

importance of this distinction will be the subject of our next "Genealogy by the Map" installment.

Alan Peters

News Items

Center for MB Studies Announces Extended Evening Hours

The Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies is pleased to announce that it will be open from 6:00 until 10:00 pm on Monday evenings during the 1991-1992 academic year (September-May). For many years the Center has been open only during regular work hours, making it inaccessible for persons who work during those same hours. The Center staff hopes that by offering these extended hours, more people from the community will be able to take advantage of the Center's valuable Mennonite resources. Archivist Kevin Enns-Rempel will be available to provide reference assistance during the extended hours.

The Center is a resource for people interested in Mennonite studies at any level. Professional scholars, genealogists, students or lay people interested in reading a good book on a Mennonite topic—all are welcome. All paying Historical Society members qualify for special borrower privileges in the Center, and may check out most library books for use at home.

These extended hours are being offered on a nine-month experimental basis. If the experiment receives a good response during the coming months, the extended hours will be continued in the future. Should the Monday evening hours not generate sufficient interest in the community, they will be discontinued after May of 1992.

Please call (209) 453-2225 for more information about hours of operation and services provided by the Center. We hope to see many of you on Monday evenings during the coming winter and spring.

Archives Vault Renovations Approved

At their most recent meetings, the boards of Fresno Pacific College and Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary approved funding for additional shelving and improved temperature and humidity control in the Center for MB Studies' archival vault. The renovations are to take place during the coming year.

The bulk of the funding will be used to install "high-density" or "mobile" shelving in the vault. This type of shelving is mounted on tracks and can be rolled using only a few pounds of pressure. Because the shelving is moveable

the vault can be almost completely filled with shelf rows, leaving only the width of one aisle open. Staff members roll the shelves in order to open the appropriate aisle for access to the material they need. This shelving system will add over 125% of additional storage area in the vault. Given that current archival holdings take up about 105% of the existing space, this new system will not only ease the Center's current space problem but provide adequate storage space for years to come.

The installation of improved temperature and humidity controls in the vault will help insure that archival materials there will be housed in an environment conducive to their long-term survival. Fluctuations in temperature and humidity are among the worst enemies of paper, greatly accelerating the chemical processes that cause them to become brittle and discolored. The existing environmental controls in the vault are not adequate to prevent these destructive fluctuations. The new system will maintain more stable temperature and humidity levels, and thereby prolong the useful life of materials in the vault.

Genealogical Committee Work Underway

At the 1991 Annual Meeting in Reedley the Society Executive announced the formation of a Genealogical Project Committee. Under the leadership of Jane Friesen, that committee has begun working toward a computerized genealogical database of Prussian-Russian Mennonite and Hutterite families. Since its first meeting last June the committee has sent out a letter to other agencies with Mennonite genealogical interests, alerting them to this project and seeking responses from them. Several responses, mostly enthusiastic and encouraging, have come back to the committee from these organizations.

The committee's main concern at this point is the design and implementation of a software program capable of storing and managing the vast amounts of data that will be entered into it. The working name for this program is "Genealogical Registry and Database of Mennonite Ancestry," or "GRANDMA." Given the magnitude of this project, the committee assumes that no commercially-available genealogical software can be utilized. It does, however, intend to design its program to perform many of the same functions—pedigree charts, family group sheets, tables of descendants—and to be compatible with these other programs. A set of general program specifications have been drawn up to guide the programmer in designing the software. Committee members plan in the near future to contact other national genealogical organizations who might have designed similar software. The committee may decide to utilize parts of any such existing programs if this seems appropriate.

Questions or comments regarding the Genealogical Project Committee's work should be directed to Jane Friesen at (209) 591-4154 or to the Center for MB Studies at (209) 453-2225.

100th Anniversary Committee to be Formed

The California Mennonite Historical Society Executive agreed at its last meeting to organize a committee to guide planning for the commemoration of a century of Mennonite churches in California. The year 1997 marks the centennial of the first organized Mennonite congregation in the state, the San Marcos Mennonite Church of Paso Robles. The Society Executive believes that this event has significance for all Mennonites in California, not only those in Paso Robles. It will be a fitting time to look back and acknowledge God's work among Mennonites throughout California during the last 100 years. Though specific plans have not been made at this point, the Executive envisions a commemorative publication and events around the state as part of the celebration.

