

# OMHGS Newsletter

OREGON MENNONITE HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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## Rewards of "Tunneling Through"

The story my dad, Ira Evers, told of the building of the road from Eugene, Oregon west through Elmira and Noti, headed to the coast, reminds me of the account of two cousins in search of their families.

There were mountains, the Coast Range, between the valley and the beach. To get through, the engineers began to dynamite and dig from either side of the mountain. After many months, the engineers came through. They had blasted, dug, and tunneled to find that they were within inches of each other to clear an opening to make the way for transportation and the railroad to go through.

It was in 1987, at age 37, that Suzy Shondell became curious about her mother's family, having lived her entire life thus far not knowing any of them. She began her search at her city library, looking in Oregon telephone directories for people with names the same as her mother's maiden name. She took addresses and sent out a dozen letters. Rewarded by one answer, she continued her search.

Suzy also joined the Mennonite Historical Society and found out about her great-grandfather, Benjamin Franklin Hamilton, who she learned had served as Bishop in Mennonite churches in Kansas. Pursuing this lead, she sent a letter to the Pleasant Valley Church at Harper, Kansas, not knowing that another great-granddaughter of B. F. Hamilton, Hannah Hamilton, is a member. The letter was passed to Hannah, and correspondence with Suzy gave information and encouragement to continue on.

In December 1987 Suzy and her husband, David, brought Suzy's mother, Martha, to her hometown over thirty-eight years after she had left home,

which was just three days after the funeral of her father, Emanuel Good. Martha's sister, Minnie, and brother John still lived in the home Martha left. Minnie had always had faith to believe Martha would return, and very little was removed or changed in her room in thirty-eight years.

When Martha came home, Minnie said, "I told you Martha would come home." Thirty-eight years earlier Martha left for Bellingham, Washington and there married a pen pal. They had three children, Susan, Rose and Robert. Later, when the youngest was in his teens, the parents divorced. Martha remarried and in 1981 her second husband died. She then moved to Sacramento, California to be near her eldest daughter Suzy.

On the other side of the "tunnel," challenged by a cousin raised in India who wanted to know her cousins, Viola Evers Nisly started pursuing the B.F. Hamilton family history.

In November, 1989, in a visit to a cousin, John Hamilton in Newton, Kansas, Viola learned that Martha Good had been located. Not certain how or where, information would be forthcoming.

On returning home to Oregon, while visiting with Wilma Shenk Nisly, Viola learned about Martha's return in 1987 and again in 1988 and 1989, and that Wilma had the address of Martha's daughter Suzy. What excitement! I, Viola, could hardly wait to get the address and when received, sent a letter and immediately had a response. Within two weeks Suzy and David were in Sheridan, Oregon.

Now that the "tunnel" is open, members of the B. F. Hamilton clan are planning, the Lord willing, to come together in July when cousins can meet cousins to share in our heritage ... stories from Alexander Hamilton down through seven and eight generations.

Viola Evers Nisly

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## Lane County Amish Mennonite Congregation

Edited excerpts from its history  
by Viola Evers Nisly



Why did people leave families, church, fertile farms and established communities to come to Oregon? What drove them to take the risk of pioneering? Has the grass always looked better on the other side of the fence?

Beginning in 1877, Amish Mennonites and Mennonites from many states and differing backgrounds moved to Lane County. Two of the first three families to buy land there, in the spring of 1887, had reportedly been Old Order Amish when they moved to Oregon within the previous ten years. Levi J. Yoder and Benedict Miller bought bordering properties near the small communities of Cheshire and Franklin, northwest of Eugene, and Peter Christner's eighty acres was only a few miles away. Later these families moved to the Oak Hill area west of Eugene. Also in 1887, the Solomon L. Miller family took up a homestead on the Long Tom River farther west of Eugene, near Elmira. The Millers had not lived long on their homestead in the woods when their house burned down on March 20, 1889.

Other families as well as single men moved to the area. Young Ben Emmert, eighteen years old, settled near Eugene in 1888 and was baptized in 1891. He came from LaGrange County, Indiana. In 1895 he was married to Anna Schrag of the Russian Mennonite community in the same general area west of Eugene.

Peter Christner, among the first to move to Lane County, is regarded as the first Amish Mennonite bishop in Oregon, having been ordained bishop by Jonathan Smucker of Indiana. For a time he had



charge of the Lane County congregation and as late as October 1895 he performed the marriage ceremony of Levi Yoder and Katie Roth. But it appears that he did not take an active leadership role in the congregation after 1889, the year J.D. Mishler moved to Lane County.

