

reunion



Some Menno-Hof trivia!

1. What year was the barn raising?
2. How long did it take to put up the entire structure?
3. What was the one dish that the ladies said needed to be on the barn raising lunch menu?
4. What is the average number of countries represented by our visitors each year?
5. How many of the United States are typically represented by our visitors each year?
6. Who owns Menno-Hof?
7. In 2012 four men removed an intruder from the premises of Menno-Hof, who or what was it?
8. How many *full time* staff members are there at Menno-Hof presently?
9. What is the average operating cost per Menno-Hof visitor?
10. What is the average admission income per visitor?
11. What is the average number of visitors annually?
12. How many nails were used in constructing the barn frame portion of the Menno-Hof facility?
13. How many area Anabaptist churches are Menno-Hof Support Partners?
14. Where do the majority of items in the gift shop originate?
15. What is the average monthly gas and electric bill at Menno-Hof?

Answers on page 3

Telling our stories points to Jesus

by Rachel Nafziger Hartzler

More than 350 friends of Menno-Hof gathered on October 3 at the Shipshewana Event Center to celebrate God's faithfulness during 25 years of "telling the story" at Menno-Hof. People sat in groups of eight at round tables with pleasant accents, including old and new photos of people who have been involved at Menno-Hof. After a welcome from Alvin Miller, construction coordinator for the 1986 Menno-Hof barn raising, and an opening prayer by Larry Chupp, president of the current Menno-Hof board, guests were served a delicious meal.

A lovely hum of conversation filled the banquet room throughout the meal as people from the four constituent groups (Amish, Beachy Amish, Conservative Mennonite, and Mennonite Church USA) and their friends told stories, renewed old friendships, and made new acquaintances.



Following the meal, Jerry Beasley, executive director of Menno-Hof, introduced Donald B. Kraybill, the keynote speaker for the evening. Kraybill, who is a Distinguished College Professor and Senior Fellow of Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies at Elizabethtown (Pa.) College, is widely recognized for his studies on Anabaptist groups and is considered the foremost living expert on Amish groups. Kraybill is the author or editor of more than 18 books, including *The Amish*, which he co-authored with Karen M. Johnson-Weiner and Steven M. Nolt (Johns Hopkins, 2013).

"Telling our stories matters," said Kraybill, "because telling our stories with integrity points to Jesus." Humans are "hard wired" (or created) to tell stories. He told about a granddaughter, who, before she was verbal, communicated a story without words. We tell our stories with words and with actions, which are then interpreted or given meaning by others. A dramatic example of this is the Amish Nickel Mines School shooting, where on October 2, 2006, five young school girls were killed and five more were injured. The emphasis on forgiveness and reconciliation in the response of the Amish community was widely discussed in the national media. The Amish immediately knew they would

Donald Kraybill (left) visits with David & Sara Miller and their son Caleb from Pendleton, Ind., during the book signing prior to the anniversary dinner.

cont. on page 2

Telling stories points to Jesus (cont. from front)
forgive because it is the “Amish way,” based on the life, teachings, death, and resurrection of Jesus, which guide Amish and other Anabaptist Christians.



Alvin Miller (above) welcomes everyone to Menno-Hof's 25th Anniversary dinner celebration on Oct. 3.

Kraybill referred to stories of sixteenth-century Anabaptist martyrs. Maria van Beckum and Ursula van Beckum were Dutch noblewomen who in 1544 were sentenced to death by burning because of their Anabaptist

faith that was considered heresy in the Netherlands. Repeated attempts by priests to deflect them from their faith failed. They went to the stake with “indefinable joy” and asked God to forgive the judges their sins, “for they know not what they do.” Kraybill confessed that perhaps humans can't forgive such horrific acts, but God certainly can, and through the power of the Holy Spirit and the example of Jesus, humans can authentically make such statements.

Kraybill told the story of Dirk Willems, one of the most prominent martyr stories. This Anabaptist escaped from his imprisonment and crossed a frozen pond, only to return to rescue his pursuer who was falling through the

breaking ice. This is a kind of story that transcends boundaries, inspiring people to return love for evil and pointing listeners to the way of Jesus. Kraybill rounded out his presentation with numerous recent Anabaptist stories that challenged those present to repeat stories and to tell their own stories with integrity.

Kraybill concluded with words from the last proverb of *Rules of a Godly Life*, a popular Pietist devotional source for the Amish that was written in the early 18th century: “Finally, be friendly to all and a burden to no one. Live holy before God; before yourself, moderately; before your neighbors, honestly. Let your life be modest and reserved, your manner courteous, your admonitions friendly, your forgiveness willing, your promises true, your speech wise, and share gladly the bounties you receive.”

