

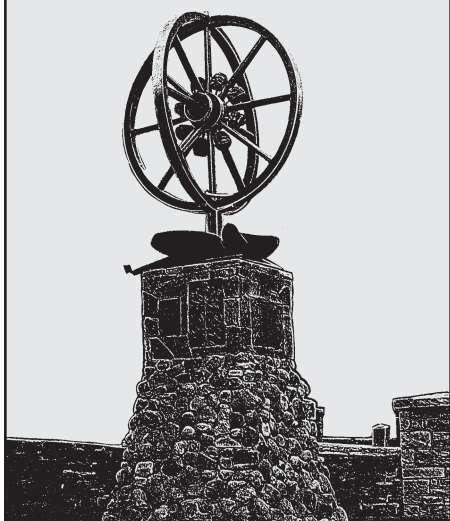
# Ontario Mennonite History

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SOCIETY OF  
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## Hagerman Celebrates 75th Anniversary

By: Joanna Reesor-McDowell

A large group of past and present members gathered at Hagerman Mennonite Church in Markham on June 10, 2012 to remember the vision of earlier leaders, and to celebrate God's faithfulness throughout 75 years of change.

Floyd and Lillian Schmucker, with their family of nine children, were the driving force behind establishing a community-oriented church in a small hamlet called Hagerman's Corners. The congregation was formally established in 1937 with 16 charter members. While some support was given by the Mennonite Mission Board, Pastor Floyd worked full-time at other jobs to support his family while doing church ministry. He spent considerable time in visiting local families, many of whom were recent immigrants from Europe.

The earliest outreach efforts focused on providing Sunday school and vacation Bible school for the many children in the neighbourhood. A Girls' Club and Sewing Circle were also established by Lillian Schmucker. After 30 years of service to the Hagerman community, the Schmuckers moved to semi-retirement in Monetville, Ontario.

After using a home, the local school and a temporary "basement with a roof" on the current property for worship and programs during the early years, the whole community celebrated when an architect-designed building was completed in 1956. There were two worship services every Sunday—morning and evening. A number of Mennonite families from other churches came to support the mission focus of the church. Some women from neighbourhood families came faithfully to Sewing Circle and worship services.

Pastor Emerson McDowell, his wife Elsie, and their five children came to Hagerman in 1965. He had previously served for 20 years at Danforth Mennonite Church in Toronto. Pastor



Emerson had many involvements outside the community, including Christian camping for children at Fraser Lake Camp and Glenbrook Day Camp and he served on the broader church boards and committees.

The Fellowship Hall was added in 1968 and was used as recreational space for the clubs as well as Sunday School. Boys and girls clubs, Christian camping and other programs for youth—both in the church and from the neighbourhood—were a focus during those years. Nancy Dolphin Marshall, one of the local teens at that time, came to the anniversary celebration and spoke about how the church was a "safe haven" and "changed her life."

After a period of steady growth, a time of loss was experienced in the 1970s. Pastor Emerson died of cancer in 1976 at the age of 58. At the same time, another long-standing member was diagnosed with a terminal illness and the congregation found it painful to walk with families closely connected to the church who were experiencing marital breakdown.



*Hagerman Mennonite Church  
under construction in 1956.*

~ Continued on page 3 ~

# History of MCC Canada soon to be published

By *Mennonite Historical Society of Canada*

When the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada met Jan. 18-19, 2013 at Winnipeg's Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, Esther Epp-Tiessen reported that her society-sponsored history of Mennonite Central Committee in Canada is in press. The book's launch, scheduled for Dec. 13, 2013, will mark MCC Canada's founding meeting in 1963, 50 years to the day. The society was pleased also to hear that the Global Mennonite History Project's North American volume authored by Royden Loewen and Steven Nolt has been launched. This fifth and final volume is being translated into both Spanish and French.

