "health nuts" who have given up white flour, white sugar, and removed themselves from that *Faspa* table. There are vegetarians who eat no meat for humane, religious, or health reasons. I have found that the craving for sweets can be as powerful an addiction as that for cigarettes or alcohol. Church and family functions featuring tables laden with sweets are symptomatic of the meaning we attach to food. The *Plautdietsch* expression "*vom ate ess noch tjeena jesterve*" (Nobody has yet died from eating) is taken quite literally.

My introduction to viewing consumption of food as a spiritual, social, political as well as a physical act came when I attended a weekend workshop on third world development issues. The films we

saw and the simulations we participated in left me with a profound impression of the "oneness of the world." After reading book after book on the subject I rationalized my unease away with the excuse that one person's contribution wouldn't make any difference. Becoming a vegetarian was so awkward since my family did not share my convictions. It was not until years later when 'unease' changed to 'disease' that I made any changes.

I think I carry in every cell the memory of utter bliss I experienced as an infant in consuming as much milk, sweetened with corn syrup, as I could possibly drink. How often I tried to recreate that moment only to realize that the words gluttony, greed, and gorge are all synonyms for a process that produces a bloated body and a clouded mind.

It became important to me to discover where and how my attitudes to food were formed. Did I learn early in life that pleasure and satisfaction in others could be evoked by obediently eating everything set before me? The advantage of that is never having to take responsibility for what I took in. If the prevailing fashion in food dictates high fat, protein and sugar consumption I could simply follow the crowd. While people with diabetes are allowed to say no to sweets, the rest of us feel we are creating a fuss or we will appear to be ungrateful or impolite. What we eat and drink is determined both by popular opinion and family pressures to conform. Paying close attention to when you feel like eating brings the realization that eating is often used to flee from uncomfortable emotional states, anxiety,

anger or simply to avoid taking action.

The current preoccupation with women's eating disorders convinced me that weight alone should not be the measure of health. It is not weight that is the issue; it is health. Our focus on illness instead of on health results in organizations for any disease you care to name but no Association of the Healthy. If we define ourselves by our ailments we tend to concentrate on them instead of concentrating on how well we are. Western medicine analyses conditions and prescribes drugs to correct deficiencies. Our bodies have the means to be healthy provided we eat balanced whole foods, get exercise, breathe clean air and have a positive attitude. One problem is that grocery stores contain many so-called foods which are not capable of sustaining life. The only kind of life they contain is shelf life.

There was a time when I routinely had anxiety attacks in the long aisles of supermarkets faced with all the attractive packages my children had seen advertised on TV and were expecting me to bring home. I rushed through what had become a lifeless chore. I had lost something; was it a reverence for life? The words junk food are a contradiction; if it's junk it can't be food; if it's food it can't be junk. The Bible says if your child asks you for bread will you give her a stone?

When I began to discuss my misgivings and questions I sometimes met incomprehension. Yes, it was conceivable that stomach problems might be food related, but surely not such things as depression, anxiety or mood, for the mind is a long distance from your stomach. But I re-

membered reading "You are what you eat." Making changes in diet and attitudes to eating is a slow process. Diet books fill the shelves of most bookstores but each has its own philosophy and most or all of them concentrate on weight loss, not health for its own sake. The reader must walk a narrow line to avoid slavishly following what another person has decided is the correct diet.

One of the books I was attracted to was *Fit for Life* by the Diamonds, who advocate a high fruit and vegetable content diet. Their suggestions on food combining were almost impossible to follow and I always wondered why I was trying to fit myself into a new mold. Even worse, I felt fragmented and suffered numerous memory lapses during that time. *Food for Thought* by Saul and JoAnne Miller provided a thoughtful survey of eating practices in various cultures. The book documents the way food affects behaviour, and provides a balanced look at the whole subject. After experimenting for some time I discovered books on the Macrobiotic way of eating, one of which was *The Macrobiotic Way* by Michio Kushi. I read with a great deal of scepticism mixed with fascination. I was afraid it was a very extreme diet. Later I read *You are all Sanpaku* by George Ohsawa, which provided the reasons and a philosophy for the way of preparing and eating they suggest.

But before that, because I suspected allergies, I tried a rotating diet in which I never ate the same foods more often than five days apart. It was the most unfocused eating experience in my life. When poor health continued I declared a moratorium on all eating while I fasted and prayed. I look back upon that time as a crucial moment in taking responsibility for my own health. During the fast I had what I now know were withdrawal effects when I no longer ate the food that I was addicted/allergic to. A second discovery was that not all hunger is for food. I went to a massage and reflexology therapist who provided the healing touch which helped speed my return to health.

All of this took place over several years during which I suffered the loss of three persons dear to me and I had a serious illness myself. After my father's death an important source of support were visits with a psychologist and therapist who helped me face the pain directly instead of trying to escape and avoid it. His approach is that the person coming for help has the answers within her and by being "evocatively empathetic" the therapist allows her to discover and experience her own strengths. His keen

sense of knowing when to speak and when to refrain from talking always amazes me. His support was important to me in controlling the inevitable anxiety that gripped me when I tried to find root causes of my illness instead of using medication to suppress the symptoms.