While board members collected an offering for the ongoing ministry of Menno-Hof, Alvin gave the answers to the Menno-Hof trivia questions that were on the tables. (See trivia questions on front) Many people were surprised to learn that Menno-Hof is owned by the board of directors. The program of fellowship, information, and inspiration was concluded with acknowledging the committee who planned the event (Lovina Rutt, chair; Len Geiser; Elsie Miller; Wayne Schrock; and Fern Yoder) and praise to “Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,” as those gathered filled the space with the musical lines of the “Doxology.”

Donald Kraybill and Steve Nolt signed copies of *The Amish* both before and after the program. This comprehensive account of the faith and life of 40 Amish groups continues to be available for purchase at the Menno-Hof gift shop.

Rachel Nafziger Hartzler lives in Goshen and attends College Mennonite Church. She is a member of the Menno-Hof Board of Directors.

Your gift makes a difference!

Recently a couple from Saskatchewan, Canada, came to Menno-Hof for the first time. They come to Shipshewana every summer but had never taken the time to visit Menno-Hof. I happened to be at the cash register when they came in and I got them started on their tour. When their tour was completed and they came back through the gift shop, the lady came to me with tears in her eyes and hugged me saying, “I have some

Anabaptist relatives in my family but we have been away from them for so long. When I heard this presentation and the stories I was just captivated and there was something within me that felt like I have found that missing link. I will be back in here next summer and I want to be able to spend a lot more time in here.”

—Susan Miller, Menno-Hof managing director

This is just one of the many stories we could share about interactions with our visitors. We are thankful that Menno-Hof is sought out by so many individuals (around 20,000 a year!) and that we have the privilege of having their attention for over an hour as they listen and learn.

At least 30% of our budget needs to come from donations. The staff and board are diligent in being good stewards with what God has given. If you have already given—thank you! Your gift does make a difference.

Contributions are tax-deductible and can be sent to: Menno-Hof, PO Box 701, Shipshewana, Ind., 46565



Coffee, Cookies and Community: part II

Objective: to reinforce the Anabaptist values of *community* and *service* while stimulating thought and action related to how we do justice and witness in the world as we make lifestyle decisions that reflect our values and commitment to follow Christ in daily life.

Bring cookies to share ~ coffee will be provided | RSVP requested 260.768.4117 or info @mennohof.org

☑ January 19, 2014, 6 p.m. at Menno-Hof (RSVP requested)
A cup of cold water: service in the Amish-Mennonite tradition
John D. Roth, professor of history, Goshen (Ind.) College

☑ March 16, 2014, 6 p.m. at Menno-Hof (RSVP requested)
Creating a safe place: let the children come
Merlin Miller, The Haven, White Pigeon, Mich.

☑ February 16, 2014, 6 p.m. at Menno-Hof (RSVP requested)
Reaching out to others: realizing and sharing gifts
Larry & Maxine Miller, Mashulaville Dormitory, Macon, Miss.

☑ **April 20, 2014**, 6 p.m. at Menno-Hof (RSVP requested)
When the ordinary becomes the extraordinary: Jesus and coffee
Paul Kurtz, Hemisphere Coffee, Mechanicsburg, Ohio

Welcome!



Ruth Miller joined the Menno-Hof staff as part-time guest services associate in June 2013. She assists in cash register training and the overall operations of the book and gift shop.

Ruth is no stranger to Menno-Hof. She has volunteered as a tour guide since 2009. She is also a

volunteer for CASA (court appointed special advocate for neglected and abused children) and Greencroft Healthcare, Goshen.

Prior to retirement Ruth was employed as an elementary teacher for Middlebury (Ind.) Community Schools. Her interests include reading, walking, engaging in conversation over coffee, attending concerts and musicals.

Ruth lives in Goshen, Ind., and attends College Mennonite Church. "I love to meet people and Menno-Hof is a great place for that to happen. People from all over the world come to Menno-Hof and it is a privilege, joy and blessing to be part of this mission."

by the numbers

525 people attended the annual Singspiration Sept. 8 on the front lawn.

350 friends of Menno-Hof enjoyed the 25th anniversary celebration dinner on Oct. 3.

904,150 visitors to-date (since Menno-Hof opened in 1988).

Beginnings & endings

hosts & hostesses:

Chuck & Judy Dabbs
Port Huron, Mich. | Dec. 2013 - May 2014

Ben & June Kenagy
Albany, Ore. | Dec. 2013

Frederick & Sandra Gingerich
AuGres, Mich. | Feb. 2014 - Mar. 2014

Thank you! May you be blessed as you have blessed us and the Menno-Hof visitors!