Winnipeg's Bill Schroeder received the MHSC award of excellence. He is well known for his historical maps, for his publications, for his volunteer work, and for his leadership on tours of Russia. It was a fitting location, for Schroeder has been involved in historical research and volunteering at the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies since it opened in 1969. The Mennonite Historical Atlas that Schroeder co-authored with Helmut Huebert has sold over 7,000 copies and

is a mainstay in most Russian Mennonite research libraries.

The society sponsors a variety of other projects including its recently revived archives committee. An on-line photo database is designed to help Mennonite archives across Canada manage their collections. This service will increase public access to the extensive accumulations of photos housed in Canadian Mennonite archives. The database project testifies to the on-going good relationships and cooperation among Canadian Mennonite historical societies and their participants.

Web-based projects include a genealogy website still in initial stages and in fund-raising mode, and the long-standing Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia On-line (GAMEO). The latter was envisioned and launched over 25 years ago to make the database from Mennonites in Canada volume II accessible to researchers. It grew to become North American-wide and last year globalized its mandate and has become a sub-group under Mennonite World Conference.

Established in 1968 to sponsor the Mennonites in Canada history series by Frank H. Epp and Ted D. Regehr, the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada



*Lucille Marr (left) presented the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada's Award of Excellence to Bill Schroeder of Winnipeg. He is accompanied by his wife, Augusta. (MHSC photo)*

comprises six provincial Mennonite historical societies, four Mennonite denominational bodies, Mennonite Central Committee Canada and the Chair of Mennonite Studies at the University of Winnipeg.

The 2013 executive is Lucille Marr (Montreal, Que.), President; Royden Loewen, (Winnipeg, Man.), Vice-President; Alf Redekopp (Winnipeg, Man.), Secretary; Richard Thiessen (Abbotsford, B.C.), Treasurer; and Maurice Martin (New Hamburg, Ont.), fifth member.

## The Mennonite Brethren Herald goes digital

The Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies (CMBS) recently released a searchable, digital collection of 51 years of the Mennonite Brethren Herald. The format of the MB Herald has changed over the years lengthening to around 30 pages, dropping to bi-weekly in 1969, then to tri-weekly in 2002, and monthly in 2007. All 1,292 issues of the magazine from 1962 to 2012 are digitized as PDF files and indexed by software, enabling searches by names, topics, Scripture, and so on. The whole collection, with searchable index, resides on an 8 gigabyte USB drive and is available from CMBS for \$30 (taxes and shipping included).

For more information on other CMBS initiatives, see: <http://www.mbconf.ca/cmbs>.





*The early pastors were Emerson McDowell, Floyd Schmucker and Elmer Burkholder.*

Maurice and Phyllis Martin and their two children came to serve in 1976. Although young people from the community were moving away, Pastor Maurice helped to establish a Serve and Learn Together (SALT) unit that brought other young adults from across Canada to our church.

Many of the young people who were raised in church families were now marrying and having children. Pastor David Martin and his wife Doris moved to the church parsonage in 1982 and joined the trend by starting a family. In 1986 the Fellowship Hall was renovated to become the new worship space to accommodate the growing numbers.

By the 1980s, Hagerman's Corners was experiencing massive change. It became part of an urban community bordering the City of Toronto with many immigrants, particularly from Asia. The congregation felt unsure of how to respond to all the changes knowing that the language and cultural barriers made it difficult to reach out to the new neighbours. When the Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church asked to use their facilities as a basis to do outreach to the new immigrants in 1990, they voted unanimously to share their space. By

1993, the Markham Chinese Mennonite Church was established.

Demographic shifts were affecting the church in other ways during the same period. Property values were rising, along with massive new development and higher density living. This had the effect of encouraging young couples and retirees to buy homes north of the city and many purchased homes in the Stouffville area. By 1995, there were a significant number of Hagerman members with a vision to start a new church in that community. After a challenging but healthy process of listening to each other, it was clear that there were two distinct but equally valid visions: one to start a new Mennonite congregation in Stouffville; the other to have a renewed congregation at Hagerman that adapts to a multi-cultural and urban environment. Both groups agreed to bless the other's vision and Community Mennonite Church of Stouffville was established in 1996 with 30 adults and 25 children. A similar number of adults but fewer children remained at Hagerman. Pastor Gordon Alton agreed to work with each group part-time during a transition period that lasted for four years.

