



Schweitzer Salt

Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association



www.swissmennonite.org

August 2025

Annual Banquet to be held on October 18

The Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association will hold their annual banquet on **Saturday, October 18 at the Burrton City Auditorium** (203 N. Burrton Ave) **at 5:00 p.m.** There are handicapped accessible entrances at both the east and the south doors. The banquet will be catered by The Breadbasket from Newton, KS with a traditional German Mennonite meal. The cost of the banquet will be \$25.00. The speaker will be Peter Buller, a recent Bethel College graduate. Music will be provided by Schwisters, a group of Swiss sisters (by family or faith). **Please RSVP to Dave Stucky via email: bigdstucky@gmail.com or text: 620-532-4408 by October 11.** Payment can be made via our website www.swissmennonite.org or at the door on October 18.



Peter Buller to Speak at Annual Banquet

Peter Buller is a 2025 graduate of Bethel College with a degree in Bible & Religion and minors in Music and Peace, Justice, & Conflict Studies. Peter was the recipient of 2025 Thresher Award for his senior seminar entitled The Kingdom Is Among You, Act Upon It: The Kingdom of God in Luke 17:20-37 and Luke 4:14-30, and for his sustained excellence in musical performance on oboe and piano. Peter is currently taking a gap year from studies while living in Independence, MO. and planning a wedding with his fiancée, Emily Guldner. Peter is hoping to work with local Mennonite churches, speak at the SMCHA Annual Banquet, and continue to play the oboe, all before entering seminary at the Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Indiana, next fall. Peter is also a dedicated movie fan and closely follows the Oscar awards race year-round!

Peter will be speaking about his experience this summer at Reba Place in Chicago, connecting with bigger themes about our role as Mennonites in the world. He may also share some of his amazing oboe playing as part of his presentation!



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For information on the Swiss Volhynian Mennonite Genealogical and Historical Project (the G&H Project), please see the following YouTube video by pasting this address in your search engine:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zyEJ57EbH2s>

SMCHA Scholarship Recipient

Katrina Toews has been awarded a 2025 SMCHA scholarship in the amount of \$2000. She is starting her second year in the Journey Program at AMBS. This is a certificate program developing leaders for ministry in local churches and communities. The program is a three year online program that requires some attendance at AMBS in Elkhart, as well as bi-monthly meetings with a mentor.

Katrina is one of the founding members of Western Slope Mennonite Church, an MCUSA church, in Glenwood Springs, Colorado. She is the daughter of Jerry and Leann Toews.

