



# Schweitzer Salt

Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association

February 2022

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## SMCHA Mission:

- \* Collect and disseminate information concerning the spiritual and cultural history of Anabaptists of Swiss Volhynian origin.
- \* Offer financial assistance to qualifying 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.

The Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association's Annual Meeting scheduled for March 13, 2022 has been canceled. At a virtual meeting via Zoom on January 14, 2020, the SMCHA Board determined that in the face of the surging Omicron variant of the Covid 19 Virus the only prudent thing to do was cancel the upcoming SMCHA Annual Meeting. March 13 is almost exactly two years to the day that society began to lockdown because of the newly discovered virus, Covid 19, causing an international pandemic. For the record, our last public meeting was held March 8, 2020 at Bethel College Mennonite Church.

As an organization, we dislike having to do this. We always look forward to meeting with the people who support us. We enjoy visiting and sharing some of the plans that we have for the future. We always enjoy going out to area churches and other venues to get a sense of where our people live and work. However given the statistics that we are exposed to daily, we feel it would be irresponsible to call a public meeting. I do want to publicly thank the SMCHA Board for helping to do what needed to be done during this lockdown and for agreeing to extend their terms in office.

These past two years have been a nightmare, both strange and demanding. Lives have been put on hold because of fear and lack of confidence. We have witnessed varying reactions including acts of love and kindness, acts of terror and hate, acts of envy and greed and acts of unnecessary suffering and death. Death has stalked us all and especially your board as we have lost a member to Covid.

We are hopeful that this pandemic will end soon. We hear theories about how there are signs of the end and ways that it could end, but to date none of them have panned out. We know that pandemics do end. Consider the flu pandemic of 1918 and the Polio pandemic of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The pandemics have ended but the disease has not been eradicated and we are likely looking at the same sort of a scenario for Covid. In the words of Dr Jennifer Scott Koontz, "Pandemics do end. We just don't know when or how."

LaVern Stucky

SMCHA President

## Hard to Read Headstones in Hopefield Cemetery

If you walk through the western one-third of our cemetery you will see some very old headstones. Since this is where some of the first graves were located, some of these earliest headstones are close to 150 years old. Over the years, the Kansas weather and time alone has worn off the writing on some of these headstones to the extent that they have become almost impossible to read. We, the SMCHA trustees, feel that we should try fix this problem some way. To refurbish the headstones would be the most obvious thing to do, but this would be cost prohibitive. We talked with two different monument companies about this, and they both said that making a new headstone would be the most economical way to fix this problem. We have decided to go with the Woolsey monument company in Hutchinson. They will make a small new headstone with just the name and the date of death of the individual that is buried there. Each new headstone will cost about \$250.00. We will not be doing anything to the original stone. It will remain there exactly like it is. The new stone will be placed in front of the old one on a base that is at ground level.

Submitted by Keith Albrecht, Executive Trustee

## SCHWEITZERS IN THE NEWS

Joel Gaeddert received Bethel College's Young Alumnus Award last fall. From the *ThresheReview* Sept. '21: Joel Gaeddert's life since college has centered on turning challenges into opportunities, which has yielded a successful business in a niche market. The Young Alumnus Award recognizes



character and citizenship, achievement or service rendered, and honors and recognition received.

Joel started Flint Hills Design (FHD) in Feb. '08 which originally was to build custom websites. However, that has expanded into building museum exhibits, including traveling exhibits, part-

nering with Kaufmann Museum and Mid America Arts Alliance. Flint Hills Design is the designer of the SMCHA website. Joel is the son of Jim and Kathy (Kaufman) Gaeddert.

### Notes from Around the Green, Winter 2021

- David Stigge Kaufman, St. Louis, was appointed director of clinical training in the Dept. of Psychology at St. Louis University. David, who is board certified in clinical neuropsychology, also maintains a private clinical practice.
- Sydney Stigge-Kaufman, St. Louis, was promoted to executive director of communications and strategic partnerships for the East St. Louis School District.
- Taylor McCabe-Juhnke was named director of the Rural Schools Collaborative of Galesburg, IL.
- Jesse Nathan, Oakland, CA, had poems published in several journals, He is a lecturer in the English Dept. at the Univ. of California-Berkeley, where he is the recipient of a "Poetry and the Senses" Fellowship from the Arts Research Center for 2021-22.
- Sandee Zerger was appointed to the Bethel College Board of Directors, representing the Bethel College Women's Association. Wynn Goering and Dan Flickinger continue on the board.
- The 2002-03 Bethel men's basketball team was inducted into the Athletic Boosters Hall of Fame. The team was the first men's basketball team to represent Bethel at the NAIA Championships. Several Schweitzers were members/coaches of that team.

From the *Bethel ThresheReview* Nov. '21: Brandon Kaufman '08 of Moundridge, Kan., and Peter Miller '08 Newton appeared in the *Washington Post* in an interview by Sarah Kaplan.



"A Recipe for Fighting Climate Change and Feeding the World" looks at sustainable farming practices and their work growing and marketing Kernza™ grain.

Peter Miller, left, and Brandon Kaufman in one of Sustain-a-Grain's Kernza fields. Kaufman is co-founder of Sustain-a-Grain, which recruits growers to

help refine techniques for cultivating Kernza and connects them with buyers interested in purchasing the grain. Jeff is the son of Lynn and Karen (Krehbiel) Kaufman and nephew of SMCHA Treasurer, Clemon Kaufman.

The Heritage Hall Museum & Archives in Freeman, SD has recently completed a redesign allowing them Gallery which will share the faith traditions represented to open a Faith Traditions in the Freeman community. As Marnette (Ortman) Hofer, Executive Director/Archivist says, "This project allows us to focus on a pillar of this community—our faith traditions." Because faith was central to those who immigrated to SD in the late 1800s, it was felt that faith should also be central to the story told at HHM&A.

