



Schweitzer Salt

Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association

September 2015

SMCHA Banquet on Thursday, October 29, 2015, 6:00 p.m.

Common Threads: Anabaptist and African-American Songs and Stories of Suffering and Hope



“Common Threads” is the program for the Annual SMCHA Banquet to be held at Eden Mennonite Church, 401 18th Avenue, Moundridge KS 67107 on Thursday, October 29, at 6:00 p.m. The cost of the meal is \$20 per person. Reservations are required and may be made by calling 316-371-6189 or emailing kjgo@mtelco.net by Thursday, October 22. All are welcome.

SMCHA members may update their membership and new members may join. Dues are \$20 per year or \$100 for six years paid to Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association.

Come enjoy a wonderful program and be a part of a great organization.

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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.

Schweitzer Salt Editor

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SEEKING CONTRIBUTORS

Super Way to Increase SMCHA Endowment — Match Day 2015 November 5, 2015

On Thursday, November 5, you are invited to match funds from Moundridge Community Foundation with a donation to increase SMCHA endowment fund. The match pool of \$15,000 provided by Moundridge Community Foundation will be divided in proportion to the total amount raised among participating nonprofits (list coming later). Donations (tax deductible) must be made in person at Northridge Community Room between 7 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Thursday, November 5. Cash, checks and credit cards are accepted; checks made payable to Moundridge Community Foundation with MATCH DAY noted in memo line.

Out of town supporters may send donations to Secretary Barbara Stucky, 100 Blake Ave., Moundridge KS 67107; she will deliver them on November 5. A receipt will be sent for each donation. Additional information will be sent to SMCHA members in October.

The 2014 Match Day challenge resulted in over \$7600 added to the SMCHA endowment, thanks to generous friends. November 5, 2015 is another great investment opportunity.

Annual Meeting 2016—April 3, 2016

John McCabe Juhnke, Bethel College professor, recently returned from a sabbatical term in the Ukraine, will be the speaker for the 2016 Annual Meeting on Sunday, April 3, 2:30 p.m., scheduled at First Mennonite Church in Hutchinson, Kansas. Watch for more details.

How can Visitors Find SMCHA Properties? Directional Signs Needed

These days many people are unaware of the properties owned and maintained by the SMCHA organization. Trustees and volunteers have worked hard to make our sites “destination places” - to attract travelers from near and far to come west of Moundridge to read about the immigration from Ukraine at the Monument and visit the Cemetery and the 1943 Marker. Signs will be placed on Arrowhead Road just west of highway 81 and then near to the 18th turn. A large sign is planned on the corner of Aztec Road and 18th Avenue pointing visitors to the Monument and Cemetery. Small signs with

more information will be placed near the Marker and Monument.

Good news. The Moundridge Community Foundation awarded SMCHA \$400 toward the Sign Project. Total estimate for the needed signs is \$1,675.

Will you help with financing signs? SMCHA welcomes contributions to complete the project. Send to Treasurer Clemon Kaufman, Box 156, Pretty Prairie, KS 67570.



This year lettering identifying the SMCHA-owned cemetery has been added to the Hopefield (Hoffnungsfeld) Cemetery Directory Building funded by memorial funds honoring Neva Belle Kaufman Adamson.

Hopefield Cemetery Guidelines on the website

Consider “coming home” as you make your burial plans.

SMCHA Scholarship Awarded to Caley Ortman

A \$1,000 scholarship has been awarded to Caley Ortman, 2nd year student at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary. Caley is working towards Masters of Divinity degree. He states, “My passion is working with youth in a church setting, though an MDiV is a broad degree that will give me the chance to follow whatever path God calls me on in ministry over the course of my life. I am very grateful for the SMCHA scholarship, which allows me to focus on my studies full-time without taking out as many loans.” Salem-Zion Mennonite is his home church, Marion, South Dakota.



Providing scholarship funds for Swiss Volhynian college/seminary students is one of the important goals.

Cemetery Booklets for sale at Banquet

Grandchildren learn about their heritage

After a “lesson” at a visit to the 1943 Marker, Gin Niehage’s grandchildren commented:

Grammy, did you come over on the ship?

It was fun to learn where we are from.

They were trying to get peace from going to war.

Do we know how many we are now?



Why did they come all the way to Kansas rather than stay on the coast?

They spoke German and wanted to keep that.

We have to stand up for what we believe like they did.

