

# Our Heritage

Pacific Northwest Mennonite Historical Society Newsletter

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## Library and archive to be dedicated in April

The new Ivan and Pearl Kropf Heritage Center will be dedicated in an afternoon celebration on April 22. Hope Lind, whose work was vital to the formation of the Pacific Northwest Mennonite Historical Society, is slated to speak at the dedication.

The center, located next to Zion Mennonite Church in Hubbard, Ore., will house both a library and archives, allowing the PNMHS to move all its holdings from a cramped space at Western Mennonite High School—and from storage areas in Archivist Margaret Shetler's home.

For nearly two decades, the PNMHS archives operated from a small room adjacent to the Western Mennonite High School chapel, but 400 square feet could not adequately contain all the PNMHS holdings, nor allowed much comfortable space for volunteers and researchers to do their work.

The Ivan and Pearl Kropf Heritage Center provides a well-



*The new Mennonite Library and Archives, adjacent to the Zion Mennonite Church in Hubbard. The completed building will be dedicated on April 22, 2012, with special guest Hope Lind providing an inaugural presentation. Photo courtesy Don Bacher.*

appointed lobby and library for patrons to use, with wood shelving crafted by residents of the Hope Village in nearby Canby allowing easy access to the center's collection of books and periodicals. A Shaker Trestle table built by Jerry Barkman will provide a large work area in the library.

But the centerpiece of the Ivan and Pearl Kropf Heritage

Center is its climate-controlled archive room. This 20 x 30 foot space includes three compact shelves that move easily on tracks, allowing Shetler—and any archivist who follows her—access to the many preserved documents, including church historical documents and conference records, as well as personal collections.

Work began on the library



New shelving moves on tracks in the archives, allowing for easy access to documents, as well as ample room for the future. The shelves can be separated by a simple turn of the crank. Photo courtesy of Don Bacher.

and archives last May, construction having been delayed by a wet spring. A new road leading to the building—a mandate of the county—was added at that point, and the foundation poured. Framing began in the fall, with the interior work completed by Christmas 2011.

Of course, earlier fundraising efforts were crucial. The building is named after Ivan and Pearl Kropf, who owned land adjacent to Zion Mennonite and who, in 2000, donated seven acres to the church following Ivan Kropf's death.

The church, in turn, leased the land to the PNMHS for \$1, recognizing Ivan Kropf's long-held vision of renovating an 1894 red barn on his (and then the church's) ground for use as a Mennonite heritage and cultural center.

Following the Kropfs' gifting of the land, a number of other Mennonites throughout the region contributed to the building fund, allowing PNMHS to finally proceed with construction last year. The historical society had agreed not to go into debt with this project, and so started construction only once

enough money had been raised.

According to Shetler, a member of the PNMHS board for almost 25 years, others played an integral role in the construction of the building: Barkman, a former PNMHS board president, who was the project manager; LeeAnn Kropf, of Bend, who was chief consultant on interior decorating decisions; Richard Kropf, who provided essential help with labor and oversight; and Gene Gascho, chair of the Zion Mennonite Trustee Committee.

The Ivan and Pearl Kropf Heritage Center becomes one of only three Mennonite archive libraries west of the Bethel College collection in North Newton, Kan.

In this sense, it provides an essential tool in the preservation of Mennonite history, especially in the Pacific Northwest, Shetler said.

This was part of the vision Lind had when she first proposed a Pacific Northwest Mennonite

Historical Society in 1988. At the time, the organization was called the Oregon Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society. Lind—whose important book, *Apart and Together*, documents the history of Oregon Mennonites—had applied for library space at Western Mennonite when its chapel was built about twenty years ago.

Historical holdings quickly filled the small room at Western Mennonite, though, and in the last decade, Shetler started storing nonessential materials at her house, hoping a larger space would open up.

Finally, it has. Since the completion of the building, volunteers, directed by Shetler and by Harold and Eileen Weaver, have moved documents, books, periodicals, and shelving from Western Mennonite to the new location; Shetler and Harold Weaver,



A new sign points the way to the Ivan and Pearl Kropf Heritage Center, with a newly-created entrance to the library opening up to Whiskey Hill Road.

along with librarian Violet Burley, have unpacked boxes and are busily getting their respective areas organized.

