

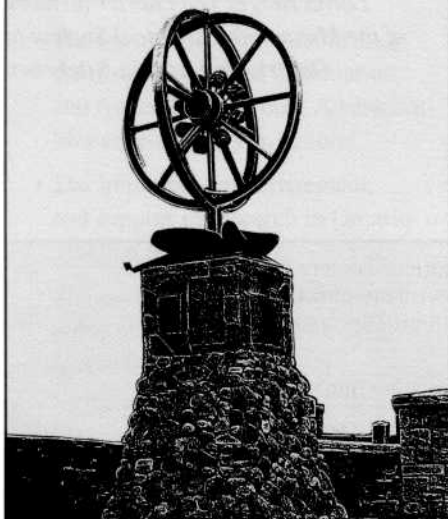
Ontario Mennonite History

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SOCIETY OF ONTARIO

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Thirty-Five Years of the Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario

By Brent Bauman

Over the past eighteen years the *Ontario Mennonite History*, and its predecessor *Mennogespraech*, has offered up articles about many aspects of Mennonite History in this province. As the journalistic component of the Mennonite *Historical Society of Ontario* it has tried to fulfill the three pronged purpose of the *MHSO*. This issue is a little different than most because it steps back to take a look at the beginnings of the *MHSO* itself. What better time than at an anniversary to do so. The following articles use news reports of the time, and reflections of those involved to tell the story of how the society started thirty-five years ago. It also explains what is the three pronged purpose of the *MHSO*.

Dr. J. Winfield Fretz was the first President of the *MHSO*, serving twelve years (1965-1977). He now lives in North Newton, Kansas, and although he is now 90 years old, as of September 29, 2000, is still enjoying good health. As you will read, he is very happy how the *MHSO* turned out, but his article does not tell us how much leadership he gave to the Society to shape its purpose and goals. Like all the principal characters involved, Dr. Fretz is hesitant to take personal credit for its formation and success.

Others however, like Lorna L. Bergey, are quick to credit him with supplying the guidance needed to start such an organization. Lorna is an original member of the board, serving thirty-two years as Secretary (1968-2000). Her own organizational skills have also been put to good use over the her many years of service to the Society.

It was Dr. Fretz who encouraged expanding the *MHSO* outside of the Waterloo County area. By using annual bus trips to outlying areas to highlight the various branches of the Amish, Swiss and Russian Mennonite community, it spread interest to new people about the Society as well. Over the past thirty-five years it has visited localities from Niagara to Zurich, the Old Order community near Mount Forest to the St. Clair-O'Connor Centre in Toronto. There was even a five day bus tour to Pennsylvania in 1983.



Alice Koch has completed 27 years on the MHSO Board, 11 years as President.



Lorna L. Bergey, a charter member of the MHSO Board has completed a 32 year term as Secretary.

A complete list of those bus trips is also included inside.

Not to be forgotten is the role of Orland Gingerich who served under Dr. Fretz as Vice President for all those years, followed by three years as President (1977-1980). He was very prominent in articulating the importance of forming a society to record the history of Ontario Mennonites.

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Consistency in leadership has been a strong point of the *MHSO*. Many people have put years into the Society. Alice Koch spent twenty-seven years on the board, eleven as President (1981-1992). During her tenure a second generation of the historically minded joined the *MHSO*.

Major projects have included the refurbishing of the Brubacher House in Waterloo and involvement in the restoration of Detweiler Meetinghouse in Roseville.

There have been a number of dramatic productions and historical publications over the years to underscore the Mennonite story. *The New Commandment* by Barbara Coffman and the adaptation of Mabel Dunham's novel *The Trail of the Conestoga* helped tell the story of Mennonite settlement in Ontario to a larger audience. *And Their Time Had Come* and *Die Fria* told the Russian Mennonite story, while *This Land is Ours* detailed the Amish experience.

The story has also been recorded in books, such as: *The Mennonites of Ontario*, by J. Winfield Fretz, later revised by Marlene Epp; and *The Amish and Their Neighbours*, by Lorraine Roth. Not to mention the many congregational and family histories written by local historians encouraged by the Society and its programs.

The horizons of the *MHSO* have extended since its beginnings. There are now more contacts with Mennonites across Canada, initiated by joint involvement with other Mennonite historical societies in the *Mennonites in Canada* book series. It has made us aware of each other and our histories. That fact alone shows that the *Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario* has been well worth the effort.

Brent Bauman lives near Drayton and is editor of Ontario Mennonite History.

Why A Mennonite Historical Society?

by Lorna Bergey

Thirty-five years ago, on May 8th, 1965, an important meeting was held at Conrad Grebel College. It involved thirty-five people interested in the promotion of interest and research in Ontario Mennonite History. They met to hear Orland Gingerich address the topic "Why a Mennonite Historical Society?". In his speech he outlined three particular points; the importance of history, the need for a historical society, and the challenge of a historical society.

When he finished Dr. J. Winfield Fretz, president of Conrad Grebel College, convened an open discussion on two possibilities. One was an organization representing officially incorporated church bodies such as the church conferences. The other possibility was an organization of interested people under the auspices of a church college, specifically Conrad Grebel College. It was the second suggestion which received strong support throughout the discussion.

It was emphasized that Conrad Grebel College should have some association with the Society, since the archives space was there for preservation of records and other valuable information. Most material at that time was held in private collections by Ontario Mennonites. It was believed having it in a central archives, such as Conrad Grebel College, would be useful to those interested in researching Ontario Mennonite History.

Dr. Fretz observed during the meeting there was a sense of urgency "to get organized now" and develop the organization later. He handed out sample copies of the constitution of the Mennonite Historical Society of the Mennonite General Conference with archives at Goshen College.

At the request of Earle Snyder, Dr. Fretz reviewed the constitution he had handed out, article by article, and encouraged those present to voice their opinions. A committee of five was then appointed to study the constitution and propose changes for presentation at the next meeting. Committee members were; Herbert Enns, Orland Gingerich, Elven Shantz, Dorothy Swartzentruber and Dr. Fretz was appointed chairman. It was decided that at the subsequent meeting the form of organization would be decided upon.

The next meeting was called by the committee. It was held a month later on June 5th at Conrad Grebel College, and had been publicized throughout the Ontario Mennonite constituency. Following the reading of the Constitution article by article, suggestions were made for changes at a number of points which were noted by Dorothy Swartzentruber, Secretary pro tem. The Constitution, with the suggested changes, was adopted by a unanimous standing vote.

The Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario had become a reality. A Board of Directors elected by ballot on June 5, 1965 included: Lorna Bergey of New Dundee; Barbara Coffman of Vineland; Henry Dueck of Kitchener; J. Winfield Fretz of Waterloo; Orland Gingerich of New Hamburg; Wilson Hunsburger of Waterloo; Elven Shantz of Kitchener; Earle Snyder of Guelph; and Dorothy Swartzentruber of Kitchener.

