



Schweitzer Salt

Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association

June 2015

Central Kansas Bus Tour on Saturday, August 29, 2015

Wondering about the stories of "The Lone Tree," Indian Guide, Santa Fe Trail, The Mennonite Settler? Learn about these and over 55 sites of historical interest on the SMCHA-sponsored all-day bus tour on Saturday, August 29, 2015.

The tour will begin at the Monument, the site of the original Swiss Volhynian Mennonite settlement at 8:00 a.m. and then progress to Peabody, Newton, Halstead, Moundridge and north. Brian Stucky and others will narrate stories of the Hornberger Farm, the poor hapless Poles, a Mennonite encounter with the Ku Klux Klan, the Alta Mill, location of the first white settlement

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SMCHA Mission:

- * Collect and disseminate information concerning the spiritual and cultural history of Anabaptists of Swiss origin.
- * Offer scholarships to qualifying college and seminary students.
- * Relate in a meaningful way the faith of our Mennonite forebears to present and future generations.
- * Maintain the Hopefield Cemetery and Swiss Mennonite 1943 Marker and Centennial Monument.

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SEEKING CONTRIBUTORS



in McPherson County, and much more in an air-conditioned coach returning back to Hopefield Church where it all began by late afternoon. All meals, drinks and snacks will be provided. Cost is \$50 each. Get your name on the list soon.

The tour is open to anyone who has an interest in history or wants to learn more about this area. Reservations can be made by calling LaVern Stucky at 620-983-2348 lavern@powwwer.net.

NEEDED: Encourage a student to take advantage of the SMCHA Scholarship of at least \$500. Contact Roger Juhnke soon, 316-283-0452 fluhnke@cox.net.

NEEDED: Someone who reads German to translate a document.

NEEDED: Helper to get videos and scanned documents ready for website.

“Reflections from the Past” theme of March 8, 2015 Annual Meeting at Kingman

Members of Kingman Mennonite Church welcomed 125 to the SMCHA Annual Meeting on Sunday, March 8, 2015 at 2:30 p.m. The drive to make Trachselwald Castle in Switzerland into a museum was shared. New budget

Fred G.



was approved. President LaVern Stucky reported a very productive year. Fred Goering was elected new trustee. An endowment fund for continuing upkeep of the Hopefield Cemetery through the Moundridge Community Foundation was

approved. At a Writing Workshop scheduled April 9, Laurie Oswald Robinson will give tools for writing Schweitzer stories.

A video of 100 years of history of the Bethany/Zion/Kingman Mennonite Churches was most informative. This video can be seen on the SMCHA website. These Mennonites also had their roots in the original Hoffnungsfeld Church near Moundridge. Willard Voran, church historian, wrote that when land was taken up by the more affluent, some of the younger generation and those of more modest means sought new horizons elsewhere. Some moved to the Kingman area.

Another event that attracted Mennonites to this area was a Flour Mill built by Peter Gering and his son Jacob.



They built a mill and dug a mill race that was approximately two miles long with horses and slips in a bend of the Ninnescah River close to New Murdock in 1886.

Peter Gering's wife was

Maria Ries; the Ries family had been in the milling business in Europe. The Gerings were the first of the Mennonite influx to Kingman which was to follow in 1900. Signs of the old mill can still be seen. More story of Gering Mill on www.swissmennonite.org website.

The church was organized in 1906 with 32 charter members. C. J. Voran was the first pastor. They encountered challenges of fires, mergers, changes. Sermons were in German for 65 years. Most pastors had little pay or lived on free will offerings. Pastor Neuenschwander and his family drove each week from McPherson, and church members took turns having them for dinner. The church was named Bethany because “that is where Jesus spent a lot of time.” The

congregation “came from majestic mountains of Switzerland to the majestic plains of Kansas, from having to trust God for their very lives to living for God.”