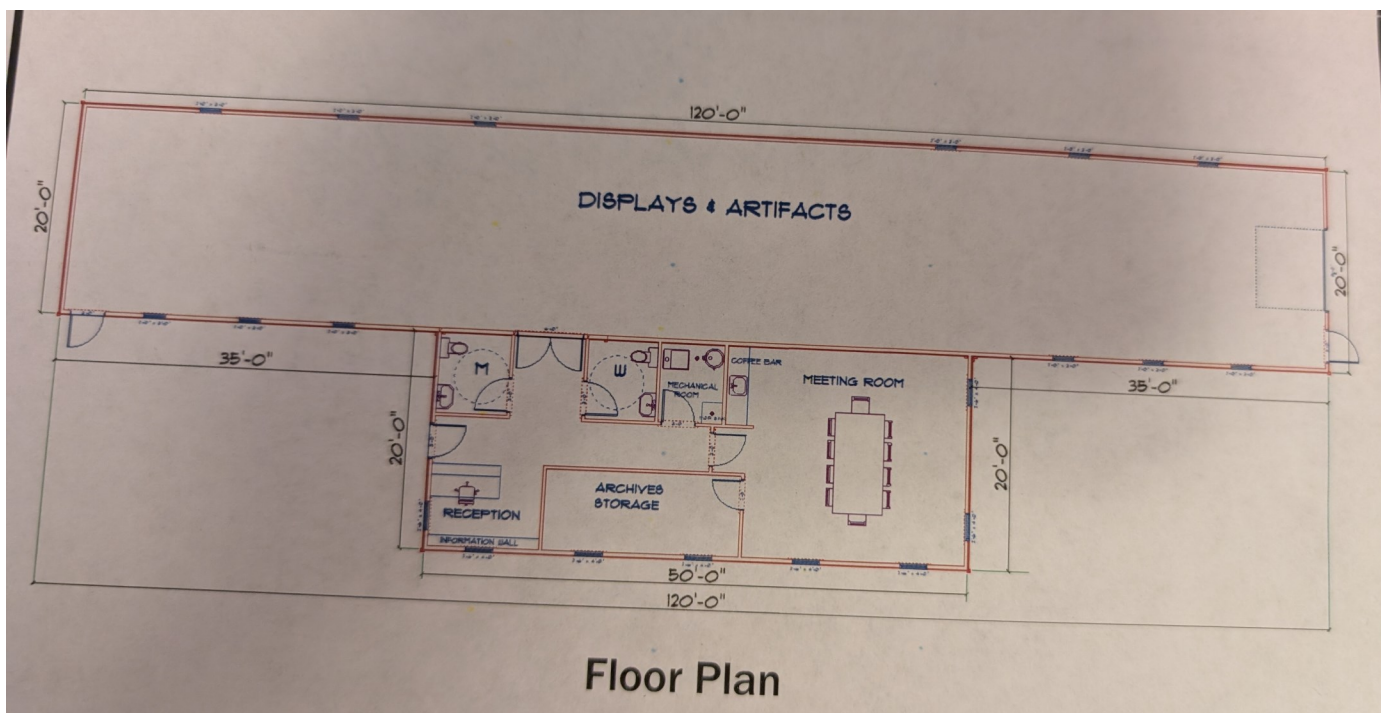
CONGRATULATIONS Katrina!!!!



Check out this sign west of Moundridge in the field by the Moundridge Museum Complex.

The Moundridge Immigrant House now has a facebook page. Like the page to learn more about the plans for this cultural center.

Contact Glen Goering at glenrgoering@gmail.com to learn more about the immigrant house and cultural center. Donations may be given through www.swissmennonite.org.





500th Anabaptist Anniversary - 1525-2025 by David E. Ortman

Whether you subscribe to an Anabaptist single origin or polygenesis theory, 2025 is still the 500th anniversary of revolutionary events coming out of Switzerland, beginning with the January 21, 1525, baptism of George Blaurock (b. 1498) by Conrad Grebel (b. 1491). Much has been written in the past, and more will be written in the future about all this, but what I have found missing to date is a better historical context for events post 1490. Examples: Renaissance (15th -16th Centuries) Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) and Michelangelo (1475-1564) brought high art into the high church at the same time that Anabaptists sought to tear down icons and images. Apparently, their paths never crossed.

Exploration - The late 1400's must have been what the moon landing was to the late 1960s. Columbus began his series of cross-Atlantic trips to discover "India" beginning in 1492. In 1497, John Cabot, an Italian navigator, was financed by the English and reached Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. Between 1519 and 1522, one of Ferdinand Magellan's ships completed a circumnavigation of the globe. In other words, the European world outlook was being expanded a thousand-fold, but none of this is reflected in the 1527 Schleitheim Confession. In fact, one might ask when Anabaptists stopped believing in a flat earth.

Social Issues-Between 1491 and 1519, Jews were expelled from Ravenna (1491), Castile and Aragon(1492), Sicily (1493), Portugal (1496), Navarre (1498), Nuremberg (1498), Naples (1510), Dubrovnik(1515), and Regensburg (1519). Inquisitions to root out heresies were also prevalent before the first Anabaptist martyr. Slavery has a biblical basis. The Portuguese reached Brazil in the 1500s and soon set up a slave trade by 1502. John Horsch's book, *Mennonites in Europe*, mentions that at a debate called by the Council of Bern in Zofingen in 1532, the Swiss Brethren condemned slavery. What other impact this had on a small band of Anabaptists during the early 1500's is unknown, yet in 2005, researchers from the University of Lausanne concluded that Swiss citizens were involved in 1.5% of financing the transfer of some 11 million slaves to the New World, mostly in the 1700's. Anabaptists apparently did not leave much of an imprint against such practices. Between 1519-21, Cortes was taking over Mexico with its resulting horrors.