The building will be open every Tuesday from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Shetler said PNMHS is looking for more volunteers to help organize and run the library and archives; those interested should

contact Shetler at the center.

On April 22, the building dedication—open to the public—will begin at 2:30 p.m. Lind is traveling from her home in Harrisonburg, Virg. to help celebrate her role in assuring the history of Pacific Northwest Mennonites can be preserved.

THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST MENNONITE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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**PNMHS SPRING MEETING**  
**CALVARY MENNONITE CHURCH**

**Economical with the Truth**  
**Swearing and Lying -- An Anabaptist Perspective**

**Alan and Eleanor Kreider, speakers**

*The Kreiders are professors at AMBS, authors, and longtime missionaries in post-Christendom England. The topic is related to their recent book **Worship and Mission after Christendom.***

**Program begins at 2:30 p.m.**



# THROUGH THE DESERT GOES OUR JOURNEY

This is a story from Mennonite history that continues to impact many people, Mennonites and non-Mennonites alike. As perspectives and understandings of the story are re-formed, so are the possibilities of on-going transformation of us as individuals and amongst us as a faith community.

Attending to history can be a means of transforming our perspectives and responses to current relationships and situations. This is the backdrop for what you are about to read.

Our ancestral story as Mennonites has chapters we're not always sure we want in the history book. Some find these chapters disturbing. Some treat these chapters as something from the past that has no relevance for today. Some believe these chapters are heretical or embarrassing failures.

There are some who choose to engage with the content of these chapters in an effort to understand, to come to

terms with what took place. The brief piece of Mennonite history I am writing about is one such chapter.

The segment of Mennonite history, specifically what led to and happened with what became known as The Great Trek, has largely been avoided, criticized, and misunderstood for the 130 years since the first wagon train left from an area of what is now Ukraine and Russia for what is now Uzbekistan.

When told of or writ-



*Sights on the contemporary Silk Road, traveled over a century earlier by Great Trekkers from Tashkent to Samarkand. This and other pictures in the newsletter provided courtesy of Charlene Epp, who spoke at the 2011 Fall PNMHS Meeting.*

*By Charlene Epp*

ten about for most of those 130 years, this piece of history tended to place sole responsibility for the migration to Central Asia on the shoulders of Claas Epp, Jr., my great, great, grandfather, and in a less than flattering manner.

With the blame for hardships endured by those who migrated to Central Asia, and the sharp criticism of Claas' increasingly fanatical theology, came a struggle on the part of the Mennonite community with what to do with those who were a part



*The train station near Molotchana, circa 2007. Now part of the Ukraine, at the time of The Great Trek, the station became the starting point for a second wave of migrating Mennonites, headed east.*

of this migration, as well as their descendants.

Beginning in the 1960's there was a slow, fledgling process that took root: a visitation of the story of The Great Trek. Some individuals retraced parts of the original migration route; others began to write with precious little information with which to work. Controversies arose amongst historians over methods and sources of information used for these ventures.

This seemed to feed and represent a quest on the part of some who found reason to question the story as it had been told to this point. Somehow there was a conscious awareness that there were pieces missing to the understanding of what had taken

place prior to, during and after the Central Asian migration.

It is just such a quest that about 25 tour participants pursued in late May and early June of 2007. It was the first organized Mennonite group tour to retrace the history of The Great Trek beyond the Ukraine. Our reasons for embarking on that journey were just as diverse as those of the original participants of The Great Trek.

Tour participants came armed with ancestors' journals and other documents never-before shared publicly, previously held secret within the given family heirs. A treasure chest of information and new understanding was opened, shared and enriched by the encounters

we had throughout this trip.

In his book *Pilgrims On The Silk Road*, Walter Ratliff bears witness to a paralleled and merging history of Christian-Muslim relations in relating the story of the Mennonite migration to Central Asia.

Through the course of a century, Mennonites and Muslims encountered a cycle of conflict and cooperation in their relationship with one another. The first recorded encounter began when the Mennonites settled in Novorossiya ("New Russia") in the Molotschna Colony; the tables were turned just decades later when the Mennonites settled in Uzbekistan.