Only by experiencing illness can I appreciate good health. It took a long time after I followed a macrobiotic way of eating and preparing food before I felt completely well. Just as it took many years of imbalance to get to the point of calling myself ill, my body had to heal itself from the inside out. Macrobiotics is not very well known, but that does not prevent people from pronouncing judgments on it. Macro means great and bio means vitality. When applied to diet it means eating for maximum vitality and rejuvenation. I moved carefully into an uncharted area. From what I have discovered by eating macrobiotically, the food for each day should consist of at least 50 to 60 per cent whole cereal grains, 20 to 25 per cent vegetables, five per cent soups and five to 10 per cent beans and sea vegetables. As many of these foods as possible should come from local sources. This could also be called a traditional diet of our ancestors if we go back 100 or more years.

It is ironic that where we live grain is the principal crop, yet grains like wheat, millet, buckwheat, rye and barley are rarely served simply cooked as whole grains, and even oatmeal porridge is considered old-fashioned. If you ask for it in a restaurant for breakfast you will be offered the instant package complete with additives, sugar being one of them. For those who grew up in Russia during the *Hungersnot* (famine), cooked grains are a reminder of what they ate when all else was unavailable. Anxious about our total reliance on supermarkets for survival, I tried to think which local foods we could

use in case foods from California were unavailable. All I could think of was root vegetables, turnips, carrots and potatoes; yet what is more readily available and as easy to store as grain?

Children in the 60's had to justify their vegetarianism to their parents. I had a role reversal and had to explain to my children why I should finally make my own decisions about what to eat. At a restaurant meal my youngest daughter said to her brother, "She [mother] has strange ideas about food but at least she doesn't dress weird." She mercifully forgot the time we noticed heads turning to stare at my comfortable earth shoes as we walked along the Champs-Elysees in Paris.

Seeking wholeness brings laughter and joy, appreciation and gratitude for ancestors and parents who gave birth to me and nurtured me to adulthood, as well as a sense of kinship with older sisters and brothers who were my surrogate parents. According to one author, the early Anabaptists or Mennonites "avoided costly clothes, despised costly food and drink . . . their walk was altogether humble". The persecutions they suffered may have given their descendants a tendency to believe that the way to heaven is through hell or suffering. Sickness is a form of suffering sometimes borne with a sense of martyrdom. What if sickness were to be viewed as the body's message that we are disobeying the laws of nature? When we begin to live in harmony with nature and our environment we may also be in harmony with each other. **mm**

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FROM

**RIEDIGER'S SUPERMARKET**

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# MANITOBA NEWS

**Karl Friesen**, a former Winnipegger, was goaltender for the German national hockey team during the Calgary Olympic Games.

**Don and Elfie Elias** of Altona worked as course judges during the skiing events of the Calgary Olympic Games. They have been involved for many years in competitive skiing. Their daughter Rachael has coached at Holiday Mountain in La Riviere, while son Robin has been on the Manitoba alpine ski team and last year represented Manitoba at the Winter Games in New Brunswick.

**Cal Zacharias**, formerly of Halbstadt, has accepted an assignment with the National Advisory Council on Aging (NACA) in Ottawa. Cal joins NACA after having worked for the New Horizons Program for the past 11 years. He will be a Projects Manager, mainly responsible for liaison activities between the Council and Senior's organizations across Canada. Cal is the son of Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Zacharias of Altona.

**Anne Berg**, a long-time Altona Kindergarten and special education teacher, received the Altona and District Chamber of Commerce's third annual "good citizenship" award recently. Anne began her employment in Altona schools in 1959 and retired in 1985.

**Henry D. and Anne Hildebrand** of Halbstadt have begun a two-year assignment for the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) serving as a farm advisor on a wheat farm project in Tanzania, East Africa. They have rented out their farm operation and Anne has left her part-time employment in the Emerson Hospital. Hildebrand has served as reeve of the rural municipality of Rhineland in the past.

In mid-January, National Health Minister and Provencher MP **Jake Epp** ended months of speculation by announcing that he definitely did not intend to seek the leadership of the Manitoba Conservative party. Epp, who has represented Provencher since 1972, said he intends to run again in the next federal election.

Members at the annual meeting of the **Steinbach Credit Union** in January were told that assets passed the \$300 million mark in 1987. Membership reached 21,785, making it the largest single-

branch credit union in Canada. The institution holds 13 per cent of all assets in the Manitoba credit union system.