By 1889 the J.P. Stutzman family lived near Junction City, north of Eugene. That same year J.D. Mishlers moved from Hubbard, where they had lived only a year. Both Stutzmans and Mishlers were from Indiana.

At first the people met in homes to worship, but by 1890 they were using a church building, probably one at Oak Hill formerly used by the United Brethren. In January 1890, J.D.'s twin brother, Peter D. Mishler from Marion County, came to Eugene to preach "three very interesting and edifying sermons to our little band," wrote the correspondent. At that time there were six families, "without a minister." Mishler continued to travel the ninety miles to Eugene as often as once a month to preach to the group, until he moved there in 1892. It seems that Christner's ordained status was not accepted by the Mishlers and perhaps others, although he was called on at times to perform marriages. His years in Lane County must have been difficult ones for him, if one may read between the lines. In addition to his ordained status receiving little recognition, his wife died on January 30, 1898. After Christner moved back to the Hubbard area, he sometimes preached for the C.B. Steiner Swiss Mennonite congregation there.

By 1891 there was a "a newly organized church" with everything in peace and harmony, "as much as we can expect for so many people from different places," a Lane County resident wrote to Herald of Truth. That year the people began a Sunday school. The first



superintendents were J.D. Mishler, Jonathan Yoder, L.J. Yoder, and Abe Miller, each serving three months. At one time it was spoken of as a Union Sunday school. The next year, for \$150, they purchased a house of worship, probably the one they had been using since 1890 or before. The Sunday school was held year round until the winter of 1896, when for the first time it was closed, but they hoped to start again in early spring.

By the end of 1891 others arrived, including Alex I. Miller, a bachelor in his thirties, from Holmes County, Ohio; the Jonathan Yoder family of Brown County, Kansas; Jacob Nussbaum from Portland; H.B. Miller; Frank Burck; and my grandfather John Hamilton, who homesteaded west of Elmira. He came as a single young man and met and married Mary Berkey, step-daughter of C.I. Kilmer who also came about that time.

In 1892 minister Peter D. Mishler from Woodburn, Oregon, moved to Lane County, as did the Nicolas Strubhar and Levi Hershberger families; and my grandparents, Moses D. and Nancy (Culp) Evers from Elida, Ohio.

Mose and Nancy Evers probably came to the Elmira area because there was a Mennonite congregation there. (Actually, it was Amish Mennonite, but it seems that distinction was not always emphasized in new communities in the west.) Nancy's parents had made a couple of trips west to California and on returning to Ohio he remarked, "If I were a young man I wouldn't stop east of the Rocky Mountains." Grandpa Mose Evers bought a large book, about 16x20x3 inches, about Oregon. It had a fold-out page with information about the Oregon territory and weather information. As my father, Ira Evers, recalled, his father Mose said that studying the book helped him decide to move.

When Mose told his father-in-law, David Culp, of his decision, David said, "I didn't give you Nancy to drag off to Oregon." Nevertheless, Mose and Nancy Evers did move to Lane County, Oregon. C.I. Kilmer went to Eugene to meet the train when the Evers couple arrived from Ohio. It was raining so hard they could not go to Elmira for most of a week and Mose wanted to go back to Ohio. But Nancy said, "Oh, no, you wanted to come and now we're staying."

In the few years of this congregation's existence, people from Indiana, Ohio, Illinois, Kansas, Arkansas, Minnesota, and perhaps elsewhere participated in its life. They were both of recent immigration and families long established in America, of various Old Order Amish, Amish Mennonite, and Mennonite communities. Other names included Benjamin Hamilton, Charlie Hamilton, Christian and Lena (Roth) Nafziger, Frank Schultz, Eli and James Hamilton, Noah Eash, Enos Miller, Ezra Burkholder, Joseph B. King, Christian J. Schlabach, and Isaac Slabaugh.

But it seems that the settlers clearly considered their church to be Amish Mennonite, and visiting leaders from the Western District Amish Mennonite Conference provided bishop oversight and direction, for a time, at least. When bishop Joseph Schlegel of Milford, Nebraska; minister Jacob Roth of Thurman, Colorado; and J.M.T. Miller of Milford, Nebraska, representing the Evangelizing Board, visited Oregon in 1893, they spent several weeks in Lane County, filling appointments at Oak Hill and also one for the Russian Mennonites who lived nearby. Schlegel baptized seven converts at the inlet of Clear Lake, officiated at a communion service, and ordained Peter D. Mishler as bishop, J.D. Misher as minister, and Levi J. Yoder, their half-brother-in-law, as deacon.