Catherine the Great gave Mennonites land that a Turkish Muslim tribe, the Nogalis, had roamed in their nomadic lifestyle since about 1630. Catherine's invitation came with the Manifesto of 1763, and was extended to farmers throughout Europe, many of whom grew wheat, many who had financially prospered as farmers.

In March of 1788 a binding legal agreement with the Russian government guaranteed the Mennonites autonomy and freedom of conscience for as long as they lived in the empire: to live as a separate community, to have their own educational system, and to be exempt from

conscription to military service. Once this agreement was secured, the first Mennonite colony was settled in Chortitza in 1789.

Many of these Prussian Mennonites brought with them wealth, and consequently influence with the local Russian authorities, sometimes at the expense of the poorer ones who lived within the Mennonite settlements.

Amongst the poorest in the settlements were the local Russians, primarily Orthodox, and the remaining nomadic Nogalis. The Mennonites soon became the managers of these local Russian workers. The Nogali people contended with the ever-changing demands and whims of the Russian authorities, eventually participating in a mass exodus in 1860, leaving less than 100 behind amongst the Mennonites.

At this point the Mennonites found themselves negotiating business deals with the Nogalis who had caused hardship and harm to members of the Mennonite colony where the Nogalis now resided.

Claas Epp, Sr., was a leader to part of a later group of Mennonites who settled along the Volga River in Samara in the Trakt Colony in 1853. He was a serious man, with a mind for civil and economic matters. As

had become common among Mennonites throughout Europe, Mennonite community leaders entered into agreements with local governments to secure the community's ability to live by their Anabaptist core beliefs.

In turn, these Mennonites became model farmers in the nation where they lived. In these agreements, hosting nations often banned Mennonites from proselytizing beyond their own community.

Claas Epp, Sr.'s son, Claas Epp, Jr., was 15 when the Mennonites migrated from the Vistula Delta area of Prussia to the Trakt Colony in Russia. The manner in which he observed relationships between his father and local Russian authorities, as

well as the dynamics of relationships amongst the Mennonites within the colony and others who were part of the settlement community, shaped him.

From the beginning, there were disputes among members of the Mennonite colonies, and between leaders of the various groups. These disputes were fueled by vies for leadership positions, as well as opposing positions on political and theological matters. Mennonites were influenced both externally and internally in regard to many matters.

Those having significant influence included German Pietism, which found easy traction amongst a faith group that was feeling the need for revitalization. By 1860, new leadership



An example of the fine woodworking in Kiva Palace in the Khan. The woodworking was completed by Mennonite immigrants from The Great Trek, and an enduring artifact to their presence in this region.

developed under movements desiring enforcement of spiritual disciplines.

The combination of the internal conflicts and the external influences resulted in partings and schisms where new groups under new leadership developed. One such group was the Mennonite Brethren, who broke from "The Mother Church" and worshipped in an abandoned mosque on Pentecost Sunday of that year.

Connected to the Pietism movement were the on-going millennial movements that crossed religious faith groups, impacting faith communities around the globe over a period of a century. Of significant influence among the Mennonites were the writings of Johann Heinrich Jung-Stilling.

His novel, *Das Heimway* (*The Homesickness*), became raw material, along with the biblical texts from Daniel and Revelation, for writings and discussions around the end times. Crunching the numbers from these written materials is what Claas Epp Jr. used to determine the date and location of Jesus' second coming.

As national boundaries and leaders changed, so did the honoring of the agreements that had protected the Mennonites' ability to live as "The City of God," a community pure onto

its faith, therefore privileged to be exempt from enduring the Tribulation.

Leaders in the Russian Mennonite settlements began exploring how and where God was opening a door for them to enter into yet another secure setting, where they could live out their faith beliefs. Parting of ways occurred due to theological differences, causing some to immigrate west to North America, and others to seek a migration east.

Due to influences, including Jung-Stilling's novel, for those heading east, it was determined time was running short to get to the designated location for the "Bride Community" to witness the second coming of Christ.

