

Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association  
Annual Meeting Minutes  
Sunday, March 14, 2010, 2:30 p.m.  
Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge KS

President Arnold M. Wedel opened the 35<sup>th</sup> SMCHA annual meeting with a welcome to all and words from P. J. Wedel, his Grandfather's brother: "You can do a lot of good in the world if you don't care who gets the credit." P.J. Wedel was the first Schweitzer in the community to graduate from college - University of Kansas in 1895. Arnold declared a quorum to be present. Approximately 75 attended, some of those visitors. Proxies were received from 15.

Kathy Goering read the minutes of the 2009 meeting. Martha Graber moved to accept the minutes. T. James Goering seconded. Motion carried.

H. Keith Goering gave the Treasurer's report. Checking account total receipts \$5153.16. Cash flow total income was \$6375.09. Expenses of \$2,575.06 included electricity to maintain marker at Hopefield and mowing. 2009 was a positive financial year. Motion was made by Keith Albrecht and seconded by LaVern Stucky to accept the Treasurer's Report. Motion carried.

Year in Review - Arnold Wedel.

- a. Maynard Krehbiel served on the Nominating Committee; his name should be added to the program.
- b. New *Schweitzer Salt* editor Charles Schrag reported that he would have his first issue printed in a few weeks, available to all members. Charles invited suggestions for articles or writers to send announcements and historical stories. The appearance will be different from previous issues but will contain similar content. Extra copies of issues from 2002-2006 are available to anyone who would like copies.
- c. Webmaster Dennis Quiring reported 40 visits per week to the SMCHA website: [www.swissmennonite.org](http://www.swissmennonite.org) which is hosted at Mennonite.net in Goshen IN since fall 2009. Dennis sent graphs showing that 76% of hits come from the U.S.
- d. Scholarship - Ellen Kling. In April, the Committee will mail the scholarship information to the ten original Anabaptist Churches plus Hesston College, Bethel College, and Great Plains Seminary. Deadline to apply is July 1, 2010. Last summer Phil Waite, pastor of First Mennonite Church in Moundridge, on a three-year doctor of ministry in preaching program through Chicago Theological Seminary, received \$250, the award for part-time students. Phil was also awarded \$250 in 2008. A picture of Phil and an article about the program appeared in the Moundridge *Ledger* last summer. This scholarship was funded in part by the Ozzie and Elaine Goering Scholarship Fund.
- e. Don Kaufman - Trustee.
  - i. Logan Jantz will be hired again to mow the cemetery. Tree spraying will need to be done. Corrections will need to be made to the light shining on monument.
  - ii. "Only Schweitzer Spoken Here" program was last Friday at the Wellness Center at Memorial Home in Moundridge. Three are planned each year. These will be announced in church bulletins and newspapers.
  - iii. The Schweitzers have the program this year at Bethel Fall Festival.
- f. Catlin Cemetery Research. Brian Stucky reported on work done this winter at the Catlin Cemetery near Peabody and information about the children who died there in 1874 during the Swiss Volhynian Mennonite immigration. The Catlin Cemetery is located 3miles north, one west, ½ north of the NW corner of Peabody. P.P. Wedel wrote in A Short History of the

Swiss Mennonites Who Migrated from Volhynia Russia to America and Settled in Kansas in 1874 that Mennonites got off the train at Peabody. Men were gone three weeks to select land. When the men returned to Peabody they realized that some children had died. The bodies had been carried to a field for burial because the town had no cemetery. (Some also died in Halstead.) One child who died at Peabody was 11-month old Freni Stucky, sister of Brian's grandfather John E. Stucky. Vic Goering also had ancestors who were aware of these deaths and Arnold Wedel has two siblings of his grandfather Peter HWedel and a sister of Kathrina (spouse of Peter H. Wedel) buried there. A correspondent in the January 1875 issue of "Herald of Truth" in Elkhart IN, wrote that "Elder Jacob Stucky party buried about 14 children." Catlin was an Old Mennonite settlement 1871-1873, before Russian Mennonites came. The Catlin Church closed in 1961 and the church building torn down, but the Cemetery is well maintained still. Working with the Catlin Cemetery current board and looking for scientific verification of the burial site, Brian invited Elizabeth Wilson-Agen from Tennessee whose work is finding graves using electromagnetic radar (a resistivity meter) to scan the site, which she did on December 2. She will send graphs and interpretation. Genealogy information from James W. Krehbiel lists 18 people "probably" buried at Peabody, uncertain because death dates are not listed for some. Brian is interested in knowing more about this story from anyone who has heard about it.

- g. Banquet. 164 attended the September 2009 SMCHA Banquet, Norman Hofer speaker, profit of \$587.70.
- h. Resources and books are for sale on the table, also listed on the web.
- i. Two burials at Hopefield this year: Veralyn Goering and Laura Stucky.
- j. Properties. SMCHA has three properties at Hopefield: 1974 marker, 1943 marker on the road, and the Cemetery.
- k. Endowed Fund Minimum. The Executive Committee set \$5,000 as a minimum for a family to endow funds for a specific purpose such as the Educational Scholarship Fund where \$10,000 was promised by Ozzie and Elaine Goering family. Several possible projects would be:
  - i. "Who are the Schweitzers?" video suggested by Robert Krehbiel at the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
  - ii. Using the brick project at Hopefield Cemetery to name the people buried at Catlin since few people may drive to Catlin.
  - iii. A memorial at Catlin Cemetery recognizing the Swiss Mennonites buried there.
2. Election of Officers. President LaVern Stucky. Treasurer H. Keith Goering. Trustees Bessie Huxman and Don Kaufman.
3. Budget. The Executive Committee recommended the budget of \$4,040.00. Vic Goering moved and Brian Stucky seconded the motion to approve the budget. Motion carried.
4. Further research. Reed Graber will explore information about his Great Grandparents Jacob and Katarina Wedel coming to America in November rather than September as most other Schweitzers did.

5. New Business. Vice President Bruce Stucky presented Arnold Wedel with a certificate recognizing nine years of leadership as SMCHA President 2001-2010 and a thank you gift written in German.
6. Adjourn. LaVern Stucky moved to adjourn the business meeting. Bruce Stucky seconded.

## PROGRAM

Kathy Goering introduced Richard Ratzlaff from Pretty Prairie, Kansas, who served as moderator of the drama, "People of Providence," about the history of the First Mennonite Church of Pretty Prairie, originated in 1884. The drama was part of last August 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration. Actors Clemon Kaufman (Andreas Schwartz), Rod Krehbiel (Pastor J. J. Flickinger chosen by lot), and Chris Krehbiel (as Emma) portrayed events and feelings of the pioneers. Presented on DVD, Jean Graber (Mrs. Walter W. "Sprig" Graber), the oldest member of the church, recited a poem by memory about her gratefulness in being accepted when she came to this church as an "Englischer." Then three young men (Donovan Krehbiel, Tyler Krehbiel, and Jordan Schrag) responded to the celebration activities noting the number of missionaries sent from the church through the years, the custom of seeking the traditional "little Mennonite girl" to marry, the attitudes about education, and the courage of their forefathers. They wondered aloud about the future and who would be standing 50 years from now in the place that they now stood - passing on the legacy

Refreshments of sandwiches, salads, and cake were served by the Eden Mennonite Church Mary Martha Circle, paid for by donation, and fellowship continued after the meeting.