Lorna Bergey is a charter member of the Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario and lives in Kitchener.

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Editor: Brent Bauman

Editorial Committee: Linda Huebert Hecht, Lorraine Roth, Sam Steiner, Marlene Epp

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Reflections on the Founding of the Mennonite Historical Society Of Ontario

By J. Winfield Fretz

Being the first president of the Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario has always been somewhat embarrassing to me. The reason for the embarrassment is that I contributed so little to the nurturing of this worthwhile organization throughout almost forty years of its history.

Prior to arriving in the Kitchener-Waterloo area in 1963 as a permanent resident, I had made several visits to the area and had a very positive impression of the community. This impression was all the more confirmed during the sixteen years of our residence and work in the area. It would not have been difficult to spend the retirement of our lives there if it had not been that our four children and a host of brothers and sisters, as well as parents, pressuring us to return.

My one strong impression of the formation of the Historical Society is a meeting that was called for the purpose of discussing a historical society. I believe I am correct when I say this meeting was called to be at our home which at that

time was located at Westmount Road and Lourdes Avenue. The names of at least some of those present, I now recall, were; Lorna Bergey, Douglas Millar, Herbert Enns, Orland Gingerich, and Lorraine Roth. There were possibly others, but I don't recall their names presently.

If it was my suggestion that a historical society be formed, it was my good fortune to have been a History major studying under the well known Mennonite historian, C. Henry Smith, at Bluffton College. He wrote at least four books on various aspects of Mennonite History. For both my Master's and my Ph.D. degrees I wrote theses focused on Mennonite Mutual Aid. These studies gave me an abiding appreciation for History as an academic subject, and as a lifetime subject for study and for pleasurable reading and formal and informal discussion.

The Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario's activities in its relatively short life span has whetted the appetite of many Ontario Mennonites in aspects of their

own, and other Mennonite and Amish groups. Without the efforts of the Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario over the nearly four decades of its existence, many individual Mennonite church members would be historically more impoverished. Impoverished not only about their own church's history, but also about the history of other Mennonite congregations and communities.

On this latter point I speak as one who deeply appreciated the field trips to various communities outside the Kitchener-Waterloo area.

I want to express a special thanks to the Society for its significant efforts to restore the Detweiler Meeting House. I am not certain whether the restored building is again being used as a worship center. That would be all the more occasion for rejoicing.

Dr. J. Winfield Fretz, currently lives in North Newton, Kansas.

Historical Society Formed

Reprinted from the July 6, 1965 issue of *The Canadian Mennonite*.

Waterloo, Ont. - On Saturday, June 5, a group of 35 interested individuals brought into being the Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario. The organizational meeting was held at Conrad Grebel College. The stated purposes of the organization are:

- The promotion of interest in and the dissemination of information and research concerning Anabaptist-Mennonite history in general.
- The initiation, encouragement, and support of research in Ontario Mennonite history.
- The encouragement and support of publications in the field of Ontario Mennonite history.
- The support and promotion of the Mennonite Historical Library and the Mennonite Archives located at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo,

Ontario, by helping to increase its holdings and by such other aid as can be given, i.e., by encouraging donations of historical books, pamphlets and documents of relevance to the Mennonites of Ontario.

A constitution was adopted and a board of nine directors elected. The names of the directors are: Dorothy Swartzentruber, Kitchener; Barbara Coffman, Vineland; Orland Gingerich, New Hamburg; Earle Snyder, Guelph; Elven Shantz, Kitchener; J. Winfield Fretz, Waterloo; Mrs. Lorna Bergey, New Dundee; Henry Dueck, Kitchener; Wilson Hunsberger, Waterloo. Following the election of a board, Mr. Robert Trotter of Elmira addressed the meeting. Mr. Trotter, with Kenneth Kerr, editor of the *Elmira Signet*, is engaged in the project of writing the story of Elmira.

From the discussions of those present it became evident that there is much Mennonite historical material extant in Ontario. This is especially so in Waterloo County and in the Markham and Vineland areas where Mennonites have lived for 150 years.

Individuals having historical documents such as old letters, diaries, deeds, and items of historical interest are encouraged to deposit them at the Conrad Grebel College archives and Mennonite Historical Library.

The College has proper facilities for classifying, preserving, and exhibiting such documents. It is anticipated that the College will become a center for Mennonite historical and sociological research and publication of materials in Ontario.

Ontario Historical Society Held Spring Meeting In Vineland

Reprinted from the May 10, 1966 issue of *The Canadian Mennonite*.
Likely submitted by Dorothy Swartzentruber, MHSO Secretary 1965-1968.

Vineland - The year-old Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario held its spring meeting in Vineland on April 30 at the United Mennonite Church.

In the morning, in closed session, the Society's Board of Directors discussed the publication of a pamphlet and the production of a pageant to give the story of the Mennonites and Amish in Ontario in conjunction with Canada's 1967 centennial celebrations.

When the recommendation was put to the larger membership in the afternoon, the Board received support for such a project. It was felt the production of a pageant represented a fine opportunity to make in impact both historically and theologically.

Other business resulted in the re-election of Mrs. David Bergey, Elven Shantz, and Earle Snyder to three-year terms as directors.

Presently the Society's membership stands at approximately 40. In the first year of operation, income consisted of \$82.50 from membership fees and expenses amounted to \$63. Interested persons, of course, are urged to become members.

Little has been written by Ontario Mennonites about themselves in the province. Therefore, said Dr. J. W. Fretz, president, the MHSO has a tremendous job to do to permanently record the significant contributions made by Mennonites to the life, culture, an ideals of Ontario.

Niagara Peninsula

Two research papers were read in the afternoon concerning the coming of Mennonites to the Niagara Peninsula. This was followed by a tour of the Museum of the Twenty in nearby Jordan.

Ivan Groh, St. Catharines, retired teacher, discussed the experiences of the first Mennonite settlers. The first settlers came from Bucks County, Pa., in 1786, and located in the Jordan-Vineland-Beamsville area sometimes called the Twenty.

Six Mennonite families immigrated to Canada in 1786 and by 1793 there were approximately one hundred Mennonite and Quaker families scattered throughout three townships.



1966 Spring meeting of the Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario was held at the United Mennonite Church, Vineland, April 30. Above photo shows board of directors of the Society in front of the Museum of the Twenty, Jordan, which the group toured. Left to right are: Dorothy Swartzentruber, Kitchener; secretary; Barbara Coffman, Vineland; Herbert Enns, Waterloo, treasurer; Elven Shantz, Kitchener; J. W. Fretz, Waterloo, president; Wilson Hunsberger, Waterloo; Mrs. David [Lorna] Bergey, New Dundee; Harold Nigh, Fort Erie; and Orland Gingerich, New Hamburg, vice-president. Missing from the picture are Henry Dueck, Kitchener and Earle Snyder, Guelph. Photo by Martin Buhr. Published in *The Canadian Mennonite* May 10, 1966. Supplied by Conrad Grebel College Archives

"The first Mennonites," said Groh, "came without their church. In 1786 the church in the American colonies was at an all-time low...Only seven percent of the population were members of Protestant churches.