This fit with a long Mennonite history of eastward movement: Dutch to Germany to Prussia. Some Swiss Mennonites immigrated to North America as early as 1683, while many others went east to the Volhynia region of Poland.

A secret delegation was given the mission to address unresolved issues for the Russian Mennonites to settle in Turkestan: Peter Wiebe from the Molotschna colony and Jacob Hamm from the Trakt settlement. These two, along with Abraham Peters, Martin Klassen, Cornelius Wall and Claas Epp Jr. spent many

hours disputing politics and theology, often seeking positions of primary leadership within the group.

All shared the common theological millennialism position of the imminent return of Christ. Within months of the designated departure date for the first wagon train, agreements were secured for a place of refuge in Central Asia.

On the first wagon train, Herman Janzten, able to pick up languages quickly, became a valued asset in negotiations and translating on behalf of the Mennonites as well as those of other language groups the Mennonites met along the way. He later acquired a key role in the Turkish government, first as a court interpreter, then as an interior ministry official for Russian Turkestan.

After this he became a missionary in what is now Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

Along the Trek, many died of disease; the wagon trains were attacked and robbed; women were abused and raped. Simultaneously, continued theological disputes, often over concerns around Claas' escalating extreme positions, caused Trekkers to part company with the wagon trains' destination to Central Asia, some returning to Germany, many immigrating west.



When the remaining members of three wagon trains met in Tashkent, more disputes arose and another significant segment of the group parted company with the migration. The majority of these immigrants were close followers of Abraham Peters who died in Tashkent; this group, including Cornelius Wall, settled in Aulie Ata.

In a short period of time, Martin Klaassen died, leaving Epp Jr. the primary leader of the remaining members of the “Bride Community.” This group settled near Serbulak for about eight months. During this period of time they shared worship space in a Kyk Ota, or “Blue Grandfather,” mosque.

Dissent in the traveling community was reaching a new height. A.K. Penner stepped forward on their first Sunday meeting in the mosque, refuting Epp Jr’s teachings; Epp and the final wagon train were yet to meet up with the rest of the traveling community. His preaching persuaded many in the community. He was asked to leave the congregation. Now the congregation split into three groups, continuing to live together through a bitter winter.

As the community resumed travel, the Great Comet of 1882 guided their way through the Kara Kum desert. For this part of the trip all their



*A picture of a Kyk Ota, or “Blue Grandfather,” mosque, near Serbulak. The Epp group shared the worship space with Muslims during their Serbulak stay.*

vehicles were disassembled and, along with their possessions, loaded on to hundreds of camels.

All were reassembled at the western edge of the desert, and the group continued their journey. Promises made by local political officials weren’t kept for the location of the Mennonite settlement, and the community headed further west to Lausan. Here the Yomud tribesmen took advantage of the Mennonites’ nonresistance, becoming increasingly violent, finally murdering a young groom on his wedding night.

The Khan of Khiva took pity on this traveling community. The Khan’s general had gone to assess the Mennonites’ situa-

tion in Lausan, returning to the Khan with a finely crafted small wooden chest. The craftsmanship of this small wooden box impressed the Khan, and he offered the Mennonites the use of his walled 13 acre garden on his country estate. It was in this walled garden that the Mennonites developed what became a successful community for 50 years.

The Muslims observed the Mennonites white-washing their church in the middle of their community, and named the settlement Ak Metchet (White Mosque). The village that later developed next to the walled garden adopted the same name, honoring those who were good neighbors, farmers, woodcrafts-

men.

Within the community, dissention mounted as Claas’s theological teachings became increasingly radical. Additionally, his leadership style assumed even stricter versions of authoritarianism than that of his own father. His career as a spiritual leader reached a turning point when the day he predicted for Christ’s return ended with another failed prophecy.

Claas went on to set another date, after which there was a final significant parting with his son, who along with his own and three other families left for America. The decreased confidence in Epp Jr. as a trusted leader seemed to increase the nature of his theological claims.

On Pentecost Sunday, 1894, Epp Jr. announced he was to be respected as sitting at the “left hand of the Father,” just as Jesus sits on the right. Epp Jr. and Elizabeth were excommunicated the last 10 years of their lives, remaining housed in the center of the Ak Metchet Mennonite settlement. They died within two days of one another in early January of 1913.