P.D. Mishler was suffering from cancer when he moved to Lane County, but after eight weeks away for treatment, he seemed better and resumed his ministerial duties. However, he died on January 23, 1894. Almost two years later, bishop Schlegel returned. After spending ten days with the Lane County congregation late in 1895, he ordained L.J. Yoder as minister and J.D. Mishler as bishop.

Lane County, like the rest of the country, suffered an economic depression following the Panic of 1893. In addition, farming in Lane County required different methods than people brought with them from their former homes, and some of them settled on poor farmland. Some of the men worked by day in Eugene, on the railroad, at carpenter work, at a rock crushing plant, or elsewhere. Chris Christner lost a hand by falling into a brick machine and Jacob Berkey lost his right hand by a circular saw in a mill. One of the members bought a sawmill, a source of financial problems that had serious, long lasting effects on the congregation.

In spite of the hardships many endured, J.D. Mishler wrote consistently glowing reports of the country, the crops, the climate. In short, he pictured Lane County as an ideal place to live and farm. Some of his fellow settlers thought he exaggerated the claims. At the height of the sawmill controversy, C.I. Kilmer warned Herald of Truth readers "not to buy or trade for land in Oregon without seeing it." L.J. Yoder, while claiming to take a more middle position, also wrote cautions about the glowing reports.

Not all the families lived in the area at the same time. Some moved in while others moved out. Although scattered in several places, in general they were grouped in two communities. Some lived in the Oak Hill-Fern Ridge area about six miles west of Eugene.



Others lived about ten miles farther west, near Elmira. Because of distances, the congregation met regularly every two weeks at Oak Hill and once a month in a schoolhouse near the Long Tom River, in the timber country where the Elmira people lived.

About 1895 Alex Miller donated land approximately eleven miles west of Eugene, along the Siuslaw and Eugene Stage Road, somewhat centrally located between Oak Hill and Elmira. The people expected to begin work on a meetinghouse there late in 1895, but undried lumber and insufficient funds contributed to a delay. It was the fall of 1896 or perhaps 1897 before the meetinghouse was completed. Mose Evers donated the hardware for the building and Levi J. Yoder built the church benches.

Within the congregation there were tensions, over dress, whether to use German or English, and differences concerning business ethics. Many young people did not stay with the Mennonite family.

As early as 1891, on one occasion, there had been an English service in the morning and a German one in the afternoon. Apparently, by 1897 English had become the standard language, but perhaps it was visiting ministers who used German and brought forth comment from Mose Evers. "These meetings were conducted differently from my understanding," he wrote, "for it was all German and I am English. I waited patiently and murmured not as the poet admonished us to do. I enjoyed myself in seeing that others were enjoying themselves."

It appears that the Isaac Slabaugh family were the last ones to move to the area. They were Old Order Amish people coming from Brewster, Minnesota, arriving September 28, 1897. By then families were scattering, and by 1898 only two remained in the Lane County. Soon only the Mose Evers family remained. He said, "I didn't leave

the church. The church left me." He maintained relationships with the Mennonite Church as long as he lived, contributing periodically to church papers and welcoming Mennonite ministers to his home for times of worship or for communion services. The Evers family attended the Baptist and later the Christian Church in the Elmira community.

The congregation had a membership of about fifty, at most. When J.D. Mishler included a small group at Hubbard, he noted that brought the Oak Hill membership to near seventy. The new meetinghouse, used hardly a year, was sold to a school district and used for years as a school. Mose Evers hauled the furniture to Eugene on a wagon, then sent it by rail to Hubbard for the church there. As late as 1976 a few of the benches were in use in the basement of the Hopewell Church. I, Viola Evers Nisly, now have one of the benches at my home. When the Albany Mennonite Church bought a building, the Hopewell congregation refunded to them \$50.00 of the money received from the sale of the Lane County meetinghouse. Many years later, the school district sold the building to a church group. The old building still stands beside the old road, now called Jeans Road, a short distance west of the Fern Ridge Reservoir.

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(Sources: 1) Information from and draft of a history by Hope Lind, including Herald of Truth, interviews and other sources; 2) my father, Ira Evers)



## Evers Family History

Presented by Nancy Evers Widmer,  
written by her sister Laura Evers Weaver

My father, Moses Daniel Evers, was born at Harrisonburg, Virginia, January 17, 1867. He lived there until he was 16 years old. His father died when he was 54 years old, leaving the mother with 6 children to support. My father was 11 years old and the youngest of the sons. His brother, Perry, being the oldest, took over the farm work. There were four boys. All did their part. The two girls worked for neighbors and helped support the family. His brother, David, went to Ohio and found work there. He wrote to Moses to come to Ohio as there was more work there and lots of pretty girls. It took much talk to persuade his mother to let him go. He went at the age of 16 and worked on farms. He also kept an eye open for those pretty girls.

