

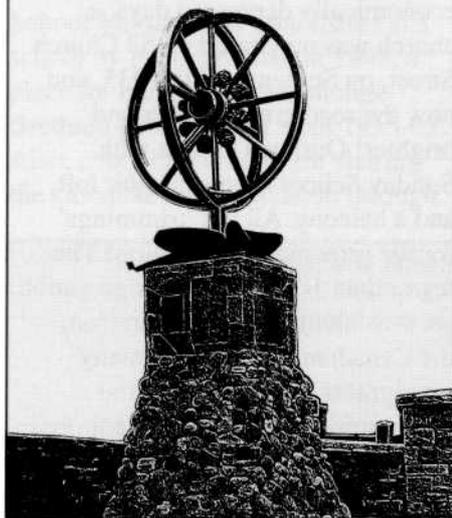
Ontario Mennonite History

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Lorna Bergey: a Tribute

by Sam Steiner

The Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario's June 5, 2002 annual meeting at Floradale saw the end of an era in the Society's history. Lorna Bergey, a member of the society's first board in 1965, ended her service after 37 years. She was secretary of the society for 32 of those years — 1968-2000.

During those years as secretary, Lorna was the anchor that held the functioning of the MHSO together. Her detailed minutes, her gentle reminders to sometimes preoccupied MHSO presidents of decisions that had to be taken, her many hours of volunteering at Ploughing Match or mall exhibits, her collection of artefacts for the Brubacher House, her carefully prepared bus tours, or her many presentations to school or other groups about Pennsylvania German Mennonites will be impossible to replace. Fortunately she has consented to continue on the Brubacher House committee and the Detweiler Meetinghouse board.

Lorna has consistently encouraged younger historians, and has given them space to develop their own perspectives even when she might disagree with the conclusions drawn. I think of my own research and



writing about Jacob Y. Shantz, and know that she unfailingly assisted countless other historians, as well as school and university students, who often sought her assistance on the 'Swiss Mennonite' story. Certainly Lorna did much to shape Frank H. Epp's understanding of Ontario Swiss

Mennonites in his two volumes of *Mennonites in Canada*.

We will miss Lorna's sage observations at the MHSO board table. We wish her continuing years of good health, and look forward to her active participation in society events. Thanks, Lorna, for your enormous gift of time and energy to the MHSO!

Sam Steiner lives in Waterloo and is the Archivist at Conrad Grebel University College. He is also MHSO President.



Tour leaders (left to right) Lorna Bergey and Alice Koch with members of the MHSO on a tour to Pennsylvania by the Society in 1983 to view Mennonite historical sites in Pennsylvania. Supplied by Conrad Grebel College Archives.

AND THE ROAD GOES ON

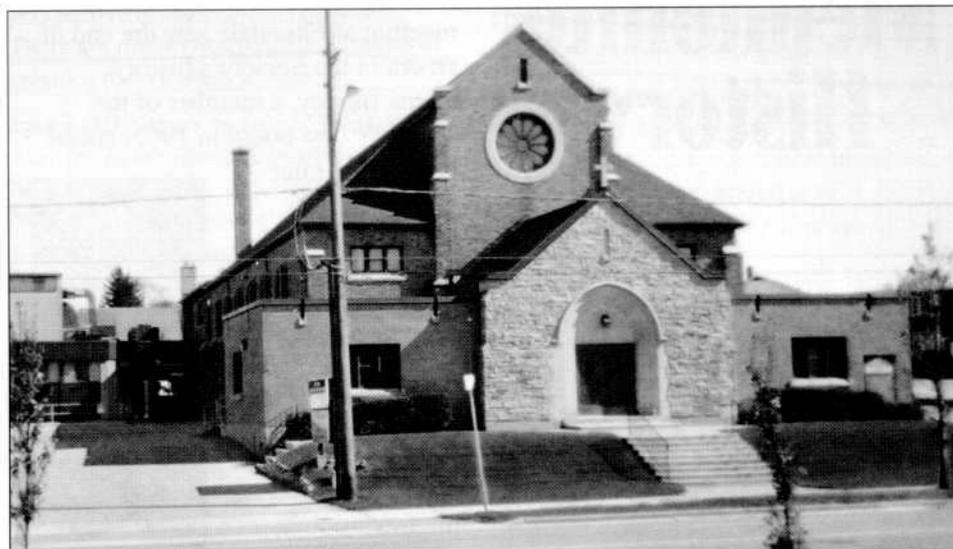
Celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the Kitchener M.B. Church

by Ed Boldt

Today our church sits on one of the main streets of Kitchener, across from a large automobile agency and strip mall, a building which has seen major additions and presents a rather dignified and handsome exterior. Heavy traffic passes by each day, cars and trucks hurrying to their many destinations. We may wonder, where are they all speeding to, and from where do they all come? And the passers by may briefly wonder, as they glance sideways, what is this church?— looks rather traditionally ‘churchy’ – not bad!