Ak Metchet came to thrive and develop trusted relationships with its Muslim neighbors. The school in the village houses two wooden desks built by the Mennonites, along with irons for clothing left behind when

the Mennonites left in haste in 1935.

Villagers proudly speak of having finely crafted wooden doors and windows in their houses made by the Mennonites. The Khan’s palace in Khiva has a finely wood-crafted floor the Mennonites built for him and which local residents speak of with pride.

Ak Metchet residents speak of a continued annual spring, pre-planting ritual of prayers offered where the Mennonite cemetery was, honoring the agricultural skills and contributions the Mennonites brought to their community.

Throughout this story are examples when this faith community’s beliefs were pressed for a response. Peppered throughout are decisive choices to retain a non-violent response, something that continues to hold the attention of current residents in

the Ak Metchet community, as well as scholars who have dedicated their careers to piecing together the history of the people of Uzbekistan.

Our pilgrimage in 2007 rendered a perspective of The Great Trek that neither discounts the impact of end times theology, nor does it allow for an individual or his errant theology to retain center stage for what has become a treasured contribution to our story of faith.

The story narrated here remains told from a particular Mennonite perspective. Other Mennonites would tell the story from the perspective of having stayed in Central Asia, or having returned to Germany from Central Asia, or of an immigrant’s experience from Central Asia through China. All these stories would give more fullness to the legacy of this Great Trek migration and the impact of it on heirs



*The contemporary location of the Ak Metchet Mennonite settlement, taken during Charlene Epp’s 2007 trip to the region.*



of the story.

Additionally, there is a story to be told from the perspective of the Muslims who encountered the Mennonites near the Volga, or the perspective of the Muslims who lived and worked with the Mennonites near Khiva, Uzbekistan. These, too, are stories that shed more light on the faith journey and witness of the Mennonites, as well as how the Mennonites were impacted by and learned from their relationships with the Muslims.

To do justice to the story of this migration, to bear witness to the legacy of faith it holds, to offer hope and possibilities of our faith to our spiritual heirs, we need to hear as many possible perspectives of this story as possible. Honoring the impact of the experience from all angles gives us a richer heritage, a stronger point for continued faith. This requires openness.

Throughout the written documents, books or personal journals, of those who embarked on this adventure is a recurring reference to Revelation 3:7-8:

“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These are the words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens:

“I know your works.



*The open door at Khan's palace in Khiva, Uzbekistan, providing an important image of the ways God opened doors for those who are faithful--in the time of The Trek, and now as well.*

Look, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.”

Held precious by many in that original group of travelers on The Great Trek was the promise of God's provision of a safe passage for the “little flock” who remained faithful, who did not deny the name of God. They saw, in the midst of their treacherous Trek, God opening doors for them to find a place of refuge.

In 2007, after years of shame and silence, a door was opened in Uzbekistan when once again Mennonites and Muslims encountered one another. Held precious by many who re-traced the Trek in 2007 and on the sub-

sequent tours in 2008 and 2009, is a faith that the door that was opened will not be shut.

That open door offers the ability to see more clearly the breadth and depth of faithfulness of our ancestors; it gives a view of the powerful impact of having right and vibrant relationships with our neighbors, regardless of how different our faith may be from one another. Through our continued journey of faith, even when blind or stumbling, holding fast to naming God as our Sovereign Ruler, and living in faithful obedience to the life and words of Christ, we, too, can be secure in the promise that our works are known. It just may be that exactly this journey is the homeland we seek.

## SOME DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS ON FAITH AND STORY

Our faith is cradled and carried in the context of story: the story of people throughout history seeking to live faithful lives in loving relationship with God, others and all that God created and called “good.”

Without these spiritual ancestors and the sacred texts that hold their stories, our own faith journey would be devoid of depth, of the assurance of things for which to hope, of the conviction to believe in that which is not seen.

In turn, our own effort at living in faith-filled relationship with God and one another becomes raw material for shaping and transforming the faith of those around us and of the next generations. The writer of the book of Hebrews speaks eloquently and specifically of some of the impact of the faith of our spiritual ancestors, Abraham and Sarah, their Hebrew faith community and their heirs.