Society Executive members will be contacting persons in various parts of California to serve on a planning committee for this event. The Executive hopes to enlist a cross-section of people for the committee, both in terms of regions and of conference affiliation. Anyone interested in helping with the work of this committee should contact the Center for MB Studies at (209) 453-2225.

Canadian Historians Unearth Buried Mennonite Treasure in Soviet Archives

A collection of Russian Mennonite archival material, "absolutely incredible in its historical significance," has recently been located in a Soviet archives. During the summer of 1990 Harvey Dyck of the University of Toronto and George Epp of Menno Simons College in Winnipeg, Manitoba discovered the records of the "Guardianship Committee of Foreign Settlers in Southern Russia," the branch of the Russian government that dealt with foreign colonists such as the Mennonites. The records, which date from 1803 to 1920, include material from the Agricultural Commission (*Landwirtschaftlicher Verein*), the Mennonite school board, the Afforestation Service (*Forstei*), teacher training institutes (*Lehrerseminars*), the Halbstadt Volost Archive, and documents of Johann Cornies and the Cornies family.

These records, previously thought lost following the upheavals of the Bolshevik Revolution and World War II, are now being microfilmed by the State Archives of the Dnepropetrovsk Region in Odessa in exchange for microfilm and photocopy equipment. They will eventually be made available to interested researchers.

Those interested in reading more about the discovery and the history of this archival collection should read Harvey Dyck's "Odyssey to Odessa: Fresh Resources and Perspectives in Russian Mennonite Studies," in the October 1991 issue of *Mennonite Quarterly Review*.

Second Volume of Russian Mennonite Cookbook Published

Readers of the *Bulletin* will remember Fran Loewen's April 1991 review of *Mennonite Foods & Folkways From South Russia, Volume I*, by Norma Jost Voth. Good Books, the publisher of that volume, has recently released the second volume of this monumental resource on the Russian Mennonite culinary tradition.

As with the first volume, this new book is much more than a cookbook. Jost has in reality written a social history of Mennonite life in Russia. Chapters on "The Mennonite House," "The Russian Mennonite Oven," "The Festive Sabbath," "Russian Mennonite Wedding Customs," "The Seasons," and "Busy Days" give the reader a glimpse of life in the Mennonite colonies. The more than one hundred recipes that appear in the book do not take center stage, but rather help to provide flavor to Jost's descriptions of these various aspects of Russia Mennonite life.

Hard-bound and handsomely illustrated with historical photographs, *Mennonite Foods & Folkways From South Russia, Volume II* sells for \$19.95. It may be ordered from Pacific Bookshop (1717 S. Chestnut, Fresno, CA 93702) or Good Books (P.O. Box 419, Intercourse, PA 17534-0419).

Winnipeg Centre Completing Third Rundschau Index

The Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies in Winnipeg, Manitoba hopes to have completed the third volume of its index to the *Mennonitische Rundschau* by the end of this year. This volume, which will cover the years 1900-1909, supplements two earlier volumes that span from 1880 to 1899. Copies of the completed indexes are available in the Fresno Center for MB Studies.

Congregational Library Bibliography Available

The Historical Commission of the Mennonite Brethren Church has recently published a twelve-page annotated bibliography entitled "Basic Mennonite Library for Mennonite Brethren Congregations." The Commission, concerned that Mennonite Brethren church libraries have a basic core of Mennonite resources in their collections, prepared this bibliography as a guide for church librarians interested in purchasing such items.

The list includes sections on "Mennonite History," "Mennonite Theology & Biblical Studies," "Mennonite Mission, Witness & Service," "Mennonite Life," "Bibliography," "Mennonite Literature," "Books for Younger Readers," "Reference Works," "Films & Videos," and "Books of Regional Interest." Though some of the items in the bibliography are geared specifically toward Mennonite

Brethren audiences, most of the resources listed there would be of interest to readers from any North American Mennonite group.