A panel of Clemon Kaufman, Lee Albrecht, Virgil Ewy, Loretta Voran, and Les Schrag shared memories of their

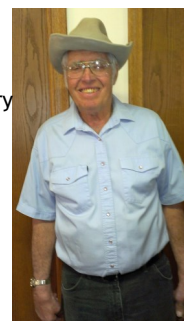


days at church including times when the pastor stopped preaching to admonish the noisy boys or a father walking to where his son was misbehaving and escorting him out by his ear. One remembrance was one of the preachers who spoke eloquently without notes but one time forgot his wife at church. Panel members remembered the outhouses near the church (Women's larger than Men's) and the well with the common cup. Activities would often be scheduled for three times on Sunday; some who lived farther from church would bring Spam sandwiches and eat there rather than drive all the way home before the next event. Women sat on one side of the sanctuary and men on the other in those early years. Women wore hats back then. One story was of a woman sitting on the aisle and an usher walking by and getting his jacket caught on her hat and jerking it off. The audience enjoyed all the stories.

Members remembered Camp Mennoscah starting in 1949 on the West side of the River and picking apples and cherries from the trees there. In 1951, Camp moved to the East side. Church members have been very involved with Camp Mennoscah and give scholarships now so all their kids can attend.

A quartet of Nancy Stucky, Janice Krehbiel, Mary Schwartz, and Chris Coon entertained. Gary Krehbiel impersonated P.R. Kaufman relating leaving Volhynia for the trip to U.S. and the trauma of settling here. Church members served homemade poppyseed rolls, poppyseed cake, bohne beroggi in a cup, cookies and drinks to an appreciative audience.

Gary



Flash drives of the Swiss Volhynian database housed in Brothers Keeper were available for purchase. Kathy Goering demonstrated how to see the Master List of graves of Schweitzers on the www.swissmennonite.org website of Cemeteries at Hopefield, West Zion, Pretty Prairie, Eden, and First Mennonite of Christian.

A Schweitzer Story

Dean had not altogether learned
The language of his new land
When he once was hauling hogs
As he often did to Halstead
In the nineteenth century
In a lumber wagon
Fitted with a metal seat
That after a few hours
Unshapely and unforgiving
Was a punishment on his

So he stopped at a farmhouse
To ask for a pillow
And an English lady
Came to the door
And he panicked
Unable to remember
The English for *pillow*

Excuse me miss
He said I wonder
Could you give me
And for pillow
He said *kisse*

And her cheeks bloomed
And her mouth open
Told him *oh*
Oh no no no he said
Pointing to his head
Not a kisse there
A kisse here
And he pointed
At his rear

—Jesse Nathan Jesse Nathan grew up in central Kansas, and graduated from Moundridge High School. He's working on a PhD in poetry at Stanford. Nathan comes back to Kansas as often as he can, sometimes for longer stretches to work around the farm, read, write, and wink at the stars.

Our People Find a New Home

(continued from last issue) by Alice Suderman

Andreas Schrag's group left Russia in the middle of April of 1873, sailing on the Frisia. In his group were also Jacob Buller, Leonhard Suderman, Tobias Unruh and Wilhelm Ewert. During their three-month stay, they visited Canada, Dakota Territory, Illinois, Minnesota, Nebraska and Kansas. But since they sometimes traveled by twos, not all five members of the group visited each of these places. Exploring the quite undeveloped Midwest was very different for the deputies from the small farm villages they knew in Volhynia. A quote from Tobias Unruh's diary written on the trip, states the following: "The state of Illinois is very hilly. Now and then you can see an isolated farm. It is our desire to settle collectively on farms like in Russia and those isolated farms would hinder this." But over and over as they traveled in various areas, he also writes about how the land would be good for farming—"Dakota Territory has an abundance of good level land suitable for raising wheat and adaptable for all crops."

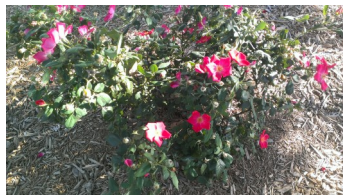
The three groups traveled independently during the first months, but all twelve met at Fargo, North Dakota on June 9, 1873. From there they planned to travel as a group to Manitoba and northern areas of the United States. Accompanied by William Hespeler, Jacob Y. Schantz, and John F. Funk, and railroad representatives, they traveled for four days up the Red River from Fargo to Winnipeg. At the request of the 12 deputies, the journey was halted for a worship service on Sunday which fell on one of these four days. Included in the service were hymns and several sermons.