Pastor Gerald Good served Hagerman as pastor from 2001-2004. He led a process of renewing our church structures to best support our vision: "As followers of Jesus, we encourage people to receive God's transforming love and become God's servants in the world." In 2005, Jonathan Emerson-Pierce became our first full-time pastor.

Several young couples who moved to the Toronto area to work on advanced academic degrees blessed our congregation with their involvement. It

was hard to say "good-bye" later, when some moved for career opportunities. This contributed to a plateau in numbers and our decision that full-time pastoral leadership was not financially viable.

Hagerman nurtured the start of another new congregation in 2005 when space was provided to the Markham Christian Worship Centre, the first Tamil-speaking Mennonite Church in Canada. Now each Sunday, three congregations meet and worship in Cantonese, Tamil and English on the same site in Markham.

Co-pastors Lydia and Gary Harder came as interim leaders in 2011 and initiated a series of Congregational Conversations that explored where we are in the life cycle of our congregation.

At the anniversary celebration four pastors who served Hagerman between 1976 and 2010 were present and spoke—Maurice Martin, David Martin, Gord Alton and Jonathan Emerson-Pierce. The closing litany expressed gratitude to God for his faithfulness and expressed the hope that the congregation can be "salt and light" and "demonstrate how different cultures can work together in a world that all too often seeks to divide."



*Among those celebrating on June 10, 2012 were former pastors Gord Alton, Maurice Martin, David Martin, Jonathan Emerson-Pierce, Lydia and Gary Harder.*

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**Editor:** Barb Draper

**Editorial Committee:** Linda Huebert Hecht (Chair), Marion Roes, Bethany Leis, Herb Schultz

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Inquiries, articles, book notices or news items should be directed to the Editor, Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario c/o Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 3G6 TEL. 519-885-0220, FAX 519-885-0014

# New hosts at Brubacher House

By Jacquie Reimer

**G**reetings! We are Karl and Jacquie Reimer: your new Brubacher House Museum hosts!

We are both recent grads of the University of Waterloo, where we lived at Conrad Grebel University College for four years. Karl's studies focused mostly on Physics and other sciences, while Jacquie took mainly history and music courses. We were married at Grebel last May, and have spent the year coming out of "student life" and into "real life." Karl now works as the Computer Support Associate for MCC Ontario; Jacquie has filled her post-graduation days with various crafting adventures and part time jobs. It was an exciting day when we found the posting for the host position in January.

We will be putting some good energy into promoting the museum. The juxtaposition of the simple, historic house nestled among giant technology buildings means some interesting and

ironic conversations are in our future. Coming up on June 7, we'll be featuring the museum at the University of Waterloo's Keystone event which will be focusing on campus cultures. On Canada Day, Columbia Lake will be filled with curious visitors securing their grassy location in anticipation of fireworks, and upwards of 300 of them will wander into the house! In September, another busy event for the museum will be Doors Open Waterloo Region, where participants will visit us before or after exploring our closest neighbour, Open Text. We welcome other potential events or ideas gratefully—please feel free to send them our way!

While it hasn't been the busiest start of the season, we have already had the pleasure of giving a tour to a small group of the Schmidt family. William Schmidt purchased the house and farm in 1954 and sold it to the University in 1965. It was great to interact with people who had been personally involved with the house in a different time.



*Karl and Jacquie took over from Mark and Alison Brubacher.*

We've been thrilled by our guests' enthusiasm and interest in the museum, and it has made us more excited to expand our own knowledge and sharpen our storytelling skills. We have both learned a lot about John E. Brubacher and his family in a short amount of time. We'd love to share that information with you; please stop by!

## Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church celebrates 60 years at 19 Ottawa Street, Kitchener

*From a presentation given by Nancy Fehderau at the Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church on March 24, 2013.*

**O**n July 18, 1924, a large group of German-speaking immigrants from southern Russia stepped off the train at the Waterloo station, carrying what was left of their worldly goods. Because of revolution, anarchy, famine and war, they arrived landless, homeless and grieving the tragic deaths of family and friends. From the Erb Street Mennonite Church, these tired, dispossessed travellers were assigned to the waiting Swiss Mennonite farmers who had generously agreed to house them.

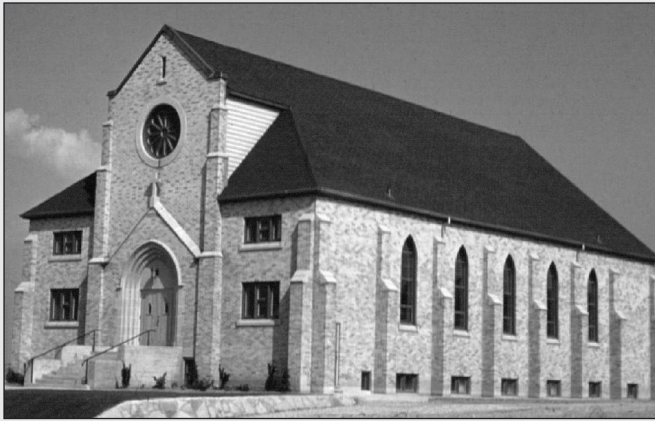
Some immigrants who shared a Mennonite Brethren background soon gravitated to each other. They gathered in various homes in the St Jacobs and Baden area for worship using the well-used German Bibles and hymnbooks they brought with them. On May 25, 1925, they organized themselves the Molotschna Mennonite Brethren Church. Later, the name was changed to the Mennonite Brethren Church of Kitchener.

By 1925, most of the immigrants had moved to the city and the fledgling church was able to rent the third floor of a store-front building at 40 King Street East. Ten years later, in 1935, a little church building at 53 Church Street became available, which they were able to buy for \$4000. By this time, they had a membership of 151 and the congregation thrived.

### 19 Ottawa St. building

In 1950, the church, with a membership of 350, was bursting at the seams. There were intense discussions and deliberations at church meetings about the possibility of building a new church somewhere in the city. Our young pastor at the time, Frank C. Peters, shepherded and led us through this period with courage, enthusiasm and vision. Many business meetings later, eight lots were purchased on Ottawa Street for \$4,500. To keep costs down, the people themselves wanted to do as much of the work as possible. The membership, after all, included an architect, Toly Isaac,

*~ Continued on page 5 ~*



*Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church*

experienced bricklayers and masons, electricians such as Pete Dyck, and John Gosen, carpenters, painters and construction workers.

In March, 1952, the sod-turning ceremony took place and the cornerstone was laid in May. Every male was encouraged to volunteer a minimum of four hours per week and most men put in many more. Some spent most of their free time at the building site. Because choir music had always been an important part of the worship service, every effort was made to install the best acoustics possible in the sanctuary. The women prayed and provided snacks and water. Throughout the construction, there was no loss of life and no serious injuries.

In January of 1953 the doors were opened to receive the people. With humble and grateful hearts, they dedicated their building and themselves to God. Already in the 1940s, English was making inroads into the life of the church. However, in the early 1950s, while still in the old church, there was a large influx of Displaced Persons, post-war Mennonite refugees from Germany, who gravitated to our German services. Thus the complete switch to English was substantially delayed in the new church.