The Mennonite pioneers waited something like 20 years for preachers and bishops and regular services. And when the church was founded, many of the scattered settlements had preaching only at long intervals of four or eight weeks."

Groh contended that the Mennonites of the pre-Great Migration period had a gloomy, pessimistic church history. By 1931 not a trace of their church was left in Welland County.

Barbara Coffman, Vineland, author of **His Name Was John**, traced the history of the First Mennonite Church of the Twenty or Vineland. It was organized in 1801 following the Great Migration of 1799 (mass migration from the Atlantic

states westward) and the influx of new Mennonite settlers from Pennsylvania.

There was no ordained minister in the new group so Samuel Meyer was delegated to write to the ministers of the Bedminster congregation in Bucks County, Pa. Because no one from the Bedminster congregation was available to go to Canada, the group at the Twenty was instructed to "Proceed among themselves to choose and authorize one whom the Lord should indicate to carry on the work of the church."

According to Miss Coffman, a meeting was held to select a minister and a deacon. "Votes were cast and the final selection made by lot. Valentine Kratz became the first minister...John Fretz became the first deacon in Ontario."

Through this unprecedented method of providing church leadership came into being the first church the Twenty area also the first church in Canada.

From Russia to Ontario

In the evening, Panelists A. A. Wall, Frank Klassen, and Jacob Penner reminisced on immigrant experiences under the expert questioning of Moderator Dr. John Wiebe. Wall and Klassen had come from Russia in 1925; Penner in 1948.

Of great interest was Wiebe's interview of Mrs. Tina Martens who had come to Canada two weeks earlier with her 18-year-old son Leonard to live with relatives in Vineland.

In the last two years, reported Mrs. Martens, the Christians at Kimpersay experienced a lot more freedom in worshiping and praying openly than formerly.

The relaxed condition came about abruptly. Two years ago, the Mennonite bishop at Kimpersay had been jailed. After three months he was suddenly released without explanation and the group received permission to meet for worship.

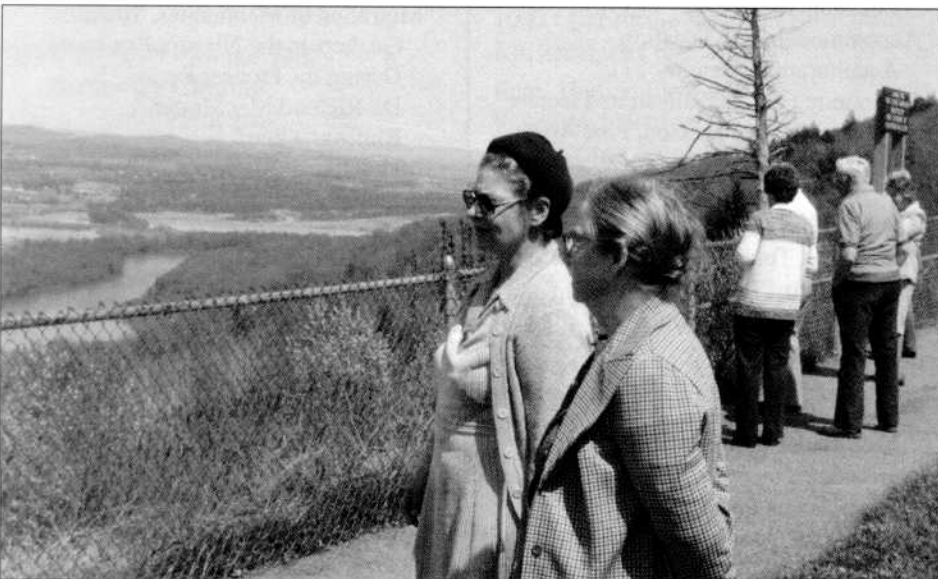
Mrs. Martens observed that children in Canada are free to learn about God in church and school whereas in Russia the state regards the children as "theirs" for indoctrination with the ideology of the Communist party.

The next public meeting of the Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario most likely will be held at Conrad Grebel College in the fall. It is the Society's intention to hold two public meetings annually, with the spring meeting in a community other than Waterloo.

Calendar of MHSO Bus Trips

1966 - 2000

- **April 30, 1966 - Vineland United Mennonite Church**
 "Early Mennonites in Welland County" by Ivan Groh, St. Catharines
 "Early Mennonites in the Niagara Area" by Barbara Coffman, Vineland.
 "From Russia to Ontario" by Jane Penner, A.A. Wall, and Frank Klassen
 An interview with Mrs. Tina Martens, newly arrived immigrant from Russia
- **June 2, 1967 - Zurich Mennonite Church**
 Mennonite Conference of Ontario Canadian Centennial program
 "Mennonite Contributions to Life in Canada" by Wilson Hunsberger, Waterloo; and Dr. Norman High, University of Waterloo.
 Illustrated Lecture "Mennonite Historical Sites in Ontario" by Dr. Earle Snyder, Guelph.
- **October 10, 1969 - Cedar Grove Mennonite Church, Markham**
 "Highlights of Mennonite History in the Markham Community" by Paul Burkholder, Markham.
 Visit to the Reesor Family Museum.
 "Folklore in the Markham Area" illustrated with slides from Blodwen Davies collection by Lorna L. Bergey, New Dundee.
- **October 23, 1971 - Erb Street Mennonite Church, Waterloo**
 "Our Anabaptist Heritage" Illustrated lecture by Jan Gleysteen, Scottsdale, Pennsylvania.
- **June 3, 1972 - Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden**
 "Church History, an Exact Science" by Ira D. Landis, Leola, Pennsylvania.
 "The Role of the Church Historian." Panel discussion with Harold Groh, Alice Koch, and Lorraine Roth.
 A typical Amish company meal was served: bean soup garnished with cinnamon, rice and chicken with sassafras, sweet & sour beets and pickles, shtrayma pie and coffee.
- **June 16, 1973 - Elmira Mennonite Church**
 "Experiences with Mennonite Tourism in Waterloo County" by Vernon Leis, Elmira.
- **June 1, 1974 - George Street W-K United Mennonite Church, Waterloo**
 "Two Mennonite Cultures Meet" by Dr. J. Winfield Fretz.
 "From Russia to Canada" by Dr. Frank Epp.
 Faspa, a typical Russian Mennonite afternoon lunch, was served by the ladies of the church.
 "Life in Russia During the Revolution." Panel presentation convened by Herbert Enns.
- **November 22, 1975 - Aylmer Amish Community**
 Tour and Historical resume of the Pathway Publishing House by David Wagler.
 "Introduction of Amish Archives" by David Luthy.
- **June 5, 1976 - George Street W-K United Mennonite Church, Waterloo**
 Presented film "Menno's Reins" produced by Cross-Town Credit Union.
- **October 18, 1976 - East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock**
 Presentation of film "The Amish: A People of Preservation."
 Co-sponsored with the Western Ontario Mennonite Conference Historical Committee.