Let me tell you a bit about this church. As you leave our church parking lots, turn left, and head out towards King Street, then follow King Street west towards our ‘Twin City’ of Waterloo. As you enter Waterloo, watch out for Erb Street, now a major intersection, and turn right, and soon you will see a small train station, at present converted into a clothing store. The old railroad is now one track and part of a parking lot.

Many years ago, when it was still a train station, it was a scene of great importance. An assembly of dark and plainly dressed people gathered around the station, subdued yet excited. Then they heard the puffing of a locomotive as a long train pulled in, and out poured over 800 passengers laden with boxes, bundles, trunks and battered suitcases. It was the Spring of 1924, and the largely Old Mennonite welcoming crowd in their dark clothes pressed forward to show their welcoming interest in their new guests, guests from faraway Russia with that ‘immigrant look!’ Soon the great crowd headed up King Street, then up Erb Street for a few blocks until they came to Erb Street Mennonite Church. Here there was another crowd, this time also with buggies and dark trucks and autos,



*Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church, Ottawa, Street, Kitchener, Ontario
Taken May 2001*

and soon they all dispersed along roads that led to farms and village residences of Waterloo County.

The months went on, and life on the farms and homes of their former Pennsylvania Dutch Mennonite hosts had been filled with many new experiences. There were the trials of language and culture adaption modified by the kindness and help offered.

Not far away, in the little village of St. Jacobs, ‘Jakobstettel’ as it is known by the natives, was the residence of Rev. Jacob Wiens. Along with 17 other members, on May 25, 1925, a small beginning was made in organizing what would later be known as Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church. Among the founders of KMB, were members of both the Mennonite Brethren and Evangelical Mennonite Brethren (Allianz) churches from Russia. As more immigrants arrived, some stayed in the Kitchener-Waterloo area, others migrated to Vineland, Virgil, Hespeler, New Hamburg, Port Rowan, and Leamington areas, founding more small churches there. This is why we

may call our Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church the ‘Mother Church’ of our Ontario Conference.

We soon held services in Kitchener, at the corner of Lancaster and Chapel Streets, where a kind Bethany Mennonite Church offered its facilities to our growing numbers. Later we rented rooms on the second floor of #40 King Street East to hold our own services there, beginning in the new year of 1926. It was time we finally got our own ‘church,’ a real church building. Finally with a certain amount of fear, during those economically depressed days, a church was purchased on 53 Church Street, on September 30, 1935, and now the road grew broader and brighter! Our own church with Sunday School rooms, a choir loft, and a balcony. All the ‘trimmings’ for the growing congregation! The fewer than 100 member congregation grew as members trickled in from the Canadian West, where many immigrants had settled in rural communities of Southern Manitoba. The ‘Great Depression’ hit farms very hard, grain prices had bottomed

out, and many migrated east to Ontario, and west to BC. Included in this exodus were those that came to K-W, some finding work in factories, despite severely depressed conditions here as well.

In 1930, the very first membership club, or group, was a 'Missions' organization called 'Tabeverein.' It was dedicated to supporting our Conference's missions projects around the world, both financially and in prayer. Other ladies groups have over the years continued this missions emphasis, including our present Women's Christian Fellowship, and Women's Missionary Service.

In 1932, KMB was instrumental, through Pastor H.H. Janzen, in founding our Ontario Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches. This provided a united effort to promote missions, in our own province and throughout the world.

In 1936, again through the leadership of Pastor Janzen, our Ontario church joined our North American 'General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches' This was in order to unite with our North American Board of Missions and Services International.

Pastor Henry H. Janzen, a strong advocate of missions around the world, kept reminding us of other roads, leading to many places where the Gospel still needed to be preached. Young Frank C. Peters, our new pastor in the early Fifties, also reminded us of this. A Sunday School Mission was established at a school by Puslinch Lake in 1948, a place for our Ontario Mennonite Brethren Bible School from 1955-65. Also, every opportunity for sharing the Good News of Salvation through

radio (KMB sponsored or produced 2 broadcasts in the 1950's and 1960's: Die Goldene Sonntagmorgen Stunde and Hymns At Eventide, the latter produced by Tabor College in Hillsboro, Kansas, our denominational college in the USA.), personal witness, including distribution of tracts, and many other avenues.