We children always called our father papa. That is how I will refer to him. He went to a night school and learned Spencerian penmanship. He was a good writer and wrote many letters.

He somehow persuaded his brother David's pretty girl, Nancy Culp, to be his best friend. His brother may have wished Moses had not come to Ohio. He worked for David Culp for several years before he and Nancy were married March 8, 1888. They started their married life at Elida, Ohio, on a farm. Their first baby, a boy, John David, arrived January 9, 1889. He was a welcome addition to the family. That summer his mother became ill with typhoid fever and could no longer nurse the baby. He was put on cow's milk which did not agree with him. He died September 22, 1889. On October 16, 1890, they had a baby girl, Dorothy Magalene. As time went by another baby came, a girl, Cora Catherine. For some reason when she was eight months old they left Ohio, had a sale, and moved to Eugene, Oregon. Why they moved to Oregon I do not know. It may have been that they had read about the Mennonite Church in the Herald of Truth. The paper is now called the Gospel Herald. They wrote to Oregon and were sent pictures of cows standing deep in grass. When they arrived they found out the grass was fern. They had many disappointments about the move. Papa thought they must go back home. Mama said, "We have nothing to go back to." He was so homesick he was afraid he would die. Then he was afraid he wouldn't. Mama had heard that dish rag tea was a cure for homesickness so she washed her dish rag and made him some tea. I'm not sure that helped, but something did. They stayed.



Soon there was church difficulty. The members began to leave. First one family, then another. They, my folks, moved from the Eugene area in 1897 to Elmira. They rented a farm home from Robert Trout. On March 29 of 1898 a son was born, Ira Samuel. Papa had to work away from home and had miles to walk to get home for weekends, then had to walk back early Monday or Sunday PM. At one time he had 16 miles to walk to work. Mama could hear bears eating the fallen cherries near the house at night. She was there alone with three little ones.

When my oldest sister started to school she could talk and understand only Pennsylvania Dutch. She had to learn English. None of the rest of us was taught Dutch.

We moved from that place in 1899, and on August the 2nd, 1900, another baby was born, Laura Anna. When she was 22 months old she was 22 inches tall and weighed 22 pounds. That place was much larger, and we had 10 or 12 cows. Papa was home most of the time. He worked away some, but was home at night. That place was owned by a Mr. Esch. The rent was \$60.00 a year. Mama brought her sewing machine along and made the girls' clothes and the boys and papa's shirts.

In 1903 a baby girl arrived August 14. She was like a pretty little dolly. My grandpa and grandma Culp came when she was three days old. Papa met them at Eugene and told them to think up a name for the new baby. When they saw her grandma said Nancy and Grandpa said Jane. The baby had a name. We had fun with grandpa and grandma. We all helped with the work there as soon as we were old enough. We had large gardens and we learned to use the hoe at an early age.

March 28, 1906 another baby came, Irvin Dewitt. We girls were happy to have a second brother. He also learned to help with the work. There were cherries to pick to sell. The children could do very well at that. The hogs had the privilege of running under the cherry trees to eat the fallen ones. Once Laura was up on a ladder, and a big hog walked under it taking the ladder. The screams soon brought papa on the run to rescue her hanging in the tree. He stayed close by after resetting the ladder.

We walked to school a distance of three miles. No one ever heard of a school bus. At one place in the road near Long Tom River and not far from the Fred Walters saw mill the water came over the road to quite a depth. We children drove to school in the winter, and one day the water looked quite deep. Ira and Cora sat on the seat of the buggy. Laura and I on a board across the bed at their feet. Cora and Ira decided to try getting across. It was a distance of 50 feet or more. The horse, old Cuba, about the middle began to swim. The water came over the buggy bed. We all had to sit. We did get across and went on to school. The teacher tried to help us partially dry out and emptied our shoes of water. We went home via a longer way that night and did not go through the water a second time. We stayed home several days until the rain let up and the water went down from the road. It was the overflow of the Long Tom River backed up by the logs that were floated to the saw mill.

My folks had company from Ohio and Virginia. The Suter cousins came from Virginia. My grandma Evers was a Suter. One year some were coming and we had no meat. Mama didn't know how she could cook with no meat. Papa had walked to Elmira, a distance of three miles. As he was going home he saw a deer swimming in the mill pond toward two logs at the edge of the pond in a V shape. The wind was in the opposite direction. He stood at the V of the logs and when the deer started to climb up he held it by the horns and cut its throat with his pocket knife. He got it home and mama said, "You killed it out of season." Now he was in trouble. He dressed it out and the next day he took a roast and went to the home of the constable who was Ross Huston that year. He said, "Ross, I have transgressed the law. I'm in trouble." Ross said, "Now, Mose, what have you done?" "I killed a deer out of season." Ross said, "How was it coming, Mose?" Papa said, "Straight at me." Ross said, "That was self defence." Papa gave him the roast, and all was well.