Church construction and expansion projects could inject as much as \$6.5 million into the **Steinbach** economy over the next two years. Five new buildings are under construction, and two churches are planning major additions. At least two existing buildings will change hands when the new buildings are open. New church buildings include a Roman Catholic church, a Sommerfelder church, the Community Fellowship church, a new Emmanuel Evangelical Free Church, and a new Steinbach Mennonite Church. Lloyd Peters, chairman of the Steinbach Ministerial Association, said the building boom at least partly reflects the town's growth in recent years. There was also a "domino effect", started when the Grace Mennonite Church made an offer to purchase the Emmanuel Evangelical building.



**Menno Klassen** of Winnipeg has been appointed interim Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada Native Gardening Coordinator. He will replace MCC Canada Native Concerns staff person Eric Rempel, who is on a one-year study leave. Rempel has coordinated the summer Native Gardening program since its inception in 1977. Klassen, a retired agronomist, is a member of the Fort Garry Fellowship, a Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba congregation in Winnipeg. As MCC volunteers in 1946-49, he and his wife, Aganetha, founded an experimental farm at the Fernheim Colony in the Paraguayan Chaco. He retired in 1982 from the Manitoba Sugar Beet Company, where he was in charge of sugar beet production research. He will coordinate the gardening program until the end of September. Due to MCC Canada budget cutbacks, the number of gardeners was to be reduced this year. Since Klassen is offering his services free of charge, the gardening program will have funds to appoint additional volunteers. Over the past 11 years the Native Gardening program has helped begin gardens in 40 Native communities.

**Ben Horch** received an award from Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Recreation Minister, Judy Wasylcyca-Leis, at the first Manitoba awards for Multiculturalism banquet, held on November 21, 1987. Horch was winner in the Media and Communications category, in recognition of his 60-year career as a singer, conductor, teacher and broadcaster.

The official open house of the new Canadian offices of the Mennonite World Conference, located at 326 Broadway Avenue, took place on December 5. Director of the office is **John Dyck** of Winnipeg, who will be assisted by administrative assistant **Valerie Kroeker**, who has recently worked at the Mennonite Brethren Conference Centre in Winnipeg. The office will be responsible for coordinating arrangements, donations, and registrations within Canada. **Jacob Pauls** of Winnipeg is MWC vice-president for North America and chair of the Program Committee.

**George and Carla Toews** were recently installed as pastoral couple of Manitou MB Church.

**Gary L. and Joyce Sawatzky** have resigned as pastor couple of the Christian Centre Fellowship in Thompson, Manitoba, effective April 30.

**John and Anita Klassen** have submitted their resignation as pastor couple of Snow Lake Christian Centre Fellowship after serving for five years.



**Henry and Kathrine Bergen** of Winkler, are beginning two-year Mennonite Central Committee assignments in Saskatoon, Sask. Henry will be working as assistant administrator of the Saskatoon Food Bank and Kathrine in promotion and as a clerk with SelfHelp Crafts. The Bergens previously served with Choice Books in Winnipeg. Henry was last employed as general manager at Winkler Cooperative Retail. The Bergens are members of Berghthaler Mennonite Church in Winkler.

Manitoba artist **Aganetha Dyck** had an exhibition of her work: *Brain is Not Enough*, at the School of Art, University of Manitoba, during the month of January.

**Abe Wiebe** of Winkler was elected as one of 12 executive committee members at the annual meeting of the Mennonite Central Committee. He represents MCC Canada on the MCC board.

Between 1983-87 MCC Canada shipped 95,045 metric tonnes of food-grains worth \$35.5 million. Recipients of the foodgrains were Ethiopia, India, El Salvador, Mozambique, Sudan, Zimbabwe, Bangladesh and Nicaragua. MCC Canada also shipped 2,665 MT of milk powder worth \$3.47 million in the same period.



**David and Sandra Roberts** of Winnipeg, are beginning three-year Mennonite Central Committee assignments in Bokong, Lesotho. Sandra will be working as a secondary school teacher and David as a community development worker. David received a bachelor's degree in geography from the University of Winnipeg. Sandra received bachelor's degrees in music and education from the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg. Sandra was last employed as a teacher in Gimli. David last worked as a plant pathology technician in Winnipeg. The Roberts are members of Selkirk (Man.) Evangelical Lutheran Church and are associated with Grain of Wheat Church Community in Winnipeg. Sandra's parents are Herb and Shirley Wildeman of Winnipeg. David's parents are David and Elmeria Roberts of Winnipeg.

**Helga Froese** of Steinbach participated in a Learning Tour to South America in January, sponsored by Women in Mission of the General Conference Church. Purpose of the tour was to help the churches in North America learn about missions from a woman's perspective. Participants were selected by their district and provincial organizations.



**Rev. and Mrs. J. H. Wiebe** celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary early in February. They were married in Einlage, Russia, and have six children, 16 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren. A reception, held at Autumn House where they now reside, was arranged by their children. Rev. Wiebe was for many years a minister, and leading minister, at the First Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

The Steinbach **Parents for German Education** have, for the third time, requested the Hanover school board to implement a German-English bilingual program in a Steinbach elementary school. The board also received a request from the **Grunthal Parents for German Education** to expand an existing kindergarten to grade three bilingual program to include grades 4 to 6. The requests have been referred to a curriculum committee for a recommendation. The board has twice denied past requests for a German-English bilingual program in a Steinbach elementary school.