In 1953 we opened a brand new church, much larger for many new members and newcomers on 19 Ottawa Street. After World War II, a wave of immigrants from Europe, having escaped from Russia or Russian occupied Poland via Germany and Western Europe, reached Canadian shores. They had experienced persecution in the great 'Stalinist Persecution' in Russia, and when they arrived our membership again grew. Almost at the same time, members began arriving, although not in large numbers, from South America, most from Paraguay and Brazil. Having settled there mainly after World War I but they found living conditions very severe. By then our membership totaled over 300. Eventually several additions were added so that by 1960 we were ready to start on a new and diverging road. A new 'daughter' church, beginning with a Sunday School 'Mission' in Waterloo that year, soon developed into a full-fledged church. In 1988, the road led to a new housing subdivision called Glencairn, in Kitchener, where the 'Mother' church purchased a lot, and another church began.

In the 1960's and 1970's KMB organized large Missions Conferences with special missions displays, fund drives, and even banquets together with special speakers, usually foreign missionaries.

Over the years, KMB contributed workers (recently in the form of Youth Missions Teams) to all parts of the world, as well as at home on mission boards and committees.

Today KMB, and its 'Offspring Churches' continue to find new roads to follow. Already an offspring of our offspring churches is founding a new work in Waterloo. Many of our members, at KMB and K-W Community, starting from the earliest years, are finding roads of service to follow. Missions of all sorts, it's almost impossible to name them all, but on any given weekend, from that small beginning in 1925 with 18 members, now about 2,000 members and visitors attend our Kitchener-Waterloo Mennonite Brethren Churches to worship and witness, each in its own style, but each dedicated to following Jesus along the road!

'IT MAY NOT BE ON THE
MOUNTAIN HEIGHT,
OR OVER THE STORMY SEA,
IT MAY NOT BE AT THE
BATTLE'S FRONT,
MY LORD WILL HAVE
NEED OF DIE,
BUT IF, BY A STILL,
SMALL VOICE HE CALLS,
TO PATHS THAT I DO NOT KNOW,
I'LL ANSWER, DEAR LORD,
WITH MY HAND IN THINE,
I'LL GO WHERE YOU
WANT ME TO GO!'

And the road goes on!

Ed Boldt lives in Kitchener and is a long time member of Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church. This article was adapted from his winning essay of the 2002 J. Winfield Fretz Award.

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Diary of a journey

by Christian Koenig translated by Isaac Horst

*Editor's note - The follow is an English translation of a German travel diary believed to be from 1829. All bracketed passages were added by the translator, Isaac Horst. It has also appeared in **Family Life**.*

On October the 15th we took to the road with the intentions of seeing something of the countryside between here, [the Big Valley] and Erie; and after that, by way of Buffalo and Black Rock, to travel to Waterloo in Canada; and arrived the first evening at 8:30 at Henry Yoders. [possibly near State College.]

On the 16th, about noon, we arrived at Phillipsburg, and visited the screw factory, and by evening at the West Branch of the Susquehanna.

On the 17th, we were at Barnets, Sandy Lick Creek, [near Brookville.]

On the 18th, we arrived. at Corbet's hotel, and ate breakfast. From there we left the turnpike to visit Mr. McClure. He went with us into the woods and showed us a limestone well and a limestone quarry. On Mr. Moser's land, we saw 2,000 acres of nice farmland. From here we went to John Schlegel. He had a corn stalk sixteen feet tall: eleven feet from the root to the first cob. In the evening we came to the home of John Baer.

On the 19th he went with us and showed us the way to the turnpike at Potter's tavern. [322: Division Highway.] From here we rode 18 miles to John Meyer's mill. Now it was evening, and we were 7 miles from the next tavern. Mrs. Meyers agreed to give us lodging; except she had no threshed oats. We satisfied ourselves with unthreshed oat sheaves for our horses.

We cut up the sheaves and mixed them with chopped corn, and moistened it. My horse ate it greedily.

Next morning, on the 20th, my horse was stiff. We took a pint of salt and dissolved it in warm water, and drenched him. Then we rode 10 miles to Franklin. There we ate breakfast; but my horse was quite lame and stiff and ate nothing. Then I stuck a fine hairpin through an apple, and pricked all 4 feet below the fetlocks, until a

drop of blood showed. Then we went slowly another 12 miles and arrived at Cox's tavern. Now my horse ate a little again, and his lameness and stiffness is pretty well gone.

On the morning of the 21st there was a light cover of snow; and after we had left 2 miles behind us, we crossed the little Sugar Creek. From here we had 10 miles to Meadville. We reached it at 11 o'clock and I paid the tax. [Apparently the 322 was a toll road at that time.]