Politics and Religion-With the beginning of Gutenberg's printing press in the 1440s (a sort of Internet of the day), information concerning political events outside of Switzerland must have been circulating. But what effects they had on Anabaptists 500 years ago is perplexing. For example, in England, Henry the VIII reigned from 1509-1547. In the 1520's when his first wife bore him only a daughter and no sons, he began plotting for a divorce, which required a dispensation from the Pope and ultimately resulted in the breakaway Church of England. In 1505, Basil III became Czar of Russia. Selim I became Ottoman Sultan in 1512 and conquered Syria in 1516 and Egypt in 1517. Sweden seceded from the Scandinavian Union in 1523. Meanwhile, in 1527, imperial troops of the Holy Roman Empire attacked and invaded Rome, causing the then current Pope Clement VII to flee the Vatican. It was a tumultuous time to say the least.

Science-Between 1500-1523 a number of scientific discoveries were made and scientific research books published, such as the 1500 Map of Juan de la Cosa showing the Americas and da Vinci proposing that fossil shells of marine animals are found on mountains because areas once submerged become exposed. In 1510, Peter Henlein of Nuremberg makes the first mechanical clock. In 1517, German surgeon Hans von Gersdorff published a "Field Book of Surgery". Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543) was also undertaking important scientific research as a mathematician, astronomer, physician, and economist. Some Anabaptists were exposed to science. For example, Pilgrim Marpeck was a mining engineer in Rattenberg, Austria. and from 1528 to 1532 served as a timber supervisor in Strasburg, France, before being expelled due to his Anabaptist activities. Still, there has been too little exploration of how world events of the early 1500's shaped, or failed to shape, Anabaptist formation, just as there has been too little exploration of how the 21st century is shape-shifting Anabaptists today – a priesthood of all believers who do not all believe the same things.

* David E. Ortman is a Seattle attorney. He is a graduate of Freeman (S.D.) Academy ('71), Freeman Jr. College ('73), and Bethel College ('75). From 1975-1980 he served in Mennonite Voluntary Service in Seattle and Washington, D.C.



SMCHA

Send articles, ideas for articles, or requests to be added to the mailing or email list to Kathy Preheim at kathypreheim@gmail.com

The next deadline for articles is: October 3, 2025.

Please share Schweitzer news and events with others to expand our readership.

Check out our updated website www.swissmennonite.org for news and articles of interest. Thanks to Jenny Schrag for her work!



Glen Goering, Director of Development

Immigrant House Cultural Center and Museum Update

Glen Goering, currently serving as the Director of Development for the Moundridge Immigrant House Cultural Center & Museum project, reported at the SMHCA Annual Meeting March 9: We have been working with the Immigrant Cultural Center project for most of the past year and a half and can finally share that through the generosity of the Jenkins family, we have acquired the three acre property just West of the Moundridge Museum Complex. If the location sounds familiar, it should. This is where all our 150th anniversary agriculture events were performed and where we raised our Turkey Red Wheat. With the deed to this property legally registered, the Task force is proceeding to finalize the architectural footprint and design of the structure and grounds.

Since the annual meeting, the Immigrant House Project received a grant to be used for the start-up fees for the first year, including but not limited to land acquisition, title and surveying as well as professional, legal and architectural design fees. With the design phase nearly complete, we are moving into the fundraising phase of this valued project.

A sign has been erected on the site of the future cultural museum by the Task Force. The new Immigrant House Cultural Center will focus on cultural aspects of the immigrants' history as they settled in the community and how they impacted the area.

The purpose of this project is to create an Immigrant House Cultural Center and Museum to preserve for future generations the history and story of the Mennonite, Holdeman and other faith groups.

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P.O. Box 93
Moundridge, KS 67107