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.

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- **June 11, 1977 - Rainham Mennonite Church**
"Rainham Congregation" by Mary Hoover.
"South Cayuga Congregation" by Earl Hauser and Lorne Fretz.
"Reformed Mennonite Congregation" by Catherine Daly.
"Dunnville United Mennonite Congregation" by Susan Dyck.
- **October 14, 1977 - Eastwood Collegiate, Kitchener**
Premiere Showing of filmed stage play "The Trail of the Conestoga."
- **June 23, 1978 - Edgley Meetinghouse, Black Creek Pioneer Village, Toronto**
"The Mennonite Community at Edgley" by Paul Burkholder, Markham.
Tour of Cober Brethren in Christ Meetinghouse and Quaker Meetinghouse at Newmarket.
- **June 9, 1979 - Oak Street United Mennonite Church, Leamington**
"The Mennonite Community at Leamington" by Mrs. Mary Janzen, Windsor.
- **June 7, 1980 - Bertie Brethren in Christ Church, Stevensville**
"Historical Resume of Bertie Brethren In Christ Congregation" by Abbie Sider, Stevensville
Tour of the area directed by Ross Nigh and Dr. Harold Nigh
- **June 13, 1981 - Zurich Mennonite Church**
"The Early Mennonite & Amish Settlement at Zurich" by Gordon Erb, Clarence Gascho, and Seleda Steckle.
Tour of settlement by Sidney Ramer and Cyril Gingerich.
- **June 12, 1982 - Chesley Mennonite Church**
"The Mennonite Community at Port Elgin" prepared by Lorna L. Bergey, read by Almeda Martin, St. Jacobs.
"Mennonite Corners" by Grace Snider, Chesley.
"The Mennonites in the Chesley - Hanover Community" by George Weber, Chesley.
Tour of "Mennonite Settlements, Past and Present, to the North and West of the Kitchener-Waterloo area." Commentary prepared by Tobias Brubacher, Elmira, and Alice Koch, New Hamburg.
- **May 6-10, 1983 - Heritage Tour to Philadelphia and the districts of Lancaster and Franconia.**
- **June 11, 1983 - Conrad Grebel College**
Afternoon tour of "Early Mennonite Settlement in the Waterloo District." Commentary prepared by Lorna L. Bergey, New Hamburg.
"Historical Resume of Hagey - Wanner Mennonite Congregations" by Eben Cressman, Kitchener.
- **June 9, 1984 - Blenheim Mennonite Retreat Centre, New Dundee**
"Evidence of Change in the Mennonite Communities in the Townships of North Dumfries, Blandford, and Blenheim" by Norman Shantz, Ayr and Lorna L. Bergey, New Hamburg.
Tour of the area. Commentary prepared by Alice Koch and Lorna L. Bergey, New Hamburg.
- **May 10-11, 1985 - 20th Anniversary Sessions at Conrad Grebel College**
"Why a Mennonite Historical Society in Ontario?" by Orland Gingerich, Kitchener.
"Highlights in the First 20 Years of Our Society" by Herbert Enns, Waterloo and Lorraine Roth, Kitchener.
Lectures on Mennonite Folk Culture in the Waterloo Community by Dr. J. W. Fretz, North Newton, Kansas.
"Wilderness, War and Gemeinschaft (1800 - 1940)."
"Urbanization, Commercialization, Emancipation (1940 - 1985)."
"Accommodation, Alienation, Acculturation (Century 21)."
"Mennonite Folk Art" Illustrated lecture by Nancy Lou Patterson, Fine Arts Department, University of Waterloo
- **May 10, 1986 - Port Colborne**
"Mennonite, Tunker, Quaker Migration to Southern Niagara Peninsula" Lecture and tour commentary by Harold Nigh.
- **June 13, 1987 - Maple View Mennonite Church, Wellesley**
"Amish Settlement in the Townships of Wellesley and Mornington" by Orland Gingerich, author of "The Amish of Canada" written in 1972 in commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the coming of Amish from Europe to Canada.
- **April, 1988 - St.Clair-O'Connor Mennonite Centre, Toronto**
"Reflections on Mennonites coming to Toronto With a Mission" by Osias Horst, who assumed the pastorate at Danforth Mennonite Church September 1, 1964.
"Experiencing Community at St. Clair-O'Connor" by Jean Shantz
Tour of Mennonite interests in the Toronto area.
- **June 10, 1989 - Port Rowan Mennonite Brethren Church**
"The Mennonite Settlement in the Port Rowan area" by Catherine Thiessen
"Introduction to the Mennonite Settlement in the Aylmer area" by George Rempel.
Guided tour in afternoon by Victor Fast and George Rempel.
- **June 9, 1990 - Mapleview Church, Ailsa Craig**
"Historical Resume of Church of God in Christ (Holdeman) Mennonite Church Mapleview Congregation" by Pastor Robert Toews.
"Early Settlement Memories" by Lorne Bender
- **June 8, 1991 - Maple View Mennonite Parochial School - Mount Forest**
"Forming a New Community" by Isaac R. Horst, Mount Forest.
Guided tour in afternoon of area schools, meetinghouses, farms and industries.
- **June 13, 1992 - United Mennonite Church, Vineland**
"Migration of Mennonites, Tunkers, Quakers in the Niagara Peninsula During the Pioneer Period" by Dr. Richard MacMaster, Bluffton, Ohio.
Guided tour in afternoon of Mennonite, Tunker, and Quaker historical sites in Vineland area and Pelham Township.
- **June 12, 1993 - Milverton Mennonite Church**
"Amish Beginnings, 300 Years Ago" "Reist/Amish Division" by Levi Miller, Goshen Indiana.
"Beginnings of the Old Order Amish in Ontario" by Lorraine Roth.
- **June 11, 1994 - Parkview Village Auditorium, Stouffville**
"Mennonite History in the Markham Community" by Paul Burkholder.
Guided tour in afternoon of area.

Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario

Charter Members

- **June 10, 1995 - United Mennonite Educational Institute, Leamington**
"The Mennonite Community at Leamington"
Guided tour in afternoon of area.
- **June 8, 1996 - Bloomingdale Mennonite Church**
"Early Settlement of Bloomingdale and Organization of the Congregation"
by Alice Koch.
"Effects of 1870s New Mennonite and 1889 Old Order Divisions" by Sam Steiner.
"Bloomingdale Congregation 1940-1990s" by Myron Stevanus.
Guided tour in afternoon of area directed by Myron Stevanus.
- **June 14, 1997 - Fairview Mennonite Home Centre Auditorium, Cambridge**
"Building Community on the Frontier" by Dr. Elizabeth Bloomfield, Guelph.
- **June 13, 1998 - Steinmann Mennonite Church**
Launch of book "The Amish and Their Neighbours: The German Block, Wilmot Township, 1822-1860" by Lorraine Roth.
"Documenting Early Amish Settlement in Canada" by Lorraine Roth.
"Changes I Have Seen in the Amish Community in My Lifetime" by Glenn Zehr.
Guided tour in afternoon of area.
Commentary prepared by Alice Koch, Lorraine Roth and Orland Gingerich.
- **June 12, 1999 - Rouge Valley Mennonite Church**
"York County Participants in the Organization of Non-Resistant Relief Organization, Ontario" by Paul Burkholder.
"Formation of Organization of Non-Resistant Relief Organization" by Lucille Marr, Camrose, Alberta.
"Restoration of the Altona Meetinghouse" by Joseph Nighswander.
Guided tour in afternoon of area.
Commentary by Paul Burkholder.
- **June 10, 2000 - Danforth Mennonite Church**
"Ninety One Years of Danforth Mennonite Church" by Bill Bryson
Tour in afternoon of Toronto area churches and missions.

- Baechler, Elmer (deceased)
Wellesley, Ontario
- Barthel, Arno
RR#2 Stone Road.
Niagara-on-the Lake, Ontario
- Becker Max (deceased)
RR#2, Kitchener, Ontario
- *Bergey Lorna L.
1202-1414 King St. E.
Kitchener, N2G 4T8
- *Bowman, Edna (Henry, deceased)
716-515 Langs Dr.
Cambridge, ON N3H 5E4
- Brubacher, Shannon (deceased)
Waterloo, Ontario
- Buschert, Donald
59 Askin Pl., Kitchener ON N2A 1K9
- Coffman, Barbara (deceased)
Vineland, Ontario
- Coffman, Lena (deceased)
Vineland, Ontario
- Mr. & Mrs. David Coffman (deceased)
Vineland, Ontario
- Cressman, Ella (deceased)
Cambridge, Ontario
- Cressman, Mrs. Clayton (deceased)
Moorefield, ON
- Culp, Alvin (deceased)
Vineland, Ontario
- Hunsberger, Wilson
4560 West Caanich Road
9 Victoria, B.C. V8Z 3G4
- *Jutzi, Clara
1007 - 1414 King St. E.
Kitchener, ON N2G 4T8
- Enns, Herbert (deceased)
Waterloo, Ontario
- Fransen, N.
RR#3, St. Catharines, Ontario
- *Freeman, Leonard
West Montrose, Ontario
- *Fretz, Dr. J. Winfield
Box 126 North Newton, Kansas 67117
- Getman, Mr. & Mrs. E.
853 Phoenix St., South Haven MI
- *Gingerich, Orland
30 Avalon Pl. Apt. 302
Kitchener, ON N2M 4N6
- Good Viola S.
Nithview Home, Boullee Dr.
New Hamburg, N0B 2G0
- Coffman, Ellen (deceased)
Vineland, Ontario
- Graham, Ella (deceased)
Vineland, Ontario
- Groh, Ivan (deceased)
St. Catharines, Ontario
- Good, Milton R.
RR1 Breslau ON NOB 1M0
- High, Isaac L. (deceased)
St. Catharines, Ontario
- Janzen P.G.
Vineland, Ontario
- Dahl, Ed.
Campbell Road Yarrow, B.C.
- Kinzie, Harry (deceased)
Cambridge, Ontario
- Joseph Leis (deceased)
- Martin, Don
40 Euclid Ave., Waterloo, Ontario
- Miller, Alice
Clarence Centre, N.Y.
- Plummer, Oliver (deceased)
Kitchener, Ontario
- *Roth, Lorraine
411-65 Westmount Rd. N.
Kitchener ON N2L 5G6
- Shantz, Elven (deceased)
Kitchener, Ontario
- Snyder, Mrs. O.A. (deceased)
Cambridge, Ontario
- *Dorothy Swartzentruber Sauder
609-1414 King St. E.
Kitchener, ON N2G 4T8
- Warkentein, Dr. John E.
Toronto, Ontario
- Weber, Gordon S. (deceased)
- Millar, Douglas D. (deceased)
43 Duncairn Ave., Kitchener, Ontario
- Mannel Mrs. F.A.
St. Catharines, Ontario
- Reaman, Dr. G.E. (deceased)
Waterloo, Ontario
- *Snyder, Mrs. Mabel
4 Snyder Ave. Elmira, ON N3B 1Y6
- Snyder, Earle S. (deceased)
Kitchener, Ontario.
- Snyder, Wayne (deceased)
Kitchener, Ontario
- *Weber, Alson M.
607-1414 King St. E.
Kitchener, ON N2G 4T8
- Wideman, Mrs. Leon
Akron, N.Y.
- Witmer, Leslie (deceased)
Cambridge, Ontario

* denotes membership 1965-2000

Change and Commitment

Stirling Ave. Mennonite Church - 75th Anniversary

by Jim Reusser

In the 1960's there was a popular Bob Dylan song called "The Times They are a Changing." Whether we like it or not, the world is changing, our society is changing, values are changing, and even the church is changing. I guess there is nothing more constant than change. As we enter a new millennium, the speed of all change seems to accelerate. Some changes are positive. Some are negative. Some have potential for great good or evil. Where shall we encourage change? Where shall we resist change?

God's people have faced change in every age. Near the end of the book of Joshua, the Israelites were in a time of major change, the latest in a series of changes they had faced.

At this hinge point of their history, Joshua, God's faithful leader, whose life and ministry were coming to a close, called the people together so that he could speak to them one last time. He began by recalling for them their history God had helped them escape from slavery in cosmopolitan Egypt, a mixed multitude. God had led them as they wandered in the wilderness of Sinai, bedouins living in tents and raising sheep. Change at Mount Sinai, God gave them the ten commandments, directions for living which shaped them into one people - God's people. Change again.

At last, after forty years, God brought them into the promised land. Now again they were faced with change, this time learning to live as settled people, farming the land. They were faced with even greater challenge and change. They would need to learn how to live justly and faithfully as God's people, with their neighbours, in their promised land.

Before they could go forward, Joshua knew they needed to look back, to see from where they had come. Before they could consider future goals, they needed to remember their identity.

Then Joshua called on the people to renew their commitment to serve the Lord God, and to give up the other loyalties which had kept them from serving God alone.

"Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness;

put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD." (Joshua 24:14-15)

Every period in the history of God's people is a time of change. Change can be positive or negative. Change can represent great good or great evil.

I was given the assignment of looking back at a particular time in the history of this church - the years that I served as pastor - 1963-1976. I want to look at that period of time in terms of the what I see as the important changes going on at that time.

