



The Menno-Hof Newsletter reunion



Friends since age 13 by Peg Powell Mountain View, Calif.

On Saturday, September 20, 2014, a group of six lively women descended on Menno-Hof wanting to sign up for the tour and explore the store all at the same time! It turns out that these are six of the original seven teenage chums who formed what they fondly call their “gang” around the time they started high school in 1949 at Springfield (Ill.) High.

The girls kept busy with the school orchestra, choir and school yearbook. The high school years found them together in church activities, swimming on Lake Springfield, taffy pulls, hayrides and parties in each other’s homes. All college bound, they enjoyed getting together in their free time. Three (Joann, Judy and Marci) had grown up in Springfield. The other four (Emelia, Peg, Barb and Doris) had moved to Springfield from disparate places.

After high school graduation, all attended various colleges and kept in touch via cards, letters and summer breaks from college. They re-connected at reunions with gabbing, giggling and catching up on each other’s families (all seven had families ranging in size from 2 to 5 kids).

In 1995, their beloved Emelia succumbed to
(cont. on page 3)

Community rallies together to support pieces of their “quilt”

by Loren Beachy, Goshen, Ind.

The sun is sinking. I glance out the corner window in Vernon’s shop. I am reminded of the auction we held here just a few months ago. Then the visitation line moves. My gaze moves the other direction and downward, into the old familiar face lying in the casket. Freeman S. has passed on. I look my last. Of course, we’ll hardly remember Freeman’s face like this. Rather, the perpetually grinning, sparkly eyed, belly laughing Freeman S. is the one who will be lodged in our memory.

The line shuffles forward, shaking hands and murmuring a few words with Freeman’s close relatives who are seated facing each other over a narrow aisle. And then, right behind the family, visible without being conspicuous, is the community.

This community is the one that turned out in huge numbers in March when Vernon had his farm auction. Now it’s 12 weeks later and Vernon is burying his father. The community is here again.

When I read the obituary today, I was surprised to see how small Freeman’s family is. He had two daughters and two sons—small by our standards. Usually, it is large families that lend themselves to large auctions and large weddings, church services, baptisms and funerals. There is no large family here. But there is support all over the place.

There is LeRoy and his wife. He lives across the fields, owns a woodworking business and enjoys playing Rook. His daughters are students of Freeman’s grandson, Calvin. There are Elmer and Alice who live a few miles up the road in Honeyville. They work at the same local sale barn that Freeman worked at. Over yonder stand Tim and Violet. They live in the same Michigan community as Freeman’s daughter Polly.

We’ve heard people say, “we don’t fully realize what we have until something tragic happens to our family.” Freeman died yesterday morning. Help poured in from neighbors and friends who abandoned their Saturday plans and came to make preparations for a funeral. I wasn’t there, but Calvin



cont. on page 2

Menno-Hof

wish list:

~37"-42" flat screen TV
~ mic stands
~ adjustable music stand

If you are interested in donating any of these items, contact Jerry or Susan:

260-768-4117.

Thanks to friends of Menno-Hof, a sweeper has been donated for the host/hostess apartments.

Community rallies together (cont. from front) tells me the barn was cleaned, floors were swept, things were moved, the shop was washed and a tent was put up. I've seen it happen in our neighborhood too.

Monday night three inches of rain fell at Vernon's farm where the funeral was to be held Tuesday. Rain flooded the buggy parking area, ran through the tool shed where people were to be seated and pooled in the barn. The neighbors anticipated this and by 5:30 the next morning, people were pouring in the driveway. The mess was cleaned up without the family having to lift a finger.

A few years ago when an accident on the Indiana Toll Road claimed the lives of a few men in the same church, it was almost more than one district could handle. So, the surrounding districts pitched in and picked up the slack—warmly, quickly and compassionately.

We hope, and we pray, and we are thankful that this is how God intended it to be. Like a living patchwork quilt, each individual is connected to the pieces around him. Those pieces are connected to another ring beyond the first. When one piece, one soul, rejoices, the entire quilt rejoices. When

one person suffers, the whole quilt suffers, and each piece reaches out toward the sufferer, doing what it can to ease the pain, to smooth the path.

Of course, we notice and appreciate the community at times of rejoicing like at baptisms and weddings or business events like auctions. But it is when we suffer a loss, when our hearts are left grasping for answers, that we feel Christ's church most acutely. It is there. It soothes. And it carries us through.

As any quilter will tell you, a quilt is only separate flimsy pieces of fabric without thread and without a backing. The backing supporting us all is Jesus Christ. The thread holding us all together is love. And even that thread, that love, is God. After all, God is love. And the community is simply an extension of Him.

Loren Beachy is an Old Order Amish auctioneer and elementary school teacher living in Goshen, Ind. He is the oldest of nine children and enjoys reading, playing softball, volleyball and board games. For the past six years, Loren has been writing *The Plain Side*, a bi-weekly column, for the *Goshen News*. His first book, *Chasing the Amish Dream: my Life as a Young Amish Bachelor*, was released October 2014 and is available for purchase in the Menno-Hof gift shop.

Are you looking for a way to serve while sharing your faith?

Menno-Hof needs individuals and couples in agreement with Anabaptist values and beliefs to serve as host and/or hostess during April, June, July and August 2015. Responsibilities include conducting tours and some light housekeeping. Two furnished apartments are available on-site.

For more information contact Susan Miller, managing director: 260-768-4117 or smiller@mennohof.org.

An invitation to give...