**Di Brandt** was one of four finalists for the Governor General's Literary Awards, announced February 11, for her book of poetry, *Questions I Asked my Mother*. The late Gwendolyn MacEwan won the award.

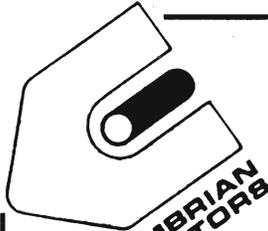
A commemorative evening was held on November 20, 1987 in honor of the late **Abram A. Kroeker**. The evening was sponsored by the Mennonite Brethren Historical Society of Canada, to acknowledge Kroeker's contribution in the areas of education, agriculture, Christian camping and Sunday Schools.

## Church development high on CMC agenda

Who makes the decisions within a large conference structure? This question on priority-setting was raised, not only by each board and committee, but by the whole assembly at the 1988 Council of Boards sessions of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC), held in Winnipeg on February 4-6.

Elected representatives from the 154 congregations of CMC met on the campus of Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC) and in the neighbouring St. Demetrious Greek Orthodox Church on three of this winter's coldest days. A spirit of good-will prevailed even when it was not always clear where funds should be channelled, or which direction a program should take, or even whether a program should be cut altogether.

The General Board of CMC presented



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the domestication of the steppe and in the value of property they possessed: their houses and contents, farmyards and machinery. There was, however, a tendency to idealize these material improvements and to attribute them solely to Mennonite enterprise and to God's blessing on His chosen people, without proper acknowledgement being given to the tremendous role of government in the development of Mennonite prosperity. To mark the centenary of Mennonite settlement in Khortitza an article appeared which contrasted the situation before settlement with the contemporary affluence of the colony. The article claimed that where once nothing but 'yellow, arid steppe' had existed, now wheatfields 'billed in the gentle spring wind.' A 'horrible wilderness without plan or order' had been replaced by 'neat, orderly, well laid-out villages, surrounded by dark green mature trees.' The pastoral vision presented was one of a rural arcadia, a landscape ordered and civilized from some primeval wasteland by Mennonite industry. While the land they had settled had neither been as uncultivated nor as unsettled as many Mennonites liked to think, there was no denying that they had effected a major transformation of the landscape. Villages had been laid out, woodland established, extended and improved, fields formed and roads constructed. Educated Russian visitors continued to write lyrically of the sense of wonder they experienced on encountering a Mennonite colony after journeying across the open steppe and passing through squalid peasant villages; in the colonies they found an oasis of rustic domesticity in an uncivilized wilderness.

Mennonites born and raised in Russia also identified strongly with this local landscape: the village, the orchards and the general atmosphere of the places in which they had been raised and which they had come to love. Even emigrants to the Americas occasionally would recall their home villages with a sense of longing. The physical structure of the village and the colonies, established at an earlier time when communities were smaller and more homogeneous, continued to influence profoundly the tenor of everyday life, creating an impression of community where sometimes little existed. In the close, compact settlements Mennonites were forced to cooperate, even when many of the older principles of cooperation and interdependence no longer had the moral force they once had possessed. But the patterns of settlement, however much they may have reflected an earlier sense of community, had never been

intended for aesthetic appreciation. The romantic sense of place felt by many Mennonites conflicted strongly with the reality of the economic world in which they found themselves by 1889. The old agrarian imagery was being supplanted by visions of an industrial world which more honestly reflected the industrial society to which Mennonites now belonged.

The Khortitza correspondent who had so clearly drawn the contrast between the uncivilized wildness prior to settlement and the agrarian arcadia which Mennonites had created, also noted the arrival of the industrial world. Above the villages, where once only the 'red hot chimney' of the local smithy had glowed, now the 'belching flues' of factories pushed upwards into the clear sky. These stacks were witness to 'the unexpected industrial boom' which had come in recent years to the colony.

The factories were only the physical manifestations of deeper changes in Mennonite life, changes which in many ways were hidden or disguised from many Mennonites by their continued existence in established rural settlements. The rattle of heavy machinery, the hiss of steam engines, the thud of heavy hammers which echoed from factory and workshops through villages and out across the carefully cultivated fields signalled the transformation not just of the village demesne and of patterns of work and leisure, but of the very nature of Mennonite life itself. The concept of the person, the organization of society, the sense of community and visions of Mennonites' place in the world, had all fundamentally and irreversibly changed in the century since first settlement in Russia. Mennonite society and culture had become far more obviously part of the wider world than it ever had been in the past, and Mennonites were now more conscious than their ancestors of their links with a world which was itself undergoing rapid change. Mennonite ideas, beliefs and values had altered; now they were part of an emergent industrial society, seeking and promoting change and 'improvement' through the development of transformatory institutions, most notably education. 'Culture' was now something transmitted in the schools, rather than in the home or by the congregation; in books and learning rather than through the spoken word and through practical experience. Mennonite tastes were increasingly bourgeois and this was clearly reflected in their life style and physical appearance. Fancy clothes and jewellery were worn openly by the new elite; stout