There are several things I should say before I do that. I had a number of contacts with this congregation before I came. The first time I was here was with the Bluffton College choir in June of 1950. In the summer of 1952 I was on staff for Bluffton College recruiting students, and I spent several days here visiting Stirling Ave. young people who were prospective students, as well as visiting Helen Snyder who I had come to know in my first year in Seminary.

In the summer of 1953, I led a voluntary service unit in Guelph and Helen and I were married here in this sanctuary by Wilfred Ulrich. Among our first visitors at Seminary that fall were Alson and Lorraine Weber and their boys John and Jim. From 1954 to 1963 while I pastored the Salem Mennonite church near Kidron, Ohio we spent a week of each summer here with Helen's parents and I often preached on the Sunday we were here.

I also need to admit that when I married Helen, who grew up in this church, I inherited almost by osmosis, her and her family's memory and interpretation of the history of Stirling Ave.

In November of 1962 Alson Weber and Doug Millar came to our home in Ohio to invite me to consider coming to Stirling Avenue as pastor. In the spring

after I received the call to come to Kitchener, and news of this became known in the community, the pastor of a church of another denomination greeted me one day by saying he heard I was going to Canada to do foreign missions.

The next thing I should say is that there is no such thing as objective history. The past is always viewed from a perspective. It is seen through a filter. What I may observe about the 1960's and 1970's at Stirling Ave, may not be what you remember, or may not have the meaning which you give to it.

I propose to look at what I observe to be the changes going on at Stirling Ave. Mennonite Church during those years. Some of those changes were going on when we arrived. Some of them perhaps began during that time. You may view some of the changes as positive. You may view others as negative. You will probably sense some of my biases.

Nevertheless, drawing from our roots, we grow into the future.

One of things which surprised and concerned me when we arrived in 1963 was the discovery that our Mennonite young people in Senior Public and High School (and none were in Rockway in those days) were uncomfortable and embarrassed with their Mennonite identity. They tried to keep their friends from discovering that they were Mennonite, and they tried to blend in where they would not be noticed. For some, this meant not wanting to be seen with a particular Christian identity. For others, it meant not wanting to be seen as having another Christian identity, such as Intersivity, or one of the more charismatic expressions. They did not have very clear understanding of what it meant to be Mennonite. I am not sure about the causes of these attitudes, but they were there. I suspect that what was true of these young people was also true of some of their parents.

Rockway High School itself was going through some difficult times, and was not always sure of its identity and mission.

By the 1970's these attitudes had changed somewhat, and I sense that they are very different today.



Stirling Ave. Mennonite Church 1964. Published in The Canadian Mennonite June 30, 1964. Supplied by Conrad Grebel College Archives.

Those attitudes may be related to the next set of changes to which I want to call attention - changes in the nature and relationships of the congregation. From 1924 until U. K. Weber retired in the early 1940s, Stirling Ave was without formal conference relationship. It was an Old Mennonite congregation out of fellowship with conference. Assumptions about church government and organization came from its past conference relationship. Members were mostly charter members, their children, and persons who came to Stirling from other surrounding Mennonite churches.

When Andrew Shelly came as pastor, he quickly led Stirling into his home district conference, the Eastern District Conference in Pennsylvania, and into the General Conference Mennonite Church. Membership in the General Conference brought some important resources to Stirling: Sunday School materials; a paper (*The Mennonite*), with news and religious articles; and relationship to a missions program. Alice Bachert and Leona Cressman served under the General Conference Mission Board.

Membership in Eastern District had less to offer Stirling. Delegates went once a year to eastern Pennsylvania to hear discussions about a seniors' home in Frederick, Pa., and about home

missions in Philadelphia, which seemed like foreign and distant programs to Stirling leaders.

However, other events in Ontario were increasing Stirling's relationships with Mennonites here. The Second World War resulted in a number of inter-Mennonite organizations to coordinate relief activities, peace teaching and oversight of camps for Conscientious Objectors to war. Since Stirling could not be represented by Ontario Conference, or even by the United Mennonites, who, though they were General Conference, were at that time German speaking, Stirling was always represented with the strength of the conferences. This put Stirling Ave. leaders into contact with leaders of the other conferences and they began mutually to develop friendships and mutual respect and trust.

Shortly before we came, Stirling was invited by the United Mennonites to help them support the small church planted near Sudbury. Stirling was also involved along with three conferences - Ontario, Western Ontario, and United Mennonite - in the establishment of Conrad Grebel College in 1960.

Within a few months after I was installed as pastor, members of the executive committees of both the Ontario Mennonite Conference and the United

Mennonite Conference informally asked me whether it was not possible to work more closely together.

Within a year, as I remember it, a meeting was called of the members of the mission committees of the Ontario, Western Ontario, and United Mennonite Conferences and Stirling Ave. to share their present programs, and their plans for future mission and service programs. This quickly led to the temporary, and then permanent, formation of what became known as the Intermennonite Mission and Service Committee. In turn, this led to the Ontario Intermennonite Conference in about 1974. These were steps on the way to what is now the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada (MCEC) in 1988.

But let us back up. At Stirling Ave., the opportunity was presenting itself in the 1960's for more meaningful relationships here in Ontario. For a number of years Stirling Ave. and First Mennonite held a joint communion service on Good Friday. Also there was considerable congregational process at Stirling during these years, while Fred Cressman was congregational chair, of looking at our relationship with Eastern District in Pennsylvania, and asking whether we should pursue relationships with Ontario Conference, United Mennonite Conference or both.

In 1970 we severed our ties with Eastern District, and by joining the Ontario Conference and the United Mennonite Conference, became the first dual conference congregation in Ontario. The rift which occurred in 1924 was now healed, and Stirling Ave. finally had conference membership in Ontario.

The 1960's and 1970's indeed saw significant change for Stirling in terms of relationships, and thus in terms of its future direction within the larger Mennonite Church.

There were also changes in our worship.

Evening preaching services had in earlier years been an important part of church life. When I came in 1963, I was expected to preach each Sunday evening. However, there were seldom more than 10 to 20 people present, and sometimes when the choir sang there were more in the choir loft than in the pews. When the suggestion was made that perhaps the evening preaching service might be dropped, one of the responses was, "If the

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lights are not on on Sunday evening, there is no evangelism." Of course, the persons who did attend were not candidates for evangelism. They were the loyal seniors of the church.

However, we experimented with other kinds of evening activities. J. W. Fretz helped us organize area meetings to discuss issues which the church was facing.

These were years when the congregation moved from feeling comfortable with singing mostly familiar Gospel songs and hymns to learning to appreciate singing a wider variety of the hymns in the hymnal. This was also the time when Stirling began to hire choir directors with more training. Howard Dyck and Ted Baerg are two which I remember as enriching the music of our worship. In 1970 the older *Mennonite Hymnary* was replaced by *The Mennonite Hymnal*, introducing us to many newer hymns such as "606" - "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

The purchase and installation of a pipe organ was another step in the same musical direction.