### **Outreach**

A weekly Sunday morning German radio program was begun to serve German-speaking people in the community. A reel-to-reel recorder made it possible to pre-record these radio programs. The recorder also made it possible to provide a ministry to shut-ins. By the 1970s, Sunday morning worship consisted of a German service followed by an English service. By the 1980s, English was the language of choice. When the membership exceeded 500 in the mid 80s, two identical church services were held for a time on a Sunday morning.

Over the years, the church was always supportive of foreign missions. In 1958, Harold and Nancy Fehderau were the first missionaries ordained and sent out from the church.

Foreign missions also came right to Kitchener Mennonite Brethren's doorstep. During the years 1986-1990, Canada received many refugees from Laos and El Salvador.

As always, music was highly valued and encouraged. Congregational singing was robust and always in four part harmony. The senior choir was well known throughout the community for its Christmas and Easter Cantatas and special programs. Youth, male, and girls' choirs were formed. A smaller group, called the Hospital Choir, sang at the hospital once a week. Quartets, including the Sacred Song Quartet, duets, trios and instrumental renditions added to the services. Until the late 80s, there were morning and evening services, as well as mid-week Bible and prayer services, so there was ample opportunity to serve through music. Our accomplished pianists added their gifts to the music ministry.

The women's groups continued to be strong and active. The *Tabeaververein*, consisting of the older women, continued quilting. The *Gabenverein* anglicized their name to Women's Missionary Service and focused on raising funds for various ministries and missionaries. In 1962, the younger women of that group formed the Women's Christian Fellowship.

In the 1980s, a group of young Moms got together and called themselves "The Friendship Circle," meeting for fellowship, crafts, Bible study, and special speakers, while their children were cared for by volunteers. They renamed themselves "Caring Connections," and then continued for a short time as "Moms' Morning Out." Today we still have women who quilt, and a group that gathers for praise and prayer.

### **Christian education**

In 1956, with a membership of 400, an education wing was added. As well as meeting the needs of the expanding Christian Education programs, it housed the Ontario Conference Bible School for ten years. As an outlet for the Bible School students and as an after-school ministry to community children, "Story Hour" was begun under the supervision of Grace Swartz and Johanna Dyck. Today, it is still serving the community as "Kids Alive."



*Interior of church.*

~ Continued on page 6 ~

That first summer, a Vacation Bible School program was offered and has continued ever since. The outreach work in Puslinch, already begun on Church St., continued until the mid 1960s under Jake and Helen Loewen's leadership. Pioneer Girls and Christian Service Brigade for boys was launched. Energetic and dedicated youth sponsors led the senior and junior youth. A college and career group was also begun.

### Fellowship

In 1971, a multi-purpose gym/auditorium was added to provide facilities for play, and larger church functions, including wedding and funeral receptions. It also provided a larger, more efficient kitchen and more office and classroom space.

In 1976, the lower front foyer was added to the original building to provide easier access from the parking lots. It also provided space for the recently installed elevator/lift.

In the 1980s there was a major shift in music as a new genre of music and lyrics brought the appearance of guitars and drums. Around this time the youth sponsors began "The Pie Factory"—an up-beat Saturday evening of casual, "hanging out" in the gym, enjoying local Christian bands and speakers and the many home-made pies. It was widely advertised and attracted many young people from the community. Eventually, drums and guitars were also added to



*The church today.*

the piano and organ in the sanctuary.

Another outgrowth of the youth programs was the formation of the Reach Out Choir under the leadership of Jake Willms. It was later re-named Celebration Choir. Over a period of 15 years, the youth of our church, together with their friends from school and other churches, came together to sing—every Sunday afternoon. The church was always filled when they gave their concerts. It was such a going concern that

younger kids couldn't wait to be old enough to join.

### Growing toward the future

In 1961, a group from KMB began an outreach program at the Brighton School in Waterloo, which eventually became the Waterloo Mennonite Brethren Church. In 1987, a substantial group of our members left KMB to plant the Glencairn MB church.

