

Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association Board and Trustees Meeting Minutes

Thurs, Nov 18, 2010, 7:00 a.m. at Underhill Farms, Moundridge KS

1. President LaVern Stucky opened the meeting after a great breakfast of sausage/egg casserole and blueberry coffeecake prepared by Lynn Kaufman at Underhill Farms, Moundridge, KS.
2. Minutes were approved.
3. Hopefield Cemetery. Gerry obtained an aerial picture from the McPherson Co. Courthouse; he said Hopefield owns 62.3 acres of land there. The cemetery is 2.8 acres. The church building is on 2 acres. In 1998 the cemetery land was deeded to SMCHA. The 1934 marker is 1.4 acres. Hopefield paid \$10,000 in 1998 as SMCHA endowment. No taxes are paid on the cemetery. LaVern passed around his copy of the cemetery book from Martha Graber showing grave sites. Wording in board minutes Sept 2, 1998 state that "all present and future Hopefield Mennonite Church members be permitted to be buried in the cemetery at no cost," but Hopefield took "Mennonite" out of their name and they are no longer a part of Mennonite Church USA. The current church members have not shown interest in this cemetery. Glen will talk with Greg Schrag about current members and expectations. Hopefield gave "their cemetery fund of \$10,000 to be invested and the principal be maintained but the interest be used for the repair and maintenance of the cemetery" and the minutes stated "that as long as the Hopefield Mennonite Church is able we will maintain the cemetery's lawn." SMCHA pays for mowing now. Could Don meet with Merv Schrag and Arnold Wedel and Glen Goering and any of the other trustees to work out the policies of the cemetery. Maybe they could contact people like Donna Neufeld family and Frank Stucky and any others to see if they know where their lots are located. Logically the genealogical connection could be criteria for being buried there. People who are to be buried there seemingly should have some kind of financial obligation.
4. Treasurer's report. Keith Goering reported banquet income of \$1,122.54 after expenses of \$1,379.38 paid. Income from membership this year is \$4440.00. Expenses as of 11/2/2010 are \$3,033.39 for electricity, mowing, printing, insurance. The Secretary of State fee of \$40 has been paid. Money market account at Credit Union totals \$1,637.67. The Scholarship Endowment Fund now is at \$10,055.20. Scholarship of \$250 was awarded to Sarah Pohl. Mowing is over budget. 194 paid members (double over several years ago). Keith attributed the higher membership to *Schweitzer Salt* mailings this year and suggested we keep mailing *Salt* to all members one year past the date they paid their fee, at least until the banquet. Half of the money that came in this year was 10-yr memberships.
5. Membership, dues, fee structure. People are sometimes confused about membership fees. The policy has always been payment for the calendar year. Membership year is from January 1 to December 31. Memberships paid anytime during the year are for only that calendar year with voting rights continuing until the next annual meeting i.e., if membership is paid on December 31, the fees are due again the next morning (anyone who paid at the annual meeting or the banquet paid for this calendar year, not the next 12 months). LaVern distributed a fee structure to consider for next year including students \$5, new individual \$10/family \$20; regular \$20/family \$30; ten year \$180/family \$270. Keith Goering responded that more structure makes the treasurer's job more complicated. LaVern suggested sending solicitation letters in December and suggested that the funds from ten-year payments be drawn down by 10% each year. Kathy suggested \$100 for 7-years rather than 10 years. Special fundraising could be done for special projects. No decisions were made.
6. Trustees Report Don Kaufman reported that a group met last week to cut the dead trees down, trim bushes, and clean up around the monument. Should we get a landscaper to advise about managing current plants or replanting? This year required more mowings, currently at a good price; Hopefield

had previously been charging us \$400/mowing. Lights are on now. Ty Stucky put a couple of lights in to see what it would look like (bulbs @ \$125; he gave us one free). We will see how bushes come out in the spring and then can decide how to budget for upkeep or new plant materials there next year.

7. Annual meeting Sunday March 20 at Eden Mennonite Church. Keith Albrecht moved, Glen seconded, to get Rosemary Fisher for the speaker. Kathy will make arrangements with her. Other program: Research committee report on homesteads. Sing along with Marles Preheim or John Suderman of old songs/church songs. Any family stories (Ben R. Stucky family met recently and Johann Schrag family had items that could be shared). Election. Scholarship. Publicity should encourage visiting the monument to or from this meeting. Food suggested: poppyseed rolls or gorovei and coffee.
8. Interviews/Stories. Keith Albrecht read a letter suggesting that we invite Jason Holcomb to interview older Mennonites. Jason gave a presentation at Mennonite Goessel Thresher Days this year about interviews he had done with harvesters, and included Photos. His wife transcribes the interviews word for word. He comes to Kansas each summer. He is not a Mennonite. He got grant money for expenses for these harvest interviews. Jason is interested in our history. Some of our people could sit down with Jason to talk about their ancestors coming to America. We would have to make financial arrangements for his costs and then line up people for him to interview. He would have some background from his presentation last year. The board affirmed following up this idea.
9. Meeting monthly. In light of a number of ideas and business items needing attention, the executive committee will meet monthly for a time; trustees are encouraged to attend as often as they can but at least quarterly as now.
10. Scholarship Committee. Alice Suderman will chair. We need to find another person.
11. A place for SMCHA records. Should we have a place for our records? An address? Look what kinds of artifacts/records are at Kaufman Museum now and what is at Moundridge Museum now? The homestead materials that the Research Committee is working on – where will that go? The interviews that Keith Albrecht mentioned? The records that have been accumulated? The history? Books? Old board minutes are now at Mennonite Historical Library and Archives at Bethel College. LaVern thanked Kathy Goering for summarizing much information from the board files there. Menno Kaufman might have some records of Hopefield. Merv Schrag has files of his Dad in German. We don't want historical records to just be kept in someone's basement. Rosemary Fisher, president of the Moundridge Historical Association, said that Delbert Goering was liaison from SMCHA for many years. They are planning to build a museum soon which will house many artifacts as well as an office and displays. One current project is requests for area churches to gather genealogical background and early migration history to be in the museum, a project that would interest SMCHA as well.
12. Swiss Cookbook. Judy Goering mentioned at the banquet that her Centennial recipe book was falling apart which prompted the idea to reprint it. Our idea is to print only the ethnic recipes and attach a DVD of women demonstrating how to make the items. We are looking for someone who could film these demonstrations. Kathy has talked with a number of local women who thought this was a great idea, particularly to encourage our younger women to learn how to make some of the favorite Swiss recipes. The Board encouraged proceeding with the idea and gathering more information and finding someone who might underwrite the project.
13. Next meeting for Executive Committee and any trustees who can attend will be Wednesday, December 8, 2010, 5:00 at Citizens Bank. We will be able to conference call to Pretty Prairie. The next meeting then will be probably in February since LaVern is having surgery in January.

Minutes by Kathy Goering