One of my hopes in the 1960's was to enable lay persons to participate more fully in the worship experience, by reading scripture, or praying, let alone lead in worship. It was difficult in those days to find anyone who would be so daring as to be on the platform. How times have changed! Now Stirling involves many lay persons.

These were also years when assumptions about leadership changed. I began as a solo minister (the last in Stirling's history), and when I left Stirling I was a part of a Ministry Team.

During the first years - the 1960's - the assumptions were that I would preach every Sunday, except for Summer holidays, or if there was a special guest speaker such as a missionary. I was expected to be on the platform even if I didn't preach, so I never sat with my family in a pew.

I remember the one time I asked the senior deacon if I could be away for a weekend, with Menno Singers who were touring in Ohio in the Kidron community where I had earlier served as pastor and in Bluffton where I had gone to college. The deacon replied, "I don't think people would understand." (A sincere deacon whom I respect.)

The first Ministry Team included Ron Rempel and Don Smucker, and shared preaching and other tasks. J. W. Fretz helped this to function.

Congregational process changed. Where the tendency in congregational meetings had been for the weighty persons to speak and for the little people to keep silent, J. W. Fretz helped us to arrange for breaks in the plenary session for people to meet in small groups where everyone had an opportunity to speak.

Lay leadership went through significant change as well. When I came there were still two deacons, the senior and the junior deacon. Such men as Clayton Moss, Gordon Weber, Elven Shantz, carried considerable authority and were spiritual leaders in the congregation. They had roots to the beginning of the congregation. They were not a committee but they carried their responsibilities as a call from God. By the time I left, they had died or retired from service and a Deacon Board had been elected. In these years, not only were these deacons of the earlier style gone, but the pioneer pastor, U. K. Weber also died. During these years many of the charter members died and ties to the early history of the church diminished.

What is given up and what is maintained are both significant. Some Mennonite distinctives were in the process of being lost during these decades. When we came there were still perhaps 5 to 10 women who still wore coverings. When we left there might have still been one. When we came footwashing still followed communion, but the number dwindled from perhaps 15 or 20 until there were so few that footwashing was discontinued.

At the same time I have the sense that there was a new appreciation for and commitment to peace, justice, reconciliation and the way of Love. It was in these years that the clothing centre was opened for example. And the event which brought the largest group of people into this sanctuary during those years, as I remember it, was the weekend when Vincent Harding from Atlanta, Georgia was with us to speak on peace and justice issues.

The makeup of the congregation changed during these years and became more diverse. Mennonites of different backgrounds joined, particularly Russian Mennonites. And more persons with no Mennonite background or genealogy became active in the church. It is a joy

to see how this has continued. I have always been impressed that often the Mennonites who are most clear about their commitment are those who are convinced Mennonites, that is those who are Mennonites by conviction and choice rather than by genealogy and ethnicity.

Why look at the past? So that we can discover and claim who we are - our warts as well as our gifts. If we do not know who we are, or where we have come from, we can hardly know where we are going. We draw from our roots so that we can grow into the future. We look to the past, not to take pride in ourselves, not to see ourselves as better than anyone else, but to remember how God has acted on our behalf and led us. To remember how God has been able to use us when we have been obedient, and to remember God's grace in not giving up on us when we were not true to his call.

We need to remember too, that the church of Jesus Christ is much larger and richer than its expression at Stirling Ave. It extends around the world and across twenty centuries.

We cannot live in the past. We should not gild the past. Neither can we live in the future. Today is the day God gives us to live. Let us humbly pray that we will have the spiritual sensitivity to recognize the opportunities God sets before us, and the courage and commitment to be God's people in the continually changing world in which we live.

In December there was a motto in the mall where we often shop, which read "The past is history, The future's a mystery, But today is a gift, and that is why they call it the present."

We need to give thanks for our forbears in the faith. But, we cannot depend on the commitment and faith of those who preceded us. In every period of our life we need to recommit ourselves to follow Jesus as Lord of our lives. This is the most important way in which you as individuals and a congregation can mark this anniversary in the life of your congregation. We need to be willing to turn away from every idolatry, everything else which wants to claim our first loyalty, and say like Joshua, "as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."

Jim Reusser, and his wife Helen, live in Kitchener and now attend Waterloo North Mennonite Church. This is an excerpt from a sermon given at Stirling Ave. Mennonite Church on March 5, 2000 as part of their 75th anniversary celebrations.

Book Review

Detweiler's Meetinghouse: A History of Mennonites near Roseville, Ontario

by Reg Good

(Roseville: Detweiler Meetinghouse Inc., 1999)

96 pages.

Reviewed by Ferne Burkhardt

Once each summer in the 1950s, people from six Wilmot Mennonite churches gathered at the Detweiler Mennonite Meetinghouse in Roseville for a hymn sing. The tiny building could not accommodate the Sunday evening crowd, so we gathered on the west lawn and sang until we could no longer read the music in the fading light.

The Roseville service was not to be missed - the singing was spirited and the setting was delightful. The picturesque fieldstone church, built in 1855 to replace earlier log buildings, was set on a grassy slope beside a quiet, tree-lined country road. The adjoining cemetery with its historic tombstones begged exploration.

My memories of a peaceful place and a joyous event bear little resemblance to the little congregation's troubled past, so meticulously laid out by Reg Good in his book detailing the history of the Detweiler meetinghouse, the only surviving stone meetinghouse built by Mennonites in Ontario, and its people.

Good begins the story by reaching back to the Pennsylvania origins of the settlers who arrived in North Dumfries Township in 1822 via Indian trails. He describes the settlement patterns, which were similar to those in Waterloo Township, the first inland settlement in Ontario, about twenty years earlier. The Roseville settlement included Scottish Presbyterians, German Lutherans, English Methodists and second generation Mennonites from Waterloo. Most of the Mennonites were inter-related. Good unravels connections between families listed as members, thus providing helpful genealogical information.

The story of the church, its people and leaders, as told by Good, is one of struggle and dissension, beginning as early as 1830 when rivalry resulted in meetinghouses at two sites just two miles apart. Family disputes, differences in theological emphasis, frequent changes

of leaders within the congregation, a string of occasional pastors sent by the conference, conservative bishops whose strict enforcement of rules kept non-Mennonites out and sent Mennonites elsewhere all contributed to conflict and decline. Tragic deaths and building projects several times brought on spurts of growth but membership was generally low. Good traces the church's bumpy slide to mission out-post status, its return to self-supporting rank (it did not pay its minister a salary) to closure on January 9, 1966, just over a year after the sudden death of pastor Moses Bowman.

Good concludes with a brief summary of the building's use over the next twenty years, efforts to preserve and restore this historic treasure and the eventual transfer of the property, including the cemetery, to a non-profit corporation committed to its preservation.