With our leaders, Vidya Narimalla, Alex Suderman, and Mark Beach, we the people of KMB, humbly acknowledge God's grace and faithfulness that has sustained the people of this church throughout the years, through ups and downs, changes and challenges, joys and sorrows.

*For more information about the early years of the congregation see Anne Wiebe's article "Mennonite Brethren Beginnings in Ontario, 1914-1932" in Ontario Mennonite History, June, 2007.*

## Lorraine Roth's genealogy collection finds archival home

A lifetime of persistent and meticulous research into the lives and family histories of Amish Mennonites has been donated to the Mennonite Archives of Ontario. Lorraine Roth first became intrigued with genealogy as a teenager in the 1940s, and spent the following decades reading and corresponding widely, even travelling to Europe to unearth archival documents and teaching herself to read old German script. Her published genealogies were soon followed by local histories, such as *Willing Service: Stories of Ontario Mennonite Women* (1992) and *The Amish and Their Neighbours*, about Wilmot Township (1998).

Lorraine had long expressed the desire that the Mennonite Archives of Ontario become the archival home for her research. In November 2012, 21 boxes of files were moved from her residence in Tavistock to the archives in Waterloo. Here they will be stored until they can be properly preserved and eventually made available to the public. In addition to files



*Lorraine Roth*

on over 100 Amish family names and research files for her history books, the collection reflects her experiences as a mission worker in Honduras, a Goshen College student, and a world traveller.

The opening of Roth's collection for research will likely coincide with the opening of the Lorraine Roth Archives Reading Room in 2014. The reading room is part of an expansion at Conrad Grebel University College that will double the size of the library and archives, add an archival gallery, and triple the size of the climate-controlled, fire resistant archival storage area.

Friends who wanted to honour Lorraine Roth's contribution began raising funds to name the new reading room in her honour at a fundraising dinner in Tavistock in 2011. They are \$5,000 away from meeting their goal of \$75,000. Donations to this fund are still being accepted. Contact Fred W. Martin at [fwmartin@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:fwmartin@uwaterloo.ca) or 519-885-0220 x24381 to contribute.

# Cataloguing of Frank H. Epp collection now complete

*The following was presented by Linda Hiebert Hecht at the 70th anniversary celebration of the Mennonite Archives of Ontario on Dec. 4, 2011.*

It is often said, “the best comes last” and that was our experience in processing the Frank H. Epp Collection. As we neared the end of our work, we discovered, from the earliest files—which were still in four original, wooden drawers—that in the 1950s, Frank Epp learned about the Phonetic Classification Index of the Mount Vernon Foundation. He not only embraced this system to organize his files, he actively promoted it to others. And then there were the blue binders called: Memory–O–Matic, Tools for Ministers. Suddenly it all made sense. Here were all the topics by which Epp had labelled his files.

I began working on these papers on a part-time basis in October 1999. My job was to build a computer finding aid to make the collection accessible to researchers. That involved describing the contents of each file, giving the dates for the papers in them and eliminating duplication. Sam Steiner guided the process, providing invaluable aid, especially when the files got thick and heavy. When Sam retired, Laureen Harder-Gissing took over this role. I did not work on this project continuously, but just when I thought I was finally finished—I had received a note from President Henry Paetkau in October 2009, congratulating me on completing the project—Laureen found a few more boxes that had been missed. Those too have now been processed.

This is the largest collection in the Mennonite Archives of Ontario. It consisted of 22 four-drawer filing cabinets plus many additional boxes. It now takes up 27.4 metres of archival shelf space. It includes papers from every conference and meeting in which Frank H. Epp participated, whether secular or church-related, letters from everyone he corresponded with—in his roles in the church, journalism, education, the Mennonite Central Committee—and papers from every writing and other project he

undertook. The collection represents all parts of his life from the 1950s when he became founding editor of *The Canadian Mennonite*, to 1985 shortly before he died.