Leonhard Suderman, in his diary of the deputation trip, tells us that the only deputies who visited Kansas were Wilhelm Ewert and David Buller: July 24: "We now felt that our mission in investigating the various localities to determine the suitability for settlement for our people to be about finished, although Kansas had not yet been thought of, but since the eastern part, which is most suitable for farming, is practically all taken up, this was also dismissed. Now, however, Brother Christian Krehbiel called our attention to Texas and suggested a trip there...Brother Buller and Brother Ewert are favorable to this suggestion...I decided for myself to visit churches eastward...Brother Andreas Schrag decided to go with me." Jacob Buller from Molotschna and Wilhelm Ewert from Prussia then visited Kansas and Texas.

So how did it happen that 5,000 of the 18,000 Mennonites who came from Russia in the 1870's chose to settle in Kansas? (Eight thousand went to Canada, and the other 5,000 scattered to Dakota Territory, Minnesota and Nebraska.) No doubt the fact that Bernhard Warkentin had success in 1873 in growing the Turkey hard red winter wheat which he had brought from Russia was news which surely must have reached the immigrant wheat farmers as they decided where to settle. Warkentin was also represented on the Mennonite Board of Guardians, a committee whose other members, Christian Krehbiel, David Goerz and John F. Funk, were Mennonites who had been in America since the 18th century. This Board gave much assistance to the 12 deputies in 1873 and to the immigrants as they arrived later. They also raised money to help the poverty-stricken families and provided temporary living quarters when they arrived. So Warkentin would have had ample opportunity to tell them about the positive aspects of settling in Kansas.

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Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association
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Online at:
www.swissmennonite.org

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Research Committee:
Maynard and Marlene Krehbiel,
Wayne Goering,
Webmaster: Dennis Quiring
"Only Schweitzer Spoken Here"
Norvin Schrag, Ben Stucky,
Verlene Kaufman, Lorita Regier
Genealogy Advisor: Betty Graber
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2015 Membership dues \$20/year
or \$100 for 6 years. Schweitzer
Salt is sent only to members.

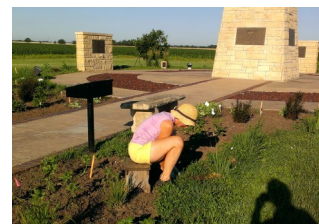


**Major Monument Landscaping Work by
Trustees and Volunteers**

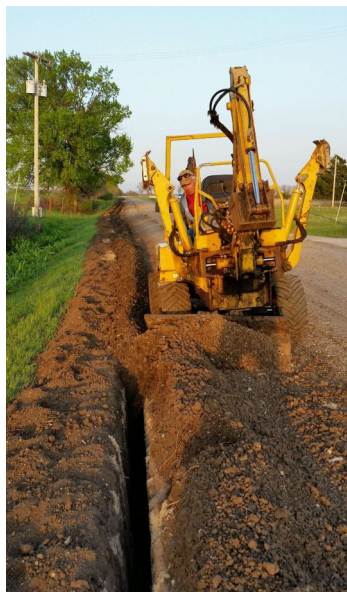


Looks like Grandma's big gardening hat but doesn't
look like Grandma weeding after the big Kansas rains.

Weeding, mulching.
Even one helper from
San Francisco.
Plants are growing!



SIGN PROJECT. SMCHA Board wants to order directional signs to
encourage visitors and friends to come see the Monument, Marker and
the Hopefield Cemetery and to read about the Mennonite ancestors.
About \$1600. Want to help? Send donations to P.O. Box 93,
Moundridge, Kansas 67107. Tax deductible.



Water now
available!!
Trustees added
water line from
Monument on
Aztec Road to
the Hopefield
Cemetery.