By evening we reached John McClure at the Conneaut Lake, 10 miles west of Meadville. On the 22nd about 7 o'clock we were on our way through Brighton, which lies 9 miles northwest of Meadville; [near Conneautville?] and at 3 o'clock we reached Samuel Patterson. He accompanied us through my land.[?] He measured an ash tree which was 13 feet around the trunk, and a chestnut tree was 18 feet around the trunk. Most of the wood was beech, chestnut, maple and hemlock, but there are also ash hickory, red oak, aspen, and cucumbers.[?] We turned back towards home, and passed the home of old Hicks. [Hickernell?] He came here last winter into this woodland. and began to clear it, and built house and barn. He doesn't have his wheat sowed yet, the same as many of his neighbours.

On the 23rd we rode on 11 miles northward to the ridgeway, running from Erie to Cleveland. We came to it a little above Elk Creek, 17 miles from Erie, then we arrived at Walnut Creek, 9 miles upstream from Erie. In the evening we stayed at James Parker's tavern, a mile from Erie.

On the 24th, we reached the scattered village of Erie, which lies along the shores of Lake Erie. From here we took the ridgeway to Buffalo, and after riding 33 miles, we arrived at Everett's tavern.

In the afternoon of the 25th, we came to the Cattaraugus River, 60 miles downstream from Erie. Then for 11 miles we passed through a swamp, [the Catteraugus Indian Reserve], and a very muddy road; and in the evening came to a tavern 71 miles from Erie. For the last three days, a strong south wind blew. The weather was warm, and the dust and wind annoyed us quite a bit.

On the 26th, about noon, we arrived at the city of Buffalo. The last 8 miles of the way was very sandy and unpleasant along the lake. Buffalo is a lively commercial city. We counted 27 ships, and many large and prosperous-looking businesses.

From here we went another 3 miles westward and came to Black Rock. Here we boarded a horse ferry and allowed ourselves to be transported across the Niagara River, which was here about a mile wide. This cost us 37 1/2 cents for man and beast. Then we rode another 6 miles to the widow Farmer, where we were just barely able to get a quart of oats for each horse.

We took to the road early in the morning of the 27th, and. arrived at the Niagara Falls at 10 o'clock. There is a large hotel here. The owner's name is Forseits [Forsyth?]. He had no oats for us, so we were forced to feed corn. We got a peck of corn cobs and gave it to the horses. After we had waited a long time, we finally got breakfast, and the most unappetizing that we had partaken of so far, on our whole trip. When it came to paying, we had to pay a round dollar for it. We lingered here for about 3 hours in viewing the falls. Below the fall, along the shore, we saw a dead. duck lying, which had likely gone over the fall, and was dashed upon the rocks. The edges of the falls are limestone, frightfully high between which the water tumbles down with a terrible

roar, so that one can hear it for many miles. From the crashing waters, a continuous mist arises, appearing as white as milk for eighty or a hundred rods below the falls.

When we had satisfied our curiosity, we went towards a little village downstream from the falls, towards the west in the direction of Dundas. Here we travelled, for 21 miles, when we reached Henry's tavern. While we were eating cold shivers passed over me, and I had a restless night.

On the 28th, we arrived at Dundas, which is a town at the upper end of Lake Ontario, 56 miles from the great falls, and 30 from Waterloo. Here we stayed with old Bomberger. I took a laxative, and bathed my feet in mullein water, and after we were there 2 nights and a day, I was somewhat better; so on the 30th, we went to Waterloo with Samuel Bricker, who gave us lodging quite cordially. He lives at the Grand River.

The weather was very nice for as long as we were on our journey; and we travelled on unhindered until the 29th, then it rained.

On the 30th it rained a little.

The 31st it rained all day.

On November 1st it began to snow in the morning, but soon changed to rain again; but let up in the afternoon; then our friend Bricker went with us to Benjamin Ebys, a bishop among the Mennonites. He also received us cordially and gave us lodging.

On November 2nd it also rained, but we went on in spite of it, about 10 miles and came to Joseph Goldschmidt in Wilmot Township. In this township live 36 Amish families, and in Waterloo 11 families, of whom none have lived in Upper Canada more than 6 years.

The work on these farms is all done with oxen. Goldschmidt told us there are only 3 horses in the whole township. On the 2nd, the weather grew brighter, and we went to the farms of Erb, Moser, Esch, Stucke; and in the evening, we came to Honderich, and he went with us about 5 miles to show us the way,

so that in the afternoon we got to George Eby, Woolwich Township.