Papa was buying some land a mile from where we lived, nearer Elmira. He built a barn on it, and the house was yet to be built. An acre of land was given for a school house just across the fence from the barn, so he changed the place for the house. That meant the barn would have to be moved. That was done before the house was started. Jim Richardson helped do it with a stump puller using skids under it. Next came the building of the house.

We hired a carpenter, Sam Brower, to help, but before that he, with help, sawed the large pine trees on the place he had bought and hauled them to the Huston Brothers saw mill. They sawed them for half of the lumber. When he had enough lumber to make the house that he and Sam Brower had planned, they began building. Farm work had to be done where we lived, the cows milked and grain cut. We all helped, and at the grain thrashing time the house building had to wait. Only what the carpenter could do alone was done. We children, usually Laura and I, carried a warm lunch to the carpenter and papa each day. It was a long summer and didn't go nearly as fast as they do now. The day finally came in January of 1913 that papa and mama decided it was time to move. He had built some small buildings on runners. He moved them first. A shop, a smoke house, a separator house, and a toilet. He hitched the team on them one at a time and pulled them to the other place and set them at the location best suited. The neighbors along the way and the ones he met on the road all stopped to visit with him as he drove along with his buildings. He had to build a woodshed after we moved.

On November 16, 1910, baby Roy Daniel arrived. He was the last one of the babies. We all had fun helping to care for him. Mama was a grandma when he arrived as my oldest sister was married December 1st, 1909, and she had a baby girl in October of 1910.

There was much work to do at the new place. Land had to be cleared of oak stumps. That was done after school and on Saturdays. We went to school near where we lived then. It was on what is known as the Evers Road now.

In October of 1914 papa began talking of going to Virginia. He just had to go home once again. He made plans to go the last part of November. He borrowed money from Wesley Inman for his train ticket and headed home. He had a wonderful two months' stay at home. He also visited in Ohio with the relatives there. His brother, David, lived there. He had found him another pretty girl and was married October 4, 1888. Years later he and mama went a few times to visit in Virginia and Ohio. In 1925 they spent part of the summer there. Their son, Isa, and wife lived in their house while they were gone. My brother, Dewitt, was hurt while loading logs on a truck. Our folks came home at once, arrived several days before he died September 27.



While living near Eugene when they first came to Oregon, papa worked for a Mr. Traxler. He, Mr. Traxler, had married a city girl from Eugene. One of their hens had hatched a brood of chicks, and they began to die. Mr. Traxler asked his wife if she was feeding them enough. Her reply was, "Doesn't the mother give enough to keep them alive?" Papa worked for 10¢ a day while there.

After the people of the Mennonite Church all left, we attended the Baptist Church and the Christian Church, finally attending the Christian Church or Church of Christ as it is now called.

We children all grew up, as children do, and left home. Papa and mama grew older. In March of 1938 they had their 50th wedding anniversary. All the children were home that day. It was a beautiful day. All the grand children were there but one who was ill. Many neighbors were at an evening meeting held at the grange hall at Elmira.

Our folks continued to live in their home after we were all gone. Roy, my brother, lived not far from them. Papa had a lovely orchard he had planted and many kinds of grapes. They had a good garden. He collected Indian artifacts. They are now in a museum in Eugene. Some were stolen before being taken to the museum.

They finally were not able to care for themselves. Dorothy and Cora, my older sisters, were with them a while, and they had them taken to the Mennonite Home at Albany. They were there two weeks when papa died of thrombosis. The day of his funeral Roy asked mama what she was going to do, and she said, "I'm going home with Laura." She was there from May 1955 until February 21st, 1958, which was the day she died.

They had many trials and tribulations, ups and downs, but for every down there was an up. Each time papa would have a down time, mother would always say, "We've always been provided for, and we shall always be."

Their 67th anniversary was March 8th, 1955. It was May of that year they went to the Mennonite Home at Albany. Papa was 88 when he passed away and mama was 89.

We have many happy memories of our years at home. The work we did was not child labor but a labor of love.

## **News and Announcements**

LIBRARY CATALOGING and processing has taken place on several occasions in the past few months. Persons helping librarian Marj Nofziger were Charity Kropf, Hope Lind, Mary Landis, Margaret Shetler, Martha Yoder, Al Nofziger, and Perry Schrock.