Mac Unruh, Isabelle Helling, Caleb Helling, Titus Helling, Jonathan Williams (pointing to the “Goering” on the sign), Eli Williams, Cammi Unruh, Corbin Unruh

Our People Find a New Home (part three)

By Alice Suderman (from a diary of a delegate)

Another individual who may have influenced groups to choose Kansas was Wilhelm Ewert, the deputy from Prussia. He was among the leaders who went to New York to meet the immigrants as they arrived. He, with a group from Prussia, settled near Hillsboro, Kansas, and started the Brudertahl Church there. Jacob Buller, a Molotschna deputy from the village of Alexanderwohl, chose Kansas as well, and established the Alexanderwohl Church at Goessel. These were the two deputies who had visited Kansas with Christian Krehbiel on the deputation tour.

The first Swiss group from Volhynia settled in Dakota Territory under Andreas Schrag’s leadership. They were aided in their choice of location by a man who preceded them to the United States by only nine months, Daniel Unruh. A chance meeting between Andreas Schrag and some of Unruh’s group from Crimea took place as Schrag was departing from the United States as one of the deputies, and Unruh’s group was entering the country. The facts aren’t certain, but through some communication from Daniel Unruh himself or from John F. Funk, who accompanied Unruh to Dakota Territory, Schrag and his group decided to make southeast Dakota Territory their home. In 1874 the area was still Dakota Territory and had not yet become the state of South Dakota. A second group of Swiss under the leadership of Elder Peter Kaufmann also located in Unruh’s area. Also settling in Dakota Territory were the Hutterites and a group of Dutch Volhynians.

But the third and largest group of Swiss under the leadership of Elder Jacob Stucky arrived in the United States in September of 1874. They were met by David Goertz from Halstead, Kansas. As an agent of the Santa Fe Railroad he convinced them that “sunny Kansas would be a better state for them than cold Dakota.” Ten years later about 30 families who had first settled in Dakota Territory made the move from there to Pretty Prairie, Kansas, for the same reason. A large number of Dutch Mennonites from Southern Ukraine and a smaller Dutch group from Volhynia also chose Kansas.

The many unknown faced by our ancestors as they came to America in the 1870’s made the experience a frightening adventure in many ways, but fortunately the reports of the 12 deputies and the experiences of the Mennonites who arrived shortly before 1874, helped erase many questions. And we cannot overestimate the role that the Mennonites who came to North America in the 1600’s and 1700’s played in helping the immigrants from Russia and Prussia as they considered immigrating to North America. John F. Funk, Jacob Y. Schantz, and Amos Herr were some of those leaders. C.J. Dyck reported in his book that the Mennonites living in Ontario and the United States raised over \$100,000 for transportation and settlement costs to help the 18,000 immigrants who came from Russia and Prussia in the 1870’s. Many of those funds were in the form of loans which our people paid off as they became established in North America.

These words of the Psalmist seem as appropriate to the experience of our people as they were to the Israelites for whom they were written: “They cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress. And he brought them to their desired haven.” Psalm 107:19, 30.

Sources consulted: Emil J. Waltner, Banished for Faith (Freeman, South Dakota: Pine Hill Press, 1968). C. Henry Smith, The Coming of the Russian Mennonites (Berne, Indiana: Mennonite Book Concern, 1927). Cornelius J. Dyck, An Introduction to Mennonite History (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Kitchener, Ontario: Herald Press, 1967).

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

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"Only Schweitzer Spoken Here"

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Genealogy Advisor: Betty Graber
Hartzler

2015 Membership dues \$20/year
or \$100 for 6 years. Schweitzer
Salt is sent to members.

Bethel College Fall Fest October 9-10. Low German program this year.

Interested in Research. Potential topics include courtship and marriage customs, Swiss Volhynian involvement in politics, landholding inheritance practices, early elementary schools, mission outreach. What are Swiss Volhynian descendants doing today.... Contact President LaVern Stucky if interested in working on the Research Committee.

Central Kansas Bus Trip August 29, 2015. The Local Sites Tour sponsored by SMCHA on August 29, 2015 proved to be a delightful time for the 56 participants. The weather was great, not hot by August standards, the sky was somewhat overcast and the bus air conditioner worked well.

The tour that wound 173 miles through parts of Marion, Harvey and McPherson counties was designed to show the influence and struggles of the Mennonite people who came to this area in circa 1874. While the emphasis was on the Swiss Volhynians, there was ample coverage of the Ostrager group, the Old Mennonites, the non-Volhynian Swiss Mennonites and others. Included were sites relating to the Indian culture, to the areas of early exploration including discussion of the Santa Fe and Chisholm trails. The focus was both on showing the historical impact and the more current influence these immigrants have had on the area.

Tour guide Brian Stucky charmed the group with his immense knowledge of the area. As a bonus the group was treated to two of the most treasured items of Swiss Volhynian food: poppyseed rolls and karevei. The tour participants seemed well satisfied. Tour number three is planned for April of 2016.