figures replaced the lean, muscular torsos of old. Their society was no longer homogeneous but heterogeneous, with wealth, education and occupation creating fine social distinctions and a sense of inequality. But although divided at the social level, Mennonites by 1889 were united in new ways and possessed a broader, if looser, sense of their own identity than most of their ancestors. But the new sense of identity also possessed a new sense of purpose, one which reached out beyond the Mennonite world and into a future which for many was full of hope and promise.

In spite of the publication of historical accounts which reviewed the Mennonite past, Mennonites in 1889 really did celebrate a future not a past, progress not tradition, change not continuity. And the colonists celebrated with a sense of ebullience, in public and with style, not with the quietness and humility that had once been the Mennonite way. They proudly celebrated as Mennonites, as Christians, as loyal Russians, and as civilized Europeans — as members of a new world — not as a separate people, withdrawn from the world, awaiting God's judgement. Life had indeed changed for the Mennonites in Russia. But if, in 1889, there were voices raised against the spirit of the age, they have not been recorded and such lamentations undoubtedly went unheeded at the time. mm

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for consideration to the plenary session several major recommendations regarding pastoral education in Canada, direction for the CMC/CMBC building plans, and associate membership for congregations of the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada (MCEC). The Board also took a bold step in the priority-setting process within the Conference.

An ad hoc committee will be formed to pursue further how best to implement seminary education in Canada in collaboration with other schools. The building plans, which had been accepted with qualifications at the 1986 annual sessions in Waterloo, are to be scaled down and/or divided into manageable phases for presentation at the 1989 Council of Boards and annual sessions. In the meantime, portions of the Call to Kingdom Commitment funds will be used for necessary renovations to the CMBC residence.

A deviation from the normal procedure of pro-rating available money among the boards was made when the General Board designated funds which are anticipated as increased income for 1988 to areas which were deemed to have highest priority at this time: to CRB for Asian ministries work and to NM to help balance its deficit budget. This action resulted in a plea for developing guidelines for establishing priorities when either deficit or surplus income situations arise. Further, Council of Boards delegates strongly endorsed the action to change CMC by-laws to allow former MC churches in Ontario to become associate members of CMC, with the hope that they become full members within six years.

Each of the program boards also had on its agenda major issues for discussion and decision-making. Native Ministries workers reported on spiritual renewal among the Native people. The work of three NM staff couples was reviewed and affirmed for further terms of service: Neill and Edith von Gunten, Elijah and Jeanette MacKay, and Henry and Elna Neufeld. The Board moved to balance a deficit budget by dropping the executive secretary position to quarter-time, using the special projects categories to fill the executive secretary work-load. Other NM discussion centred around Native leadership training and itineration of northern stations by board members.

The Congregational Resources Board took specific steps to expand the Asian (i.e. Chinese, Vietnamese and Laotian) ministries work, agreeing to invite Hugh and Janet Sprunger to visit Chinese Mennonite churches and pastors in North America, and providing some money to help fund a quarter-time cross-cultural

staff person who will relate to the North American Chinese Mennonite Council. Other actions by CRB included the phasing in of a person on marginal time to relate to provincial mission committees; accepting guidelines for funding and prioritizing church development work; and adopting a resolution on Christian Peacemaker Teams.

Agenda for the CMBC Board included implementing the Service Education program for fall, 1988, and phasing in new faculty for the New Testament area as present faculty reaches retirement. Faculty reappointments included a second five-year term for President John Neufeld, and three-year terms for both Lois Edmund and Sig Polle in Practical Theology. To alleviate the constant pressure of increasing costs, the Board has asked John Neufeld to spend major time at doing special fund-raising for the next 18 months.

## Low-German New Testament

After hundreds of years of using the Scriptures in German, the Mennonites finally have God's Word in their own everyday language.

The New Testament in Low German rolled off the presses at Kindred Press in Winnipeg, January, 1988.

It will fill the need of 80,000 Mennonites whose mother tongue and everyday language is *Plautdietsch*, often labelled "low German." Some of these speakers are in Canada and the U.S., but the vast majority live in Mexico, Paraguay, Belize and Bolivia.

The translation project was a joint effort of Mennonite Brethren Communications of Winnipeg and Wycliffe Bible Translators with its sister organization, the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL). A working agreement to produce the Low-German New Testament was signed by the groups in 1983. Finances for the project came from interested donors.

Much of the groundwork for the translation was completed by Rev. J. J. Neufeld of Winnipeg, speaker on a Low German radio program produced by Mennonite Brethren Communications. During 28 years — and 5,000 programs — of radio preaching, Neufeld translated his sermon Bible texts into *Plautdietsch*, which has a total vocabulary of about 7,500 words.

