
Foreword

Seventy-five years ago, in 1920, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) was established in response to the tragic experiences and needs of Mennonites in the Soviet Union. Since then MCC has responded not only to pleas for help among Mennonites, but also to other people's needs throughout the world. Today MCC can look back proudly upon seven and a half decades of distinguished service "in the name of Christ." Thousands of grateful people owe their very survival to this venerable organization.

We begin this year's issue with articles dealing with Russian-Mennonite history, including aspects of the work of MCC after World War II. Ted Regehr's article "Of Dutch or German Ancestry?" seeks to understand the difficulties Russian Mennonites experienced with regard to their ethnic identity in the politically-charged atmosphere of the second half of the 1940s.

James Urry in "After the Rooster Crowed" deals with the relationship between Russian Mennonites and the early Soviets by arguing that Mennonites today need to understand the plans and political objectives of the Bolsheviks in the 1920s in order to appreciate the true nature of Mennonite history before Stalin assumed absolute control of Soviet economy and politics in the 1930s.

John B. Toews takes us back to the gruesome experiences of Mennonites during the Makhno terror of 1919. There were other massacres in South Russia that surpassed the Blumenort tragedy in both scale and horror, but no massacre of this terrible period in Mennonite history has produced as detailed a description in the documents as the one at Blumenort.

The 50th anniversary of Harold S. Bender's seminal article "The Anabaptist Vision" has come and gone (1944-94). Its influence upon Mennonites has been profound and Abe Dueck documents this influence in "Canadian Mennonites and the Anabaptist Vision."

1995 also marks the year of another anniversary: it is forty years since E.K. Francis published his influential historical-sociological study, *In Search of Utopia* (1955), of the Mennonites who came to Manitoba in 1874. Sociologist Leo Driedger, who knew Francis personally, has written a tribute to this scholar which deals with the difficulties and roadblocks that had to be overcome before his book was eventually published.

Our literary section includes work by three literary artists, a poet and two story tellers. Sarah Klassen's "Singing at the Fire" is a poem cycle based on Jan Luiken's engravings in the seventeenth-century *Martyrs Mirror*. Warren Kliever contributes two stories based on youthful experiences, "Growing Memories" and "The Art of Grafting." And Lloyd Ratzlaff in "Of Bulls and Baptisms" writes humorously yet sensitively about a young person's faith experiences in a Mennonite community.

As Mennonites become more assimilated and urbanized in society questions arise concerning the survival of Mennonite beliefs and values and how Mennonites compare with other groups in this regard. Psychologists Shirin and Eduard Schludermann contribute an article on "Values of Winnipeg Adolescents in Mennonite and Catholic Schools," and Leo Driedger and Abe Bergen one on "Growing Roots and Wings: Emergence of Mennonite Teens." The latter article was originally given as a paper at a youth ministry conference in Winnipeg in November 1994.

The humorous yet informative article "What's in a Name?" by Helmut Huebert argues persuasively that "Huebert" (not Hiebert) was the original spelling of the name, and that a "Mennonite" name might be important in finding a job!

The last sections of this issue include review articles by Tom Yoder Neufeld and Harry Huebner, book reviews, and bibliographical notes.

We would appreciate reviewers of books sending us a computer disk with their reviews. Please send reviews to our book review editor, Victor G. Doerksen, German Department, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2N2.

For some years now we have resisted raising the subscription price for the *Journal*. This year we have to increase the price to \$12.- for individual subscribers and \$15.- for institutions. We hope subscribers will understand and support us in this.

The Editors

Note:

Contributors are reminded that by including computer disks—IBM compatible, and in WordPerfect if possible—with their hard copy, they are helping us with our editing and cutting our costs. All hard-copy submissions should be *double-spaced*. And publishers, please send all books for review to our review editor Victor G. Doerksen, Department of German, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2N2.