He had knowledge of the unoccupied lands lying in that township. For this reason, we desired of him that he would accompany us and show us old Christian Koenig's land. However, since it had rained so much recently, the waters had risen so high that he told us we could not get there without getting wet feet. He showed us a map of the township, on which Koenig's land is marked, and gave us a report of the land. Then we retraced our steps and arrived at Benjamin Ebys in the evening.

[This is an important revelation. It had been commonly claimed that Simon Cress was the first Woolwich settler, in 1819, when he settled on the present site of St. Jacobs. However the Waterloo-Wellington Atlas states George Eby settled on Lot 1, Woolwich Township, in 1813. Besides, his wife is buried in Martins cemetery.]

Two other facts come to light. Since Koenig's land was situated at the extreme northern end of Woolwich, it would have been more inconvenient for Benjamin Eby to take him there. Besides, Koenig would hardly have been interested to settle there, 25 miles from the closest Amish settlers. Apparently John Brubacher ended up buying the lot for his son-in-law, Philip Algeier.] There we stayed overnight. He and his wife showed themselves quite cordially towards us. They gave us peas.

On the 5th, we took to the road for home. In the evening we arrived at Dundas. This is the place where the dwellers of Waterloo, Woolwich, and Wilmot Townships bring their farm produce to sell.

We were informed that York lies 45 miles north of here, and Ancaster 3 miles south, but we were not there. Hamilton is the county town and lies about 4 miles east of here. The Grand River runs through Waterloo, and about 20 miles west of Dundas. Lake Ontario borders about 3 miles east of here. A canal is being dug from there to here. It is about half finished.

On the 6th we arrived at the 20 mile creek, [at Vineland] about 19 miles from Queenston.

On the 7th we traveled through St. Catherines. Here we crossed the [Welland] canal, going from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario, about 11 miles from Queenston. [Apparently they are taking the easterly route going home, instead of the western one.]

After that we came through St. Davids, and in the afternoon through Queenston. Here we let ourselves be taken across the Niagara to Lewiston. Here we followed the river for 18 miles to the Tonawanda Creek, 10 miles below Black Rock. The large Erie Canal comes from Black Rock alongside the Niagara River to this point; then it follows the Tonawanda Creek for 12 miles; then crosses the land through Lockport, Rochester, and on to Albany.

On the 8th, we took the road to Williamsville, where we found blue limestone and black firestone, in a lovely district. From Williamsville we went 2 miles eastward, then 2 miles north, to John Lapp.

On the 9th we traveled north again, by a crooked and muddy road, for about 20 miles, and came to Lockport, to the great canal. There are 5 locks through which the vessels are lowered or lifted 60 feet. The walls of the chutes are made of cut stone, fastened together with iron. The canal above the locks is cut through limestone rock for several miles.

From Lockport we went north for 8 miles to the ridge way from Lewiston to Rochester. We traveled on it 7 miles. On the morning of the 10th it rained, changing to snow flurries, but we kept going on the road to Rochester, to Salmon Creek 14 miles above Rochester.

On the 11th it was cold with snow flurries, and we went to Rochester. There is a fall on the Genesee River, 79 feet perpendicular. This allows extraordinary opportunities for mills, of which there are a number of well-established flour mills. We were in one mill which had only 4 pairs of

~ Continued from page 21 ~

stones; and in another one which is built for sixteen pairs of stones, 9 pairs of which are now running, and others of respectable appearance told us there is a mill with 10 pair stones running. They said there are 18 mills in the city, but whether they are all flour mills expressly we did not fully understand; for there are paper mills, and sawmills, and one for cutting stones, besides factories, to finish wool and cotton, also some foundries to cast brass, and iron moulders and sculptors, all run by water power. At the last census in 1827 the town had eleven thousand inhabitants.

Here the Erie Canal crosses the Genesee River through hewn stone aqueducts. The market house is built on the river and reaches from shore to shore. The greater part of the town, together with the market house, and canal, are above the falls. During the afternoon, we rode 18 miles to Victor. From here we intend to go to Canandaigua which lies 10 miles from Victor.

Therefore, on the morning of the 12th, we started off early; and after riding in circles for 16 miles, we finally got here at 11 o'clock. Here they served us black rye bread and half fried beef for breakfast; but since this was not to our taste, they brought us a drink which resemble dishwater.

From Canandaigua we took the road to Prattsburg and Hammondsport, and in the evening to the widow Sherman.

On the 13th about 10 o'clock we reached Prattsburg. Here we had our horses shod. Then we rode through Bath which is the county town of Cohocton. We rode down the river six miles where we stayed for the night.

On the 14th, about 10 o'clock we arrived at Painted Post. Here the Cohocton runs into the Tioga River, and 4 miles further, the Tioga empties into the Canisteo. Here we traveled from the Tioga through Lawrenceville which is 12 miles from Painted Post. In the evening we came to Mansfield, 16 miles from the state line.