"I always translated supply on demand for my radio program," he recently told staff members at Wycliffe's Canada Divi-

# MIRROR MIX-UP

LERY



OURT



LEDO



TAWSE



SOPER



One thing you can give  
and still keep



In this edition we announce the winner of the January puzzle. From among the 22 entries Abe Braun of Altona was selected winner.

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

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

Answers accepted for the January puzzle were plea, post, pear, spare, peach, and peace.

**Entries must be sent to the Mirror office by April 14, 1988.**

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# A year-long look in the *Mirror*?

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sion headquarters in Calgary.

Peter Fast, a Low German speaker and long-time member of Wycliffe, heard about Neufeld's broadcasts and in 1976 visited the preacher. He eagerly read the pastor's carefully-indexed files of translated Scriptures, about a third of the New Testament.

Fast said Neufeld's translation was very good. But work was needed on the orthography: "the spelling was not standardized."

Fast offered his help to produce a standard written phonemic alphabet and Neufeld accepted. Fast became orthography checker and coordinator, and later used a uniform phonetic alphabet produced by 18 Low German speakers at a University of Manitoba seminar in 1982. Dr. Joe Grimes, a long-time SIL linguist, offered to be translation consultant and Vi Reimer, another trained SIL linguist and native of Steinbach, agreed to work with Neufeld as editorial secretary.

Neufeld continued intensively to translate the remaining books of the New Testament. In May 1986, while celebrating his 73rd birthday, Neufeld translated the last verse of the Book of Revelation into Plautdietsch, with the translation team at his side.

In the early 1920s, several conservative Mennonite groups in Canada moved from Manitoba and Saskatchewan to Latin America. They wanted to avoid compulsory education and what they saw as increasing worldliness. Also known as "Old Colony" Mennonites, they live in villages, but farm separately. Some drive only horse and buggies and do not use automobiles. Their *Plautdietsch* language has survived several centuries of change.

Fast said many of the Mennonites' written communication is in standard German, also known as High German.

"They teach their children the basics of reading and writing in High German. They read the Scriptures in High German, and they attend worship services in that language," said Fast. "But they don't speak High German among themselves, and they have limited understanding when they read it."

It is to these people that the new *Plautdietsch* translation will be of most use.

Explained Neufeld: "We're reaching out to the people that still need it. Our religion and our preaching must be in our mother tongue."

Copies of the 182,000-word *Plautdietsch* New Testament are available from Kindred Press, 4-169 Riverton Avenue, Winnipeg, MB, R2L 2E5.

## POET'S WORD

*The Mirror apologizes to the writer, John Enns, and its readers for the error that crept into the text of this poem when it was published in January. One missing letter in one little word altered the meaning of the whole poem. Republished here is the corrected text.*

JANUARY 1, 1987

The first time  
I snorkeled  
The salt water  
Seeped into  
My mouth

Struggling

I broke surface  
Tore off  
The mask  
And spat bile

The warm Caribbean sunlight  
danced on the gold  
and blue, the green  
and silver, and the endless  
kaleidoscope of fish and coral  
brought tranquil rhythm  
to each breath

The first time  
I saw  
My father  
Dead  
The salt water  
Seeped into  
My mouth

I struggled

Against the grey  
Cold numbness  
Patiently waiting  
To engulf me

The stark Northern sunlight  
danced bravely over frozen fields  
till black crows winged  
warm earth turned  
and the gentle rhythms  
of the autumn winds  
were coloured green and gold

the first time

— John Enns



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# Frintschauft Nofädme

fonn Jack Thiessen

**N**u heat sitj de Dommheit doch lang-somm opp. Fäje Wäatj wea etj noch een jestuckda nobody, soo's de measchte aundre, enn nu kome se Reajwies aun, enn welle weete, aus Mike Tyson, de nia Champion fonne Schwoare-Scherwaundasch mett mie Frintschauft ess. Jo, de Mensche froage no mien Autogram enn bliewe lenja bie mie sette aus jeweenlijch, uck wann'et Menniste sent, 'dee'et sea drock habe', enn sent aulatoop frintlijch aus een Toptje Mies, enn wann etj mie haustijch ommndrei, moatj etj emma, daut se no miene Fuppe tsiele, omm üttoofinje, aus dee nijch en bätje no bute ütjebult sent nom latsten Feit mett Larry Holmes. Mie ess daut, soo's etj aul säd, aulatoop en bätje too groff jeworde (ooda säd etj 'too domm'?) enn doawajen, schriew etj daut nu dol, daut Jie aula weete, wua'ett doamett bestalt ess.