In 1979 he made the following list for his political campaign: 1) President of Conrad Grebel College; 2) born of immigrant parents on a Manitoba farm in 1929; 3) 12 brothers and sisters, a wife, and three daughters; 4) resided in Man., southern and northern B.C., Ottawa, Waterloo, Kansas, and Minnesota; 5) academic degrees include B.Th., B.A., M.A., Ph.D and honorary LL.D.; 6) experienced as farmer, teacher, minister, radio broadcaster, journalist, and administrator; 7) published five books on Canadian Minorities (mainly Mennonites) and two on the Middle East; 8) 10 major foreign research trips; 9) served 8 years on federal immigration advisory board and numerous positions in church and community; 10) given over 2500 speeches in 6 provinces, 10 states, and 8 foreign countries, including numerous radio and television appearances.

By 1986 the books he had written or edited numbered 12, not including his dissertation and other manuscripts in process. Frank Epp was a Christian committed to peace and was a dedicated member of MCC Peace Section for many years. He had a concern for young people and wrote many articles and gave talks for them. He was a compelling and inspirational speaker, although controversial at times. And last but not least, he was appreciative of his family, especially his wife Helen, without whom this collection and the many books he wrote would not have been possible.

A second aspect that makes this collection unique is that it includes Frank Epp’s personal correspondence. He kept copies of all the letters he wrote, giving us a record of both his views and those of the person he wrote to. It is especially



*Frank H. Epp*

impressive, how many times Epp wrote a note of affirmation, concern or encouragement to individuals who were not in leadership.

The collection has many newspaper and magazine articles on political, social and cultural topics as well as human interest stories. They point to Epp’s concern for the issues of his time and his desire to stay informed.

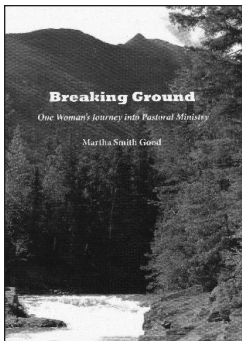
One of the oldest of these items is an article on Mennonites in the *Family Herald and Weekly Star* from 1938.

The collection includes: over 50 files on Vietnam in the 60s; many MCC files, especially its International Peace Section which Epp chaired from 1979 until his death; papers on Alternative Service and the Draft; files on Epp’s political campaigns, Mennonite educational institutions, Young People’s activities, Conference of Mennonites in Canada meetings, Mennonite World Conference sessions, the college courses he taught, and the churches he pastored. His research which led to two books on the Middle East is another highlight of the collection as are the sections on his speaking engagements and his writing, as well as a tract collection, and a complete list of all the sermons Epp preached, as well as outline notes for his sermons and talks.

This collection documents not only the work and activities of one man with wide influence, it also represents an era of Mennonite history. As such it will be a significant source for future researchers and I am grateful to have had a part in preparing it for use.

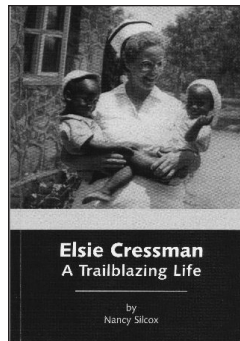
*Linda added later that she heard comments that it’s time for a biography of Frank H. Epp to be written. As of April 2013 Linda also completed her work on The Canadian Mennonite photo database.*

## New Books



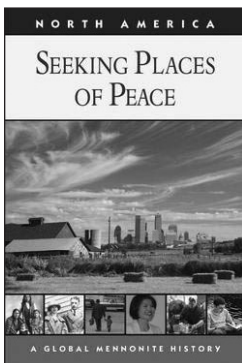
***Breaking Ground: One Woman's Journey into Pastoral Ministry.*** Martha Smith Good. 2012, 177 pages.

As her title suggests, Martha tells the story of her life growing up on a farm near Markham, her determination for further education, and her path to becoming the first woman to be ordained in the Mennonite Church in Ontario. The book is available from the author at 519-662-3691.