-Fall 2021 "Headlines", HHM&A Newsletter

If you are receiving this newsletter as a print copy and have an email address, we would appreciate receiving your e-mail address so that we can send the newsletter by email. That would allow you to get news that is sent out occasionally in between issues and it would save printing and mailing costs for the organization. Please send your email address to [deannedks@gmail.com](mailto:deannedks@gmail.com).

We are happy to include obituaries of SMCHA family members in the newsletter. We will also send them by email if you wish to submit them. In order to avoid neglecting some, we will only include those that are submitted to the media chair.

## Calling All Genealogists

Does your genealogy research include Swiss Volhynian Mennonites? Many resources are now available to find information online. Thanks to translations to English and indexing, information about our ancestors is much easier to locate.

Among our Swiss ancestors, I have copied many newspaper articles, found land records where they lived, found much information that other genealogists have shared online, located maps and other information in addition to the wonderful obituaries and occasional pictures that are on "Find a Grave". With the modern genealogy software, it is possible to store in one file not only the factual information, but also pictures, sound recordings, videos, newspaper articles, maps, citizenship records, historical documents and other items that can be photo copied.

Here is what I propose; can we organize a network of a few genealogists interested in researching the Swiss Volhynian Mennonites – maybe one in Pretty Prairie, one in Moundridge, one in Kingman, one in Newton and two or three in Freeman? It is possible for all of us to work on the same database even if we are in different locations. The database would be online and only accessible to those that have permission. It would be Private. Zoom meetings could provide a chance to visit periodically. It is also possible that each individual genealogist could add their own private additions to the database stored on their own computer – some data would be available to other genealogists, and some might not. Part or all of most existing genealogical databases can be combined into one database making it much easier to add information.

Think about the possibilities if you wish to make a large family tree. Another SVM in a distant branch of the family may have already completed significant research on those relatives and is able to easily share the information. Perhaps genealogists in a different location can go to the local courthouse to get additional information saving you a trip. Perhaps they have first-hand knowledge of some event or can get information from a local newspaper that is not online. Or they have pictures – you don't.

Betty Graber Hartzler has been the genealogist for SMCHA for many years. When I mentioned this possibility to her, she was very excited and felt that it was a "wonderful idea". She is willing to share her database for the project.

If you would like to be a member of this team or have a suggestion of someone who would be interested, please send me an email at [Juhnke500@AOL.com](mailto:Juhnke500@AOL.com). Once we are able to put together a group of interested individuals we can discuss the logistics, perhaps over a Zoom meeting. Thanks for any response.

Jerry Juhnke  
920 N Preserve Street  
Wichita, Kansas 67206

**For several years, Dale Schrag, former Bethel campus pastor and director of church relations, volunteered to help raise funds for an endowment for the Mennonite Library and Archives (MLA) on the Bethel College campus. In Summer of 2020, it was announced that the one million dollar goal had been met. Now MLA is encouraging visitors to view the oldest book in its collection, the 1522 edition of the New Testament in Greek and Latin. The half millennium artifact will be on display throughout 2021-22. SMCHA also has an archive box at MLA.**

Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association  
209 Lake Vista Circle  
Hesston, KS 67062



Online at:  
[www.swissmennonite.org](http://www.swissmennonite.org)

#### SMCHA OFFICERS

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#### Genealogy Advisor:

Betty Graber Hartzler

#### Honorary Historian:

James W. Krehbiel

***In order to keep SMCHA a vibrant organization, supporters who believe in SMCHA goals and activities pay annual dues of \$25 per year. We are encouraged when our friends send a donation. Please send dues or donations to Pat Rupp, 2311 Cheyenne Rd, Moundridge KS 67107. Schweitzer Salt is sent to members. We appreciate it when you send information to share.***

## SCHOLARSHIPS

SMCHA is again offering education financial assistance grants to individuals preparing for full-time Christian service, Mennonite ministry, Mennonite Voluntary Service, or other related careers. The maximum grant available is \$1,000 for full-time ministerial students with lesser amounts for part-time students and Mennonite voluntary service participants. Applicants should send a letter of application, and a letter of recommendation from his/her pastor or congregation to the Scholarship Committee, c/o Roger Juhnke, 328 Lakeshore Dr, Newton, KS 67114, or email [rjuhnke@gmail.com](mailto:rjuhnke@gmail.com). The grants are for the 2022-2023 school year. The application deadline is May 30, 2022.

These grants are available to members of the following Swiss-Volhynian churches and to individuals of Swiss-Volhynian descent who may attend elsewhere: Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, KS; First Mennonite Church of Christian, Moundridge, KS; First Mennonite Church, McPherson, KS; First Mennonite Church, Pretty Prairie, KS; Zion Mennonite Church, Moundridge, KS; Kingman Mennonite Church, Kingman, KS; Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman, SD; Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, SD.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- The first incorporators of SMCHA were Harley J. Stucky and Dale M. Stucky.
- The 150th anniversary of Swiss Volhynian Mennonites coming to the U.S. is in 2024. Please share ideas for ways to celebrate with any SMCHA Board Member. You can view the video of the 125th Anniversary celebration in 1999 on the [swissmennonite.org](http://swissmennonite.org) website which shows plowing with horses, cemetery tours, stories of early leaders, speech by Congressman Moran, and much more.
- Stewart Awbrey wrote in the Hutchinson News in March 9, 1971 that “the year before the Mennonites arrived in 1874, wheat production in Reno County totaled 44 bushels. By 1884, a million-bushel crop was reported, most of it turkey red.”