Jo, wie sent Frintschauft, enn uck goanjich soo wietleftijch. Taunte Jasch Klosche haft goanjich soo orajcht, wann se meent, daut ditje Jenetj bie aule Thiesses enn Tysons kjemmt ar en bätje bekaunt fäa, enn uck daut heete Bloot hinjre Füste. "Dee Thiesses kunne aula grulijch bossijch woare, enn wann dee mol opp earenst doll worde, dann holde de Lied de Kjinja nenn." "Enn wann see aunfonge too schlone, gauf daut emma Broodaschauft," meend de Historika Peetasch uck aul emma. Disse Mensche habe rajcht.

Dee Jeschijcht ess soo's ditt: Daut mien

Grootonkel no Sumatra jintj enn doa mett de Tiejäsch enn de Sind toop oppriemd, daut weet Jie. Oba daut disselwja Onkel eenen Onkel haud, woon'a aul aune 1802 no Afrika jintj, daut weet jie nijch, wiels daut ess blooss en eenem Buak "Fraunts Thiesses Mejchel woat Missjooona en Afrika: Femielje-Jeheimnis," oppjeschräwe. Enn ditt Buak ess em Mennonite Study Centre bie Harry Loewen enne unjaschde Schüflod too finje.

Enn waut steit doabenne? froag jie. Well, nijch sea fäl, oba doa steit, daut — enn ditt weet jie meist aula — Mejchel fonn een enn jee, de Nome fomm Darpsboll wea, wiels Michael, Mechel, Mejchel, Michel ensoowieda emma de jratsta enn de stoatjsta wea, waut'et gauf. Daut weete se em Himmel enn uck oppe Ead, wiels de Ertsenjel drajcht dän Nome uck nijch ommsonst.

Jo, enn diss Fraunts Thiesses Mejchel wort soo jenant, wiels hee aul mett een Joa Kaute aufwarje kunn, enn mett twee Joa lange Betjse druach enn twintijch-pundje Arbuse aufplock, enn eent mett de Füst de Nacht oppe Berstaund tweischloach enn oppfraut. Mett fief Joa haud de Darpsboll fe am Schis, enn mett twalw haud hee eemol oppem Joamoatj enn Ternie eenen Mongoole emm Rastling-Ring daut Hinjarenj ferr aule Lied foll-jehiwt.

Toom Jletj wort dis Mejchel kjristlijch enn fein mak enn lead aus Missjooona. De Lied odemde enn bätje opp, wiels Thiesses

Mejchel wea ferhää doch een 'force to be reckoned with,' jewast, soo's Taunte Klosche säd, "soo haude de Lied uck noch no äwa hundat Joa jesajcht."

Soo's etj aul säd, siene Mutta freid sitj sea, daut hee aunstaut nom Circus too gone enn Mensche de Kjap too febüle, nu doch no Afrika jintj, enn doa de Mensche beobeide deed. Ut Afrika kaum eascht uck foaken Post enn dann emma weinja, enn leet donn schliesslich gaunts no.

Jo, enn waut wea, enn woaromm leet de Post no, enn head schliesslich gaunts opp? Wiels Fraunts Thiesses Mejchel haud sitj doa mett däm Eppaschta siene Dochta befriet, enn daut wea enne grulijch jestuckte, schmocke enn frintliche Mamme, "oba schwuat aus Petjdrot" — soo steit'et doa jeschräwe. Yessiree, daut jeft noch sogoa twee Bilda wua Mejchel mett siene Fru enn drettien Kjinja emm hoagen Ella steit enn fief Kjinja sette bie am oppem Kopp, oppe Oarms, enn eena oppe Kjnee, dee hee soo en bätje nohecht helt!

Daut jeft Thiesses, dee sitj noch emma schäme, daut wie soon Frintschauft habe, enn see beobeide de Thiesses Lienje en Afrika enn schreewe, enn råde, enn deede, see sulle doch, weens äaren Nome en kjlienet bätje endre. Enn daut deede se dann uck. Mett däm Resultat, daut een Ua-Uagrootjind fonn Fraunts Thiesses Mejchel nu dee Champion fonne Schwoare Scherwaundasch ess! Enn disa heet Mike Tyson. **mm**

## Die tote Liebe

ein Gedicht von Conrad Ferdinand Meyer

*Der Schweizer Dichter vergleicht in diesem Gedicht das Verhältnis zwischen zwei Menschen und die menschgewordene Liebe, die durch Ostern vom Tod auferweckt wurde, und die sich den zwei Jüngern zeigte, die nach Emmaus gingen. Es handelt sich also um ein Gedicht zu Ostern.*

Entgegen wandeln wir  
Dem Dorf im Sonnenkuß,  
Fast wie das Jüngerpaar  
Nach Emmaus,  
Dazwischen leise  
Redend schritt  
Der Meister, dem sie folgten,  
Und der den Tod erlitt.  
So wandelt zwischen uns  
Im Abendlicht  
Unsre tote Liebe,  
Die leise spricht.  
Sie weiß für das Geheimnis  
Ein heimlich Wort,  
Sie kennt der Seelen  
Allertiefsten Hort.  
Sie deutet und erläutert  
Uns jedes Ding,  
Sie sagt: So ist's gekommen.  
Daß ich am Holze hing.  
Ihr habet mich verleugnet  
Und schlimm verhöhnt,  
Ich saß im Purpur,  
Blutig, dorngekrönt,  
Ich habe Tod erlitten,  
Den Tod bezwang ich bald,  
Und geh in eurer Mitten  
Als himmlische Gestalt —  
Da ward die Weggesellin  
Von uns erkannt,  
Da hat uns wie den Jüngern  
Das Herz gebrannt.