On the 15th we traveled on across the Tioga River to Petersburg, or Blossburg, here we left the river and took the log house road, and traveled over the Allegheny Mountains. Here the snow lay 2 to 3 inches deep. In the evening we came to Glendenning's tavern at the foot of the mountains. Here it is 10 miles from one side of the mountain to the other.

Early on the morning of the 16th, I and my fellow traveler discussed following the Lycoming Creek to Newberry, and then up the West Branch of the Susquehanna across the Pine Creek; and through Jersey Shore at the upper end of the great islands. Here we have the house of Henry Stable in which two brothers live, named Julimy.

On the morning of the 17th, the cost of hotels was 50 cents higher than we paid elsewhere without anything better or more being received than otherwise. So, we will let ourselves be taken across the river, and travel the closest valley to Mill Hall at the Fishing Creek, then along the same to Nittany Valley, which is 19 miles from Bellefonte, without once riding across the water, and from Dahl's Tavern to the Big Valley.

On the 18th, we went through the Stone Valley and home, after we had traveled 923 miles in five weeks, and used up \$26.85 each. In closing we thank God our Lord who granted us a safe journey and brought us home in good health.

* * * * *

This diary poses lots of questions, although a few of the questions may be reasonably answered. Among the scribbling, on the front cover, one can trace what may have been there before the scribbles were. To me, it appears to be

*Diary of a journey
David Zug and Christian Kinig
in the year 1829*

Although this diary was presumed to be that of Christian Koenig, I would suggest that the writer may have been a son of the man who owned the Woolwich lot. He asked George Eby to accompany them and

show them old Christian Koenig's land. To me it would seem highly improbable that the man who rode over 900 miles through strange country, with winter fast approaching would call himself 'old'.

Who was David Zug? Would it not be reasonable to assume that he was a young companion of Christian Koenig II? The fact that he never spoke, or made any other contribution to the journey would indicate to me that he was a traveling companion and nothing more.

Another question. If I am not mistaken, when they were near Conneautville, Samuel Patterson accompanied them through his (Koenig's) land. Did the Koenigs own land at Conneautville? Was that why they wished to explore the countryside between home and Erie?

From where did they start? To me it would seem that they might have lived in the Big Valley, near State College.

In the geneology, *Descendants of Samuel Koenig* by H. Gingerich, we find that Christian Koenig Sr. was born in 1761 in Berks County, Pennsylvania and died in Fairfield County, Ohio in 1838. Christian Koenig Jr. was born 1787 in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania and died in Fairfield County, Ohio in 1844. Joseph Koenig, son of Christian Koenig Jr. was born 1809 in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania and died in Fairfield County, Ohio in 1873. He was married to Sarah Zook, daughter of David Zook (Zug).

If Joseph Koenig was born 1809 in Mifflin County, than his father, Christian Jr. must have lived there too, and may have lived there in 1829. Since Christian Koenig Jr.'s son was married to David Zook's daughter than Christian Koenig and David Zook were in the same generation, and likely lived in the same area.

Because of these facts Christian Koenig and David Zook possibly made this trip together.

Isaac Horst lives near Mount Forest, Ontario. He is the author of several books, and has translated many old diaries and papers from German into English.

Book Review

HIDDEN WORLDS: *Revisiting the Mennonite Migrants off the 1870s*

by Royden Loewen

(Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2001.)

239 pages

Reviewed by Helen L. Epp

Hidden Worlds tells of the dynamic and evolving everyday world that lies behind the institutional side of the Mennonites of the 1870 migration. The author states that 'the aim of the book is to interpret the past with questions relevant now.' It seeks to discover from the lives of ordinary people the process by which cultures were created in the New World.

What makes the book so interesting to read are the sources used – daily diaries, travelogues, newspaper accounts, personal letters, probated wills, etc., that at times one can feel the emotions expressed by the various writers.

The earliest diaries were written by men (1857-1879) and portray some of the social history of that era. They speak about marriages, deaths, and customs of the colonies. The births of their children were also recorded sometimes even without the mention of the mother's name. In fact, in one instance, the birth of a brother-in-law's calf had more coverage than the birth of his own child. No diaries were written by women before 1874. These diaries also became travelogues during the migrations - men's diaries were more analytical, astonished at the signs of their expanding world; women were especially mindful of the social elements of the migration, of the separation of extended family and the process of the uprooting. Women described their sleeping quarters en route, while men described the countryside and the crops. One travelogue was written by a nine-year-old boy who was especially enthralled by the power of the ocean.