THE OMHGS PERMANENT LIBRARY and Archives will be located in the new Chapel Building planned for the campus of Western Mennonite High School near Salem, OR. Groundbreaking for the new chapel will be on April 8, 1990. The library now is temporarily located in the home of Al and Marj Nofziger, 777 Binshadler St., Lebanon, OR. Call ahead to (503) 451-4868 for appointment if you wish to visit.

THE NEW OMHGS BROCHURE will be available shortly with up-to-date information on the Society and its benefits for members. It is a good means of informing others about OMHGS. There is a Form for Membership included. It helps explain the purpose and the goals of the Society.

OMHGS WILL HAVE BOOTHS at the Western Mennonite School Auction on Saturday, May 5, 1990, at the State Fairgrounds in Salem; and at the Pacific Coast Conference of the Mennonite Church, June 15 to 17, 1990. Books and items will be on display. Plan to stop by and visit us!

SWEET HOME CONGREGATION ANNIVERSARY will be held on Sunday, April 29, 1990, at the church. More information can be had by calling (503) 367-2848. They are planning to bring together as many people as possible whose lives have been touched thru contact with the church. Orie Roth, a former pastor, will be one of the special guests. There will be morning and afternoon services, with a potluck meal. An interesting program is planned with music, reflections on the past by current and past members, slide presentation, and good fellowship.

THE MENNONITE BRETHREN CHURCH OF DALLAS will celebrate their 100th Anniversary on the first weekend of August, 3rd to 5th, 1990. More information can be had by calling the church at (503) 623-3384. The actual 100th anniversary date represents the presence of Mennonite Brethren in the Polk County area.

THE OREGON GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY will have a Research Sources meeting on Saturday, March 31, 1990 at Wesley United Methodist Church, 1385 Oakway Road, Eugene, OR. The Society's address is P.O. Box 10306, Eugene, OR. 97440-2306.

TYPING OR EDITING TALENTS could be used by the OMHGS Newsletter. Contact the Editor or Chairperson if you could give some time. Phone numbers are 364-1669, or 344-5974.

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# Executive Committee Highlights

(Copies of full minutes available for interested persons)

Minutes of Executive Committee meetings over the past several months include these items:

- Marj Nofziger and Charity Kropf began cataloging the books in the OMHGS library.
- The Spring 1990 meeting will feature the Albany congregation and the Widmer family. The Fall 1990 meeting will tentatively feature the Hopewell congregation history, and the Mishler family.
- The value of membership, for tax purposes, was discussed. It provides \$4.00 per membership for the Newsletter, and \$3.00 for library use. Thus any fee paid over \$7.00 is tax deductible. A non-member library use fee of \$3.00 was agreed on. Members can use the library free, however no books may be checked out.
- A logo contest was announced. Kathy Passmore, Karl Birky, and Mae Etta Kennel were asked to judge the entries. Mae Etta may decide to enter the contest, and in that case, another judge will be chosen.
- The Hopewell congregation history will be presented by Howard King. Contacts still need to be made to find someone to do the Mishler family history. These both will be for the Fall 1990 meeting.
- Time at several meetings was given to the preparation of the IRS Form 1023 for tax-exempt status.
- Over one hundred copies of the recent promotional letter were sent out to interested persons. There have been a number of responses to these.
- A letter will also be prepared to send to other Mennonite historical and genealogical societies. It will inform them that we no longer send the Newsletter to non-members, but we would like to exchange newsletters with them, if they wish.
- Work will continue on processing and cataloging our library holdings.
- Time was spent preparing a budget for 1990 and 1991.
- Memberships and non-member contributors by date January 5, 1990 were 40. Several more have been received since that. Dues and contributions from those 40 were \$625.00.
- Form 1023 was mailed to the IRS in Los Angeles on January 13, 1990.

## Report of Fall 1989 Meeting

Perry Schrock led the meeting, and Margaret Shetler conducted the devotional.

Re-elected for a two year term as Vice-Chair was John Fretz, and Margaret Shetler was newly elected to a two year term as Secretary, replacing Dan Widmer.

Hope Lind, Chair, noted that the executive committee earlier had appointed Marj Nofziger as Librarian. She has agreed to serve a term through 1992.

It was announced that the Pacific Coast Conference (MC) will provide space in the new Chapel Building now in planning, on the campus of Western Mennonite High School near Salem, for OMHGS library and other holdings.

Approval was given to the recommendation presented at Pacific Coast Conference (MC) last June, which allows OMHGS to organize, administer and operate future archives and historical library and that it be the custodian of present archival materials.