Menno-Hof Trivia answers (see front)

1. 1986
2. One week. It took two years to complete the inside work.
3. Pie!
4. 73 different countries
5. All 50 of them.
6. The board of directors. This group is made up of persons from the Amish, Amish-Mennonite, Conservative Mennonite and Mennonite Church USA churches.
7. A skunk!
8. None. Everyone is part-time with a total staff hours of 2.4 FTEs.
9. \$9.61 average cost per visitor
10. \$5.48 average admission income per visitor
11. Approximately 20,000
12. None. Wooden pegs were used.
13. 14 churches
14. Locally, made by Mennonites and Amish
15. \$1,133.86

We sort of "happened" on this place (Menno-Hof), not knowing that it was going to become a favorite of our trip. We spent almost three hours there and learned so much about the Anabaptists. We hope to host a bus trip to the area and this will definitely be on our itinerary!
—recent online review

DIRECTOR'S DESK

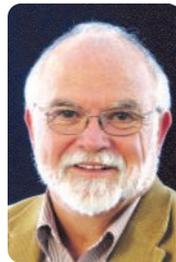
This quarter I am pleased for the Director's Desk to be used for thoughts sent by Tim Lichti, Menno-Hof's first executive director, who was unable to attend the 25th anniversary dinner.

Reminiscing by Tim Lichti | Menno-Hof director (1987 - Jan. 2000)

I was sad that I could not be present for the Menno-Hof celebration dinner in October. It has been a special part of my life journey to have participated with so many of you in bringing this ministry into reality and to see and hear the many stories that have come out of Menno-Hof. Memories of my days at Menno-Hof are numerous and fill me with emotion. Perhaps it is good that I am not there to say this since several minutes might elapse as tears would need to be wiped away.

In the past 25+ years we have traveled from flea market ministry to Menno-Hof, to engagement with the faith communities that make up the population of Lagrange and Elkhart counties. Generations of directors and board members have come and served well. My hope and challenge is that Menno-Hof never lose sight of the vision that was shared through tears during one of the early board meetings by Daniel Bontrager, pastor at Woodlawn Amish Mennonite Church, "I want our work to never lose sight of the sense of mission behind this project. We desire to reach others (and our own) for Christ by the sharing of our stories."

I have been privileged to serve the church in many ways. I have been a pastor, director of Menno-Hof, conference minister, and now a teacher of pastors at Hesston (Ks.) College. Through this time I have encountered the value of the faith community but never as vividly as I did during the creation of Menno-Hof. I continue to hear, and have not grown tired of, the value of having hooks and pegs on which to hang our stories, in remembering our heilgeschichte "the stories of salvation history." May we not grow weary of the confession of our own short-comings and the way God has and continues to be an active participant with us in the building of the Kingdom of God. May God bless the ongoing ministry of Menno-Hof. Shalom.



Jerry Beasley
executive director

Menno-Hof staff:

Jerry Beasley, executive director
Susan Miller, managing director
Charlotte Long, program and communication associate
Don Miller, facility and grounds associate
Ruth Miller, guest services associate

Board of Directors:

Larry Chupp, president, Shipshewana, Ind.
Lovina Rutt, vice-president, Goshen, Ind.
Andrew Eversole, Goshen, Ind.
Rachel Nafziger Hartzler, Goshen, Ind.
Dorothy Hostetler, Shipshewana, Ind.
Donna Jones, Shipshewana, Ind.
Orie E. Lehman, Shipshewana, Ind.
Daniel B. Miller, Goshen, Ind.
Wayne Schrock, Millersburg, Ind.
Don Stauffer, Union, Mich.
Alvin J. Yoder, Shipshewana, Ind.
Fern Yoder, Millersburg, Ind.

Hours:

Monday—Saturday: 10 a.m.—5 p.m.

Summer hours (June, July, August)

Monday—Friday: 10 a.m.—7 p.m.

Saturday: 10 a.m.—5 p.m.

Reunion is published quarterly to keep our friends informed of happenings at Menno-Hof. Send questions or comments to director at info@mennohof.org

Menno-Hof Amish-Mennonite Visitors' Center

PO Box 701
510 S Van Buren St, SR 5
Shipshewana, IN 46565
Tele: (260) 768-4117
Fax: (260) 768-4118
E-mail: info@mennohof.org
Web site: www.mennohof.org

Menno-Hof wish list:

~32" - 42" flat screen TV
~21"-28" snow blower
~love seat for apartments
~8'X12' garden shed

Thanks to our loyal supporters we have received 8ft. tables!

If you are interested in donating any of the listed items, contact Jerry or Susan at **260.768.4117**. Monetary contributions can be sent to: **Menno-Hof, PO Box 701, Shipshewana, IN 46565**



MENNO-HOF

AMISH-MENNONITE VISITORS' CENTER

P.O. Box 701

Shipshewana, Indiana 46565

*See and Hear
the Amish-Mennonite Story*