According to Hebrews 11:8-16, “by faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were

heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. By faith he received power of procreation, even though he was too old—and Sarah herself was barren—because he considered himself faithful who had promised.

“Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, ‘as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.’”

All of these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth, for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland.

If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them.

We, too, are heirs of the promise that God is our guide in our faith pilgrimage. It is a journey riddled with adventure, risks, unknown routes. The writ-

er of Hebrews gives testimony to a God who unashamedly honors our faith-filled intentions.

When acting and living in faith and trust that our journey seeking a homeland whose architect and builder is God, we are met by God's response of preparing a place of communal completeness, resourced with richness surpassing any human material comprehension or experience.

This is the inherited spiritual legacy of our ancestors; it is the spiritual responsibility for us, and it is the spiritual possibility for our spiritual heirs.

*Charlene Epp was born in South Dakota, raised on a small family farm. Her family attended Bethel Mennonite Church, where she was baptized. Charlene attended Freeman Jr College, graduating from Bethel College with a BS degree in Elementary Education and specialization in Early Childhood Education. She later graduated from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, and is an ordained minister serving as a Chaplain at Providence St Vincent Medical Center in Portland. She and her husband, Duncan Smith, whom she met in Mennonite Voluntary Service, are members at Portland Mennonite Church, living in Beaverton, Ore.*

## Preserving the Past, Preparing for the Future

For Christmas this year, my husband gave me an Amazon Kindle Fire. The device truly is amazing: I can read and store books on it, as well as magazines and newspapers. The Fire also allows me access to the web, to email and Facebook; and when I'm bored of reading, I can stream television shows and movies to its tiny screen.

As a traditionalist, I've resisted this technology for a long time, believing there is something aesthetically appealing about holding a hard-bound book, or reading a newspaper at the breakfast table, or walking the stacks at a used bookstore, breathing old- books smell and wondering at the stories held on tightly-packed shelves.

My Amazon Kindle will not afford me these visceral pleasures. I'll never have to visit a bookstore again, although I cannot imagine abandoning my local independent store, if only for its other pleasures: meeting friends for coffee, holding a warm cup of foamy chai. Those pleasures, of course, have nothing to do with reading.

I saw the proverbial writing on the wall this year, and finally gave in to my resistance, putting a Kindle on my Christmas wish list. Our house is bursting at the seams with books, and there's re-

ally nowhere to add more to our collection. My husband has argued for several years now to let our increasingly expensive newspaper subscription lapse, because we can both access information in other places—and often do.

Most significantly, as a college professor working with younger generations, I recognize I need to be familiar with the technology my students are using, and that I must be able to access texts in the ways they do. My students rely more and more on technology to gather information, and so I must too, else I will no longer speak their language—and so fail to teach them.

A good deal has been lost in this paradigm shift from paper to the web. As someone interested in Mennonite history, I am well aware of those losses. The letters, diaries, and other written manuscripts historians prize because of the record they leave have all but vanished with the advent of newer technologies.

One hundred years hence, scholars will cull online indexes and emails for information, instead of studying the fragile paper that holds words penned by someone narrating her place in history.

Historians will no longer find joy in fingering a manuscript once held by its original owner

a century earlier, but will contend with what seems a much less intimate data file, accessed from a computer terminal—or a hand-held device, like the Kindle.

In this move to newer technologies, the Pacific Northwest Mennonite Historical Society (and other like-organizations) plays a vital role in collecting and preserving the past as a way of preparing us for the future.

For it is in knowing the stories of our ancestors, understanding their struggles with a changing world and the onset of modernity, that we can better deal with our own changing world.

Our denomination's regional history has, for several decades, been crammed into a small space at Western Mennonite High School. The new library and archives in Hubbard provides a space to study the records of our past, set in ink and paper; and the records of our present, increasingly stored in databases; and the records of our future, most likely preserved in technology we cannot even now understand.

I am grateful for this new building, and for the ways it acknowledges the past, the present, and the future.

*Melanie Springer Mock edits the PNMHS newsletter. She teaches English at George Fox University, Newberg, Ore.*