About 60 persons attended the meeting, several sharing items of interest and historical significance after the two main presentations; these were the history of the early congregation in the Elmira area, and the history of the Evers family.

### Letters and Queries

Enclosed is my membership for OMHGS. Also enclosed are my lineage charts for Mrs. Erma Neufeld. I was thrilled to find Trincke Becker .... in her article on The Becker Family. I would be glad for additional information on the Beckers, as well as Decker, Wedel, Buller, Richert, Schmidt, Ratzlaff, and Thoms, where my lineage ends or is blank.

- Neva Lou Hershberger  
1114 - 7th Avenue, Wellman, IA 52356

I was wondering if you might be able to help me locate any of the Mast family in Oregon, who are descended from John Mast of North Carolina .... brother of Bishop Jacob Mast of Penna.

- Edward A. Stoltzfus  
RD #1, Box 208A, Selingsgrove, PA 17870

I would like a copy of your September 1989 Newsletter, and to find out how to become a member/subscriber.

I'm most interested in Mennonites in Polk County (OR) and especially the old North Dallas MB Church. I have a picture which may be of some of this group in the early teens of this century.

I am also researching one branch of the Ratzlaff family in

Prussia, Poland, and America (especially Oregon), the Giesbrecht, Penner, and Martens families. I'm maintaining a file of obituaries of Mennonites and descendants of former Mennonites, German Baptists and others from Russia and Poland.

Also interested to know of information concerning former residents of the Turner, OR area of Marion County.

Are you folks making any plans to set up a library or perhaps a small museum?

- Albert Ratzlaff  
15785 Highway 22, Dallas, OR 97338

## **Coming Meeting Dates**

The Spring, 1990 Meeting of OMHGS will be held at the Albany Mennonite Church, 3405 Kizer Avenue, Albany, OR, on Sunday, May 20, 1990 at 2:30 p.m. (See separate program sheet).

Presentation will be made by Gerry Brenneman on the history of the Albany congregation, and by Dan Widmer, Salem, on the Widmer family history.

The meeting is open to all interested persons. You are also invited to bring books or other items of interest to display.

The Fall 1990 OMHGS Meeting will tentatively be held on Sunday, October 21, 1990 at the Zion Mennonite Church, three miles east of Hubbard, OR, at 2:30 p.m.

Featured will be the history of the Hopewell Mennonite Church near Hubbard, and the history of the Mishler family. More exact details will be announced in the next newsletter.

## **Logo Contest**

The contest for a logo for OMHGS has been extended to June 30 this year.

Anyone is welcome to submit drawings or rough sketches. Your entry need not be professionally drawn, what we want now is your idea of what would best represent OMHGS. If you need a copy of the OMHGS Brochure for more ideas, please send for a free copy. Rough sketches can be cleaned up later for use as our final logo.

Send your entries to the Newsletter Editor, or one of the other officers.



A people who have not the pride to record their history will not long have the virtues to make history worth recording; and no people indifferent to their past need hope to make their future great.

- Anonymous

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Every man should study the past in order to understand the present and anticipate the future.

- Dr. LeRoy Drummer

\*\*\*\*\*

Records of the past reveal a little of the future and something of ourselves.

- Anonymous

\*\*\*\*\*

You will despair about the future if there was nothing in your ancestors that you deem worth preserving for your posterity. To have identified such ancestors, such a past, is to have a cause to serve, a story to tell whose end is not yet.

- Shriven and Ostrom

\*\*\*\*\*

Fellow citizens, we cannot escape history. We will be remembered in spite of ourselves.

- Abraham Lincoln, 1 Dec. 1862

\*\*\*\*\*

People will not look forward to posterity who never look backward to their ancestors.

- Edmund Burke

\*\*\*\*\*

It is absurd to think that life begins for us at birth. The pattern is set far back; we merely step into the process.

- Kathleen Coyle, Irish novelist

\*\*\*\*\*

Genealogy is digging up family roots, but it is also making a record of the living.