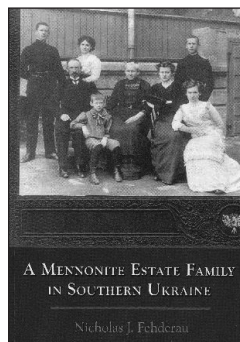
***Elsie Cressman: A Trailblazing Life.*** Nancy Silcox. Pandora Press, 2012, 255 pages.

Elsie Cressman was not your typical Mennonite girl. She attended high school in the 1940s and graduated as a registered nurse in 1946. Her adventurous spirit served her well in her years of working at a Leprosarium in Africa. In later life she was a pioneer in developing midwifery in Ontario where she delivered over 3,000 babies.



***Seeking Places of Peace—Global Mennonite History Series: North America.*** Royden Loewen and Steven M. Nolt. Good Books and Pandora Press, 2012, 400 pages.

This fifth and final volume in the Global Mennonite History series provides an overview of 300 years of Mennonites in North America. Rather than looking at individual groups, Loewen and Nolt give a composite picture, emphasizing broad themes and showing changing attitudes over time.



***A Mennonite Estate Family in Southern Ukraine.*** Nicholas J. Fehderau, translated by Margaret Harder and Elenore Fehderau Fast, edited by Anne Konrad. Pandora Press, 2013, 340 pages.

Nicholas Fehderau writes a fascinating account of what life was like for a wealthy Mennonite estate family in southern Ukraine before World War I and the Russian Revolution. He also describes the suffering they experienced due to political instability in the years after 1917. The story ends with his arrival in Kitchener at age 20.

## News & Notes

### • Membership fee increase

The Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario is increasing its annual single membership fees from \$15 to \$20 and the family membership from \$20 to \$25.

### • Electronic newsletter

If historical society members are interested in receiving an electronic version of *Ontario Mennonite History* instead of a paper copy, please contact Sam Steiner or Barb Draper.

### • Fretz Publication Fund of the Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario

This fund is available to any individual or charitable, church or community organization that requires financial support to assist in the publication of research (a book, film or other form of media). Projects should illuminate the experience of Mennonites in Ontario. Normally, up to \$2,000 is available per project. The next deadline is October 1, 2013. For more

information, see: [www.mhso.org/events/fretzaward.shtml](http://www.mhso.org/events/fretzaward.shtml).

### • Fall meeting 2012

The Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario met on Oct. 13, 2012, at Wellesley Mennonite Church, where Mary-Eileen McClear spoke about "Discovering and Telling Family Stories." She told a fact-based fictionalized account about the Jacob Bechtel family who lived near Blair. While father Jacob was away, the family tried to avoid losing their oxen to the military in 1813. Mary-Eileen used information gathered by Jonathan Seiling in his research on the War of 1812 to write this story about the war experience. She encouraged everyone to retell family stories with details beyond names and dates so that family stories can come alive.

### • Fall meeting 2013

The MHSO fall meeting will be Sat. Oct. 19 at the Rouge Valley Mennonite

Church in Markham. George Reesor will talk about his experiences as a "Shoe Box Historian" and he and Lorne Smith will give a brief outline of the Reesor and Hoover families. A bus will leave Waterloo Region mid-morning.

### • 50th anniversary for Hanover

Hanover Mennonite Church began in 1963. The congregation invites everyone to help them celebrate on June 21-23, 2013. **Fri. June 21** – MYF reunion at Riverstone Retreat Centre, Durham, anytime after 6 p.m. **Saturday June 22** – Tour of former places of worship; photos and activities at the church from 1 to 4 p.m. Light supper provided at 5 p.m. Evening reminiscing with former pastors and musical selections. **Sunday June 23** – 10 a.m. worship service at John Diefenbaker Secondary School with Pastor Juanita Laverty. Lunch to follow at the church. If possible, please RSVP to [hmc@wightman.ca](mailto:hmc@wightman.ca) or 519-364-4309.