Good gives some examples of Mennonite cooperation with non-Mennonite neighbours, including allowing the cemetery to be used by the entire community. But within the congregation, people seem to experience mostly conflict and exclusion. Missing are positive stories of spiritual strength and Christian discipleship within and beyond the congregation which must have been present to keep it alive for well over a century.

Two major appendices significantly enhance this 96-page soft-cover book, which includes a number of excellent photographs. The first appendix is a complete cemetery list, compiled by Norman Shantz. The second, without which the story would not be complete, is the well-illustrated description of the ten-year restoration project which by the fall of 1999 allowed guests "to experience the worship environment of our forebears." Narrative is by Gerald Musselman, architect and secretary of the board of Detweiler Meetinghouse Inc. The book also includes lists of board members and project donors and an index.

Ferne Burkhardt is a reporter for Canadian Mennonite. She lives near Petersburg, Ontario.

People and Projects

BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS AT VINELAND

The First Mennonite Church in Vineland will celebrate its 200th anniversary with special events for its members and friends on the weekend of May 26-27, 2001. Sunday's program includes; a morning worship service, a noontime fellowship meal, and a sharing session in the afternoon.

WATERLOO MB CHURCH MARKS ANNIVERSARY

This year the Waterloo Mennonite Brethren Church located in Waterloo, Ontario, is celebrating the 40th anniversary of the mission Sunday School which was its forerunner. This Sunday School, met for the first time on Nov. 13, 1960 in the Brighton Public School located on Noecker Street in Waterloo, Ontario. The Waterloo Mennonite Brethren Church was officially established seven years later in January 1967.

KITCHENER MB CHURCH CELEBRATES 75TH ANNIVERSARY

This year the Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church is celebrating its 75th anniversary. In May 1925 seventeen members met in St. Jacobs, Ontario in the home of Rev. Jacob Wiens for an organizational meeting. At first the group held their services in the Bethany Mennonite Church at the corner of Lancaster and Chapel Streets in Kitchener, Ontario and in 1925 they rented rooms on the second floor of 40 King St. East. By 1935 they were ready to purchase their own building at 53 Church St., Henry H. Janzen was the pastor at this time. In 1953 the congregation moved to a their present site at 19 Ottawa Street. Several "daughter" churches developed over the years from this church, including the Mennonite Brethren Church in Waterloo (1960) and the Glencairn Mennonite Brethren Church in Kitchener (1988).

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PRESTON AND WANNERS CELEBRATE BICENTENNIAL

The Preston and Wannars Mennonite Churches concluded a year-long celebration of its 200th anniversary with special events on the weekend of September 15-17, 2000. This included a banquet Friday evening, a picnic in Linear Park in Cambridge, local tours, and a Sunday morning worship service at Preston. *from the Canadian Mennonite*

WELLESLEY CELEBRATES 25TH ANNIVERSARY

Wellesley Mennonite Church celebrated its 25th anniversary on the weekend of September 9-10, 2000. Saturday's events included a barbeque and musical entertainment by the women's trio, "Lamplight." Sunday morning's worship service included several speakers including; Gerald Schwartztruber, the congregation's first pastor, and Ray Martin, its current pastor. After the noon potluck meal, the afternoon program included reflections from several members of the congregation ranging from charter members to more recent attenders. *from the Canadian Mennonite*

BUSY RESEARCHERS

Laureen Harder-Gissing is researching the histories of both the Stirling Ave. Mennonite Church and First Mennonite Church, both in Kitchener. This will result in new history books for each congregation in the near future.

Barbara Draper has been asked to write a book examining the Mennonites in the Elmira, Ontario area for the *Mennonite/Anabaptist Series*. This will include an in-depth look into such groups as; the Old Orders, David Martin group, Waterloo-Markham Conference, Conservative, and Mexican Mennonites.

Book Notes

- Phyllis Pellman Good, author and Jerry Irwin, photographer of *Amish Children* (Intercourse, Pennsylvania: Good Books, 2000) 96 pages, spent time with members of the Amish community learning about the life of their children. In addition, Pellman Good effectively incorporates Amish children's writings and comments from Amish parents and grandparents into the text. These are taken from two journals *Blackboard Bulletin* and *Family Life* published by Pathway Publishers in Alymer, Ontario. In two photographs Ontario is mentioned specifically: Amish school children in front of their Ontario schoolhouse in wintertime, and an Amish family on a visit to Niagara Falls (Horseshoe Falls). Aside from these two Canadian references, the majority of the photographs appear to be from the United States. However, the discussion of a child's life within the Amish community, extending from birth to the time when he or she joins the church, and the beautiful photography make this book a splendid addition to the literature on Amish life.
- Harry Loewen, editor of *Road to Freedom: Mennonites Escape the Land of Suffering* (Kitchener: Pandora Press, 2000), 302 pages, tells the story of post World War Two Mennonite immigration from the Soviet Union to Canada over fifty years ago through first hand accounts of the events, and many archival photographs.
- Carl Hiebert, author of *This Land I Love: Waterloo County* (Kitchener: Gift of Wings Publishing, 2000) 128 pages, uses many aerial photographs to show his "view" of Waterloo County. Reflections by Old Order Mennonites supplement the text. Proceeds of the sales of this book go to MCC if ordered through MCCO or MSCU.
- Alice Koch, author of *Nith Valley Mennonite Church and its Roots: A history of coming together of Biehn and Blenheim churches into Nith Valley Mennonite Church* (New Hamburg: Nith Valley Mennonite Church, 2000) traces the histories of Blenheim Mennonite Church (1839-1974) and Biehn Mennonite Church (1865-1974) and their subsequent joining together to create Nith Valley Mennonite Church (1975-2000).
- Mary Hunsberger Schiedel, author of *A Journey of Faith: The History of Shantz Mennonite Church, 1840-2000* (Baden: Shantz Mennonite Church, 2000) 96 pages, details the 160 year history of Shantz Mennonite Church.
- Carol Steinman, author of *Refined by Fire: The Story of Hagey/Preston Mennonite Church, 1800-2000* (Kitchener: Pandora Press, 2000) 150 pages, documents the account of Preston Mennonite Church over its 200 year history.
- Ed Boldt, Vic Hiebert and Linda Huebert Hecht editors of *Looking Back, Looking Ahead: A Millennium Booklet of The Ontario Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches* (Kitchener: Millennium Booklet Committee, 2000) 19 pages, contains photographs and "Highlights since 1982" and "A Vision for the Future" for each of the conference's 25 churches and mission churches (with a membership of between 4,100 and 4,200), major boards and committees in the MB Conference of Ontario.
- Barbara Draper and Martin A. Frey, compilers of *A Family History of Martin S. Frey* (St. Jacobs: Martin A. Frey, 2000), 249 pages, updates the records of the descendants of Martin S. Frey with many details about each family member. Copies are \$20 and available from:
Martin A. Frey,
70 Northside Drive,
St. Jacobs, Ontario N0B 2N0
519-664-2376.