---

# OUR WORD

## Easter Faith

There is nothing that puts Christian faith to the test more than does the fact of death. Not death in general, or in the abstract, so to speak — that is, death or deaths that are not close to us — but the death of those who are close to us and, perhaps most of all, our own death.

Christian faith is properly associated with life, in several senses of the word: to live a successful Christian life is to live abundantly, richly, expectantly. Death is an end of life, of all that symphony of concordant and discordant notes, it is really an end and that is what scares us.

Over the centuries the Christian world has comforted itself with the notion that we are immortal, that our souls at the moment of death take flight to the bright regions beyond. But that is not what we learn from the experience of Jesus.

Jesus too lived an abundant life, though many of us might not think his poverty-stricken, tramp-like existence very rich. He lived the paradox of wealth in poverty and enjoyment in suffering, not at second hand but directly, himself. And his death, like his life when viewed from outside, would have to be called miserable and wretched. Perhaps we glory in it, but he suffered it.

And we in turn will suffer ours, if we are very lucky it will come quietly and/or quickly. Even so, we suffer when we think about it, and we would like to see something on the other side: our friends and loved ones (and our own continuation).

But, you say, isn't Easter all about life after death? Indeed, so it is, but we tend to make it too easy for ourselves by talking of immortality, rather than of the tougher reality. Death is the destroyer, not only of our outer shell, but of our selves. It really is the end.

We Christians always want to have a safety harness, a reliable insurance policy; we want to know . . . and who can blame us? But as Christians we come to times when it is necessary to let go, to have faith in God. It was not easy for Jesus, who called out: My God, why have you forsaken me?

That faith, in the face of the free fall of death, is the faith of Easter. That is the faith that can move mountains and human beings and that can strengthen us when we think of our own mortality and mourn for those who have already left.

— Victor Doerksen

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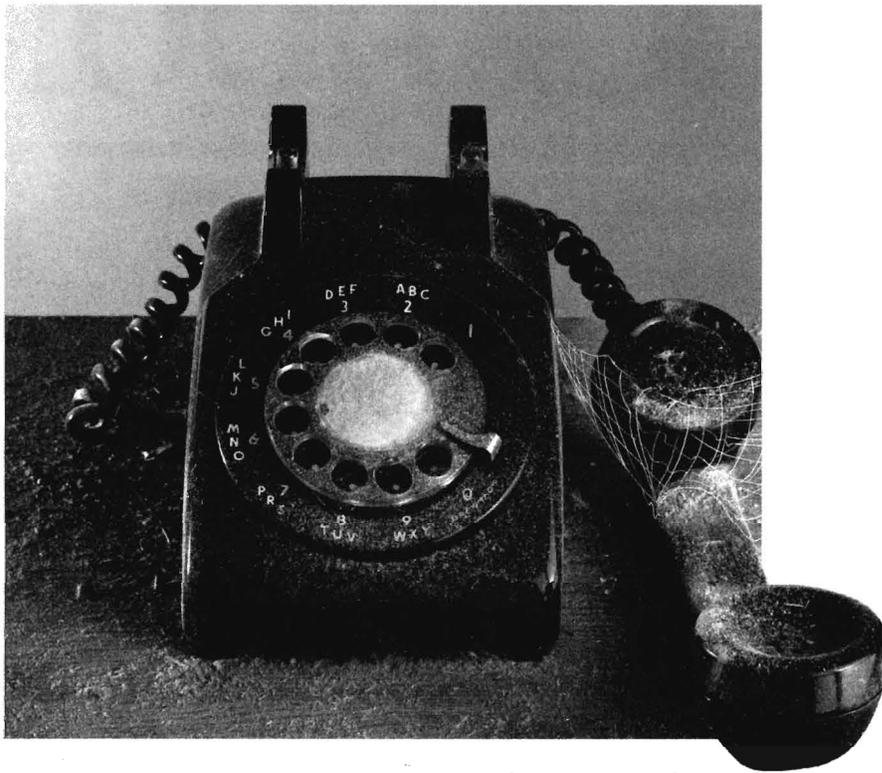
### EASTER

Disease, Poverty, Injustice,  
A dark and gloomy tomb,  
Create a coldness.  
Generosity, Love, Justice,  
Radiate the warmth and light  
Of an empty tomb  
Made glorious by the fullness  
And wonder of Easter.

— Grace Hartley

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