The second chapter notes the will and the inheritance laws of this migrant group. It is significant to note that the inheritance laws were more equal and liberal than the Canadian Dower Act of 1918. The Dower Act only gave the wife one-third of the estate upon her husband's death, which was already more than the old-English law. By contrast the Mennonites said that both men and women were entitled to half of

the estate. Their argument being 'if the wives are joint heirs of the grace of life, how much more of the temporal goods' (1 Peter 3:7).

One of the first known wills in Manitoba was made by Klaas Reimer. When he died, his 17 children got an equal share of his estate while his wife received the farmland. Wills were made in various ways, but despite some family specific concerns, most wills mentioned the principles of bilateral (equality for sons and daughters) and partible (portions of the land) in the inheritance.

Chapter Three deals with the treatment of Mennonite immigrant women from 1881-1906 and likens their work and existence as 'potato field in a corn patch'. It underscores the standard image of the 'hausfrau' as a life of domesticity hidden in the corn field away from public view. They worked hard, gave birth to many children, and made mounds of food. The fact is that they wrote many letters both privately and publicly to the Rundschau which suggest that they had a deep sense of ethnic identity and frequently saw their lives quite differently than their male counterparts.

When American journalists interviewed the immigrants, men were described by their purchases and land negotiations, while women were described as 'silent, dour, and peculiar persons...who wore funny old kerchiefs tied around their heads.' However, in describing the Mennonite flower gardens, the reporters were laudatory. Mennonite men wrote about women as 'either dependent on men or helpless in their absence.' Men were the heroes in stories, the women were the 'vulnerable victims.'

In the letters women wrote, they often expressed confident spirits. The letters spoke about 'the yearning for the homeland' and they tried to connect with the extended family 'scattered throughout the world.'

In the fourth chapter, and to this writer possibly the most interesting, 'Mr. Plett and Mr. Bergey', Loewen makes a comparison of the Dutch-North German Mennonites of Manitoba and the Swiss Mennonites of Ontario, though the comparison is somewhat

unequal since the Dutch-German Mennonites were of the first generation while the Swiss Mennonites were third generation Mennonites in Canada. It was interesting to note that one of the first comparisons he gives is that Mr. Plett's wife wore a 'black kerchief' and spoke Low German while Mr. Bergey's wife wore a 'white cap' and spoke Pennsylvania Dutch. It was from the diaries of both farmers Plett and Bergey that best allowed for a comparative study of the social dynamics in the household.

Ontario Mennonites had greater difficulty maintaining the closed sectarian community than did their counterparts in Manitoba. Mr. Bergey's diary records almost daily interaction with his non-Mennonite neighbours, while Mr. Plett made only few trips a year outside his community to Winnipeg or to his French neighbours to buy pigs. Knowledge of the English language was almost universal among the Swiss Mennonites by 1901, whereas only 27 percent of the Manitoba women were able to speak English and 'not a single child between ages three and five was able to speak English.' From the census it was noted that the Dutch Mennonites had larger families than the Swiss. Land in Ontario was almost twice the cost than it was in Manitoba-\$3995-2180 to \$1684-578.

Although there were differences between these two groups, both groups had a common 'adherence to the established Mennonite values of a separated people, a simple lifestyle, rootedness in the land, the farm household, and the agricultural community.' They also both practiced a particular system of inheritance and cultivated social networks that would help in maintaining their communities and social boundaries.

The book has very extensive and well documented footnotes, some of them telling a story in itself. Although the book may appear thin when first looking at it, the pages contain more words than many other books. It is an interesting book and very worthwhile to read.

Helen L. Epp has lived parts of her life in Manitoba and Ontario. She currently lives in Waterloo.

Book Notes

- Delores Martin, author of *Memories of St. Jacobs, 1852- 2002* (St. Jacobs: St. Jacobs Anniversary Committee, 2002) 44 pages, tells the story of a small Ontario village settled largely by Mennonites that is now a large tourist attraction. There are many historical photos of churches, businesses, people and landmarks. \$10.00.
- Osiah Horst, author of *A Journey Through Change: A Life Story* (Toronto: midKnight Publishers, 2002) 172 pages, was an Ontario pastor who traces his life story from growing up in an Old Order Mennonite home, to becoming an urban minister for 30 years. Horst was also a conscientious objector during World War II and a chaplain at St. Clair O'Connor community. \$19.95.
- Robert S. Kreider, author of *My Early Years: An Autobiography* (Kitchener: Pandora Press with Herald Press, 2002) 600 pages, tells of his experiences in the early twentieth century on his way to becoming a noted Mennonite scholar and church leader. \$60.00.
- Kimberly D. Schmidt, Diane Zimmerman Umble, and Steven D. Reschly, editors of *Strangers at Home: Amish and Mennonite Women in History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002) 368 pages, have compiled fifteen essays on the changing role of women in the history of the Amish and Mennonite church. It includes essays by Marlene Epp, Linda Huebert Hecht and Royden Loewen. \$39.95 US for hardcover.
- Helmut Harder, author of *David Toews Was Here* (Winnipeg: CMBC Publications, 2002) 348 pages, has written a biography on a prominent leader in the Mennonite church. Toews was instrumental in creating the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, and in bringing thousands of Mennonite refugees to Canada from Russia in the 1920s. Harder is a former theology professor at Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg, along with himself being a church leader. \$24.00.
- Lawrence Klippenstein and Jacob Dick, authors of *Mennonite Alternative Service in Russia: The Story Of Abram*