Individual copies of the bibliography are available free of charge from the Historical Commission at 4824 E. Butler, Fresno, CA 93727-5097.

In Memoriam: Irvin George Neufeld Clayton Auernheimer

The California Mennonite Historical Society lost two active members during 1991. Irvin George (I.G.) Neufeld was a charter member, former Vice President and Librarian of the Society. He died on April 15 at the age of 83. Clayton Auernheimer was a much more recent member of the Society, having joined only in 1991. He distinguished himself in the Society during that time, however, by being one of the featured speakers at the 1991 annual meeting. He died on September 6 at age 61.

The Society expresses its appreciation for the work of these two men and extends its sympathy to the Neufeld and Auernheimer families.

News From Other Mennonite Historical Societies

The California Mennonite Historical Society is only one of several Mennonite historical societies across the United States and Canada. CMHS members may be interested in the following activities of other societies:

The **Nebraska Mennonite Historical Society**, organized in 1989, published its first eight-page newsletter last March. Entitled *Nebraska Mennonite Historical Society Newsletter*, it is available from Peg Burkey, Route 1, Dorchester, NE 68343.

The **Mifflin County (Pennsylvania) Historical Society** recently published a 470-page history of Mennonites and Amish in that county. Written by S. Duane Kauffman, it is entitled *Mifflin County Amish and Mennonite Story: 1791-1991*.

The **Oregon Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society** is soliciting contributions from its members to help purchase furnishings and equipment for an archives/library room at Western Mennonite High School near Salem, Oregon.

The **Lancaster (Pennsylvania) Mennonite Historical Society** is preparing for two major presentations in the coming months. On December 2, 1991, Albert N. Keim, professor of history at Eastern Mennonite College, will present a lecture on "The Story of Mennonites in Civilian Public Service in World War II." On March 28, 1992, John L. Ruth, Mennonite minister, historian, storyteller, author and

playwright, will be the keynote speaker at the Society's fourteenth annual Genealogy Conference. He will speak on using family traditions in the absence of traditional recorded history.

Mennonite Sanitarium *(continued from page 2)*

port, however, the General Conference evidently did not offer any tangible assistance to the project.

Little progress toward a sanitarium appears to have taken place over the following five years. In 1910 the Pacific District of the General Conference Mennonite Church appointed a committee to examine the possibility of building a sanitarium for tuberculosis patients in southern California. The conference requested that the committee report back with its findings at the 1911 district conference. The report apparently was optimistic, since the 1911 Pacific District Conference passed a resolution to accept responsibility for building a sanitarium at Upland. The committee took a similar report to the General Conference sessions at Bluffton, Ohio a few months later, hoping for an equally positive response. This they did not receive. The General Conference declined the committee's request that it take over the project, but encouraged the Pacific District to continue with it and granted the committee permission to solicit funds from congregations across the country.¹¹

Even without the support of the General Conference, the Sanitarium Committee wasted no time in getting to work. The committee organized itself in December of 1911 with the following members: J.S. Hirschler, J.C. Mehl (both of Upland) and H.J. Krehbiel (Reedley). In March of 1912 the committee selected a site and purchased five acres for \$1850. In order to raise additional money for construction, committee members Hirschler and Mehl set out across the country soliciting donations with the authorization they received from the 1911 General Conference.¹²

The proposed sanitarium hit its first major snag in the fall of 1912 when it became clear that some people in Upland opposed its construction in a residential area of their city. Rather than challenge the disgruntled residents, the committee scrapped plans for the original site and began looking for another location.¹³ It is unclear what the committee did with the land already purchased for the first site.

The opposition toward a tuberculosis sanitarium by the citizens in Upland is not at all surprising. By the turn of the century, many Californians had begun to express fear at the growing number of consumptives coming to their state, a situation that some called "tuberculophobia." This was in marked contrast to the generally welcoming attitudes of state residents toward these invalid newcomers during the previous three decades. The growing awareness of the communicable nature of tuberculosis, not fully understood during the early years of the California health craze, only strengthened the resolve of those who wished to keep these patients as far away as possible.¹⁴

Almost a year elapsed before an appropriate alternative site could be found for the sanitarium. One potential site was