- quote by Edna Ramseyer Kaufman



## Recent Donations

Donated by Verna Weaver Bishop:

- Burkholder, L.J. - A Brief History of the Mennonites in Ontario
- Smith, C. Henry - The Story of the Mennonites

Donated by Eugene Mennonite Church:

- Alderfer - Helping Your Child to Grow
- Augsburger - The Expanded Life
- Beyler - Salvation History Score Card
- Bishop - World Hunger: Reality and Challenge
- Ediger - The Prophet's Report on Religion in N. America
- Gingerich - The Christian and Revolution
- Jacobs - The Christian Stance in a Revolutionary Age
- Kennel - Ecology of the Airwaves
- Lederach - Mennonite Youth
- Lind - Out of the Closed Into the Church
- Miller - Equipping for Ministry in E. Africa
  - I Am A Woman
  - The Peacemakers
- Roth, et.al. - A Time For Teaching
- Wenger - Because God Loves
  - Pacifism and Biblical Non-resistance
- Wood - The Problem of Nationalism
- Grounds - Evangelism and Social Responsibility

Donated by Clif and Lois Kenagy:

- Kraybill, Ed - The Kingdom of God (Proceedings 1978)
- Lehman - In Praise of Leisure
- Martin & Levitt - Divorce: A Christian Dilemma

Donated by Mae S. Lenhert:

- Lenhert, Mae Strubhar - Jesus With Me: Ozark Memories
  - Mary Egli Roth's Amish bonnet

Donated by Clif & Hope Lind:

- Amstutz - So You're Going to be Married
- Baker - A Catechism (General Conf. Mennonite Church)
  - God Healed Me
- Franz, et.al. - Let My People Choose
- Harder - Foreign Missions, India (American Mennonite Brethren Missions in India, 1898-1948)
  - Guide to Faith
  - Mennonite Brethren Church, Reedley, CA, 1905-1955
- Lederach - Reshaping the Teaching Ministry
  - The Spiritual Family & the Biological Family
- Roth - Becoming God's People Today
- Shenk, ed. - A Kingdom of Priests
- Waltner - Learning to Understand the Mission of the Church

Donated by Hope Lind:

Bender - Bible Survey Course, Unit 1  
Derstine - Paths to Beautiful Womanhood  
Erb - Bible Survey Course, Unit 2  
Kropf - Descendants of Lovina Miller Burck  
Shenk - Henry Venn, Missionary Statesman  
Yutzy & Youngblood - A Branch of the Yutzy Family Tree

Donated from Linn-Benton Business & General Services:

Kenagy - Obituaries - Knox Butte Cemetery

Donated by Al and Marj Nofziger:

Brunk - Rightly Dividing  
Cramer - The Psychology of Jesus and Mental Health  
Horst - Mennonite Confession of Faith  
Hostetler - Fear in Algeria  
              - Journey to Jerusalem  
Jacobs - Demons  
Jost - Seventy-five Years of Fellowship  
Kauffman - One Hundred Lessons in Bible Study  
Kraybill - Mennonite World Handbook, MWC, 1978  
Mendelssohn - Elijah, an Oratorio  
Mennonite World Conference - International Songbook, 1978  
Ris - Mennonite Articles of Faith, a Translation  
Shetler - Church History of the Pacific Coast

Donated by D. and B. Oswald:

The Descendants of Jacob Oswald and Elizabeth Rupp Oswald -  
by Oswald

Donated by Dennis Roth:

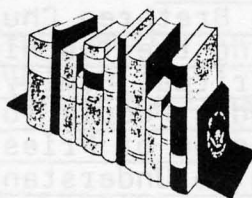
Hostetler - Descendants of Barbara Hostetler and Christian  
Stutzman

Donated by Frances Shenk:

Shenk - An Autobiography of Barbara Weaver Sharer

Donated by Ethel Snyder:

Snyder, M. Ethel - Appreciation of the Past: Remembrances  
of the Pacific Coast Conference W.M.S.C.



## Membership Information

Membership in the Oregon Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society is open to persons or groups who are interested in and supportive of OMHGS and its purposes.

Dues are payable annually, and will be effective from January 1 to December 31. Individuals wishing to make a contribution of \$10.00 or more annually, in lieu of membership, will receive the Newsletter, and will be informed of the Society's activities.

### Membership Form

I want to become a Member of, or Contributor to, the Oregon Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society. I will be informed of all Society activities; will receive the OMHGS Newsletter; and as a Member will be eligible to serve on committees of the Society. My contribution is enclosed, payable to O.M.H.G.S.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Enrol me (please check one):

_____ Student	\$5.00	_____ Sustaining Member	50.00
_____ Single Membership	10.00	_____ Non-member Contributor	10.00 or more
_____ Family "	15.00	Life Memberships will be announced later.	
_____ Contributing "	25.00		

OMHGS is a non-profit organization and is supported solely by membership dues and contributions. The first \$7.00 of your dues or contribution represents services rendered by OMHGS, such as Newsletter and library use; amounts above that are tax deductible.

# OMHGS Newsletter

OREGON MENNONITE HISTORICAL  
AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

675 Elma Avenue S.E.

Salem, OR 97301

**FIRST CLASS**

**Join Now!**  
**We need YOU**