Below are just some of the many positive comments we have received recently from our visitors. We are thankful that Menno-Hof is sought out by so many individuals (around 18,000 a year!) and that we have the privilege of having their attention for over an hour as they listen and learn.

At least 35% of our budget needs to come from donations. The staff and board are diligent in being good stewards with what God has given. We invite you to consider Menno-Hof in your year-end giving. If you have already given—thank you! Your gift makes a difference.

“Brought new respect and love for God! Thank you!”

“Thank you for a rewarding experience!” | “Very informative and enlightening”

“Thank you for standing strong for faith in God. Wonderful presentation!”

“A testimony to the goodness and faithfulness of God.”

“Very sensitive way to represent the way of life and religion.”

“Learned something new today!” | “So thankful for our heritage – Praise God!”

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

Simple Treats, Stewardship & Servanthood ~ A SUNDAY EVENING WINTER SERIES

Bring finger foods to share ~ coffee will be provided | please **RSVP**: 260-768-4117 or info @mennohof.org

Paying it Forward: Joyful Stewardship in the Anabaptist Tradition

January 25, 2015, 6 p.m. at Menno-Hof

John D. Roth, Professor of History, Goshen (Ind.) College

From the beginnings of the Anabaptist movement in the sixteenth-century, the principle of stewardship has been a central part of our understanding of Christian faith and practice. Good stewardship is one way of sharing the Good News of the Gospel ... and in the process, we ourselves are blessed and transformed. Drawing on lots of stories, John will reflect on the theological and historical basis for our commitment to Christian stewardship.

Driven by Mission: Fostering Community Health

March 22, 2015, 6 p.m. at Menno-Hof

Dr. James Nelson Gingerich, Maple City Health Care Center, Goshen, Ind.

Maple City Health Care Center is a medical home and primary care provider for 5,000 people in the underserved neighborhoods of Goshen. For 25 years, the center has worked to foster healthy community through relationships, empowerment, and integration. James will share stories of transformation and discovery as the center has learned to operate out of a call to mission and a sense of abundance.

How Jesus and Voluntary Service Messed Me Up!

February 22, 2015, 6 p.m. at Menno-Hof

Andre' Gingerich Stoner, Director of Interchurch Relations, Director of Holistic Witness, Mennonite Church USA, Elkhart, Ind.

How do we handle time and money in the "kingdom-of-God movement"? Why does Uncle Sam know more about my money-walk than my brothers and sisters in Christ? How do we resist the busyness and materialism of our culture, so that we can better love the Lord and love our neighbor? André will share stories from his own experience and from Anabaptist communities to reflect with us on these questions.

"Friends since age 13" (cont. from front)

cancer. In 1996, most of them were able to attend a special event in Columbus, Ohio, where an award was presented in Emelia's honor for Best Humorous Children's Book. After that, they wanted to get together more frequently than every five years so they started having mini reunions. Sometimes these mini reunions were at or near where one of them lived such as Florida, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Ohio. Sometimes they met up at an Elderhostel or similar offering, all three of which were in North Carolina. Last year, just before their sixtieth reunion, they visited and spent time exploring Arcola, an Amish community in Illinois. This year, they met in South Bend, Indiana, to explore Joann's favorite places. One of which was Shipshewana and environs, prowling around quilt shops and learning more about the Amish, especially at Menno-Hof. They found Menno-Hof very well done and fascinating!



by the numbers

380 people attended the 6th annual Singspiration on Sept. 14.

32 different religious affiliations have been represented by our visitors so far in 2014.

\$1,300 was given for Menno-Hof during the Singspiration offering. Thank you!

922,640 visitors to-date (since Menno-Hof opened in 1988).

Friends since age 13 pictured at Menno-Hof (l to r): Joann Sporleder, Peg Powell, Marcia Wilkins, Judy Bates, Barbara Sutton and Doris Lapp.

Photo by Larry Miller

DIRECTOR'S DESK



Jerry Beasley
executive director

Some may wonder why organizations or groups invest time and energy to develop a theme. At Menno-Hof we do this every two years and I believe all staff and board members would agree that it has been a very helpful tool.

The definition for “theme” is 1) an underlying dominate idea, 2) subject matter of conversation. The process of identifying our theme generates much conversation and thought in our Program Committee meetings, the group comprised of various board members responsible for

recommending a theme every two years. This initiative and conversation not only helps us understand each other’s thoughts and views but also helps pull us together as a team as we incorporate the theme in our operations here at Menno-Hof.

The theme recently developed and approved for 2015 and 2016 is Stewardship and Servanthood. We see these as Anabaptist values that can stand on their own or be linked as one underlying idea that will drive our program and communication planning. The first example of this is our 2015 Menno-Hof Winter Series (see page 3). Our hope in preparing the series each year is to stimulate thought and (continued below)



MENNO-HOF

AMISH-MENNONITE VISITORS' CENTER

P.O. Box 701

Shipshewana, Indiana 46565

*See and Hear
the Amish-Mennonite Story*

NON-PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
SHIPSHEWANA, IN
46565
PERMIT NO 17

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

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.

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.

Director's Desk (continued from above)

conversation regarding the theme and specific content of the series presentations. While the “theme” should not be a new idea or subject matter in Anabaptist faith communities, we do believe that they may be issues we all struggle with in general and agree are critical values in living a Christ-centered life. I hope you’ll plan to join us in January, February and March as we hear individuals present specific thoughts regarding the theme.

Thanks for all you do in supporting Menno-Hof—we greatly value your partnership!

Menno-Hof themes for 2013-2014: service and community