Dick and His Colleagues (Kitchener: Pandora Press with Herald Press, 2002) 163 pages, uses the diaries of Abram Dick, Jacob's father, to tell the story of Alternative Service in Russia. Klippenstein provides the historical perspective of the story's time frame. There are many photographs included to enhance the account. \$20.00.

- James O. Lehman, author of *Mennonite Tent Revivals: Howard Hammer and Myron Ausburger: 1952-1962* (Kitchener: Pandora Press with Herald Press, 2002) 318 pages, tells how the church experienced spiritual and social changes during the 1950s and early 1960s. This was the time of the great tent crusades that are credited with bringing spiritual renewal to Mennonites after World War II. \$36.00.
- Donald B. Kraybill and Carl Desportes Bowman, authors of *On the Backroad to Heaven* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002) 352 pages, have written an introductory guidebook to the world of Old Order Anabaptist groups. They focus on four Old Order communities - the Hutterites, Mennonites, Amish, and Brethren. This comparative study shows the differences as well as the similarities of these groups. \$16.95 US for paperback, \$55.00 US for hardcover.
- Paul Toews and Kevin Enns-Rempel, editors of *For Everything a Season: Mennonite Brethren in North America, 1874-2002* (Winnipeg: Kindred Productions, 2002) 188 pages, use this large-size book, with many illustrations, to give an informal history of the Mennonite Brethren in North America. It was commissioned by the Mennonite Brethren General Conference before disbanding in 2002. \$35.99.

People and Projects

HISTORICAL DISPLAY CONTINUES

The historical display by Woolwich Historical Foundation/Marion Roes of Dreisinger Furniture and Funeral Service in Elmira will be up indefinitely. All you people who haven't had a chance to get there, can still see it. It consists of over 60 pictures, ads, articles dating from 1878, plus some artifacts. Dreisinger Furniture Store is at 7 Arthur St. N. in Elmira.

HISTORICAL FOUNDATION ANNIVERSARY

Woolwich Historical Foundation is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. On Saturday, September 28 an open house was held at the Old Township Hall in Conestogo to celebrate 20 years. Local experts were on hand to assess people's old pictures and papers. Lots of pictures, genealogies, artifacts, some not shown before, were displayed. A 2003 membership special will be offered until year end. *Woolwich at the Turn of the Century: 1900.*

On Saturday, October 5 WHF was part of Elmira Fun Fest. Displays and local experts (as above) were on the lower floor of Elmira Public Library. – *submitted by Marion Roes*

BIOGRAPHIES FOR ONLINE ENCYCLOPAEDIA

The Ontario sub-committee of the *Canadian Mennonite Encyclopaedia Online* has compiled a list of deceased persons significant to the history of Mennonites in Ontario for whom biographies should be written. Members of the committee representing the different Mennonite groups are: Lorna Bergey, Ed Boldt, Linda Huebert Hecht (chair), John Reimer, Lorraine Roth and Sam Steiner. To date around thirty biographies have been written including ones on Christian Nafziger, Joseph Hagey, Valentine Kratz, Abram B. Kolb, Donovan Smucker, and Abram Martin; United Mennonite Church leaders: Nicholas Fransen, Frank J. Andres, Abram Barg, N. N. Driediger, Peter Epp, Jacob C. Neufeld, Henry P. Pauls, Jacob P. Penner, and Sarah Wiens; and Mennonite Brethren leader Abram Redekop. The internet address for the encyclopaedia is www.mhsc.ca. – *submitted by Linda Huebert Hecht*

FRETZ AWARD

The winner of the 2002 J. Winfield Fretz Award is Ed Boldt. He won in the local historian category with his paper *And The Road Goes On: Celebrating the 75th Anniversary of Kitchener M.B. Church.*