



# reunion



## A gift from a stranger

by **Elsie & Bill Siemens**  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan,  
Canada  
Menno-Hof hosts Dec. 2014

During our time at Menno-Hof we were always on the lookout for new experiences in the community. Earlier in the day we had heard of a quaint little café in the village of Emma, about five miles from Shippshewana. We decided to drive out that way and if it hadn't been for the sign, we would not have noticed the building on the corner as a restaurant.

Our waitress recognized that we weren't regulars. We told her we were Canadians, volunteering at Menno-Hof. She told us that she was a member of a local Mennonite church. Our conversation with her was pleasant.

Soon after we arrived, another customer came in and sat in the booth next to us. Contrary to the usual, we did not have any conversation with the gentleman. All he knew about us was what he overheard from our conversation with the waitress.

After a tasty meal and pleasant conversations, we asked for the bill. We were informed that it had been paid by the customer in the booth next to us. This visit to Emma Café will be etched in our memory as one of the many pleasant experiences of our stay at Menno-Hof.

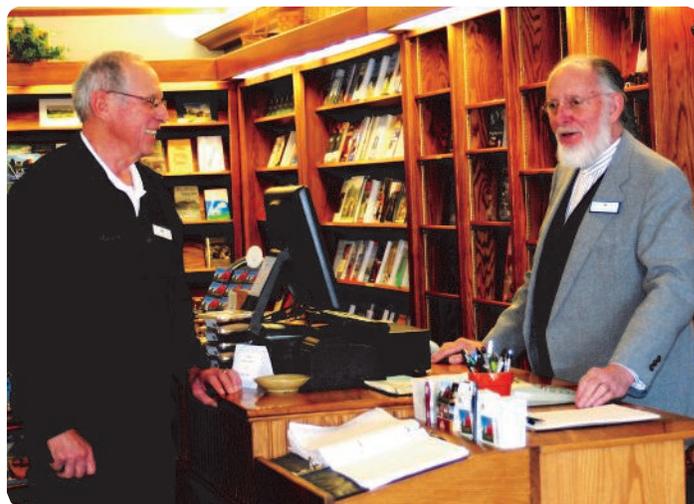
## Volunteering as a lifestyle?

by Charlotte Long, staff

Fred Tillery's story of how he became connected to Menno-Hof is an interesting one. It involves an Amish buggy, a historic mansion in Kansas and a heart that was seeking to trust in the Lord. But, let's start at the beginning.

Fred was born and raised in Kansas. He grew up attending the Baptist church with his family – his parents and one sister. Music was, and continues to be, a big part of Fred's life. He enjoyed singing in the church choir and at the age of nine, his parents bought him a bugle. "I drove my parents up the wall so they bought me a trumpet," Fred chuckles. He can still play any brass instrument that has three valves.

As an adult, Fred had a good job in Kansas for 20+ years that paid well with good benefits. But that's what it was – a job. It was sort of a rut, something you had to do. "Around 2001 I came to the conclusion that there's more to life than this so I grew wings and flew away." Since he was already volunteering



weekends as a tour guide at the Brown Mansion in Coffeyville, Kansas, it seemed natural for Fred to move onto the premises for his first full-time volunteer "job." He rented out his home and thus began his life as a self-described freelance volunteer.

So, where does Menno-Hof come in? We're almost there. Fred loves all things vintage so naturally, thrift stores and auctions have a pull for him. Not far from the Brown Mansion is a little town that has a thrift store that Fred frequented. He was surprised on one visit to see an Amish buggy for sale which was rare since there aren't any Amish in the area. Fred bought the single buggy with intentions of displaying it at the mansion. In the buggy he found a registration card for a William Smucker from Topeka, Indiana, with an address. Fred wrote William a letter, introducing himself and letting him know that he had just purchased his buggy. "Can you tell me a little bit about the buggy and about yourself?" William wrote right back. It was his buggy when he was

**Fred Tillery** (right) chats with John Preheim, Menno-Hof volunteer, while waiting for visitors.

*cont. on page 2*

## Volunteering as a lifestyle? (cont. from front)

newlywed to his wife, Amanda. Fred promised to visit William and Amanda some day and so began a relationship that lasted for many years.

Several months later, Fred traveled to Topeka, Ind., to visit with his new friends, the Smuckers, and decided to stop in at Menno-Hof to see what it was all about after having overheard a conversation about the place while at church. At Menno-Hof he met Oliver & Miriam Yutzy, then interim executive director and secretary, and had a nice visit and tour. The Mennonite values and theology resonated with Fred. On his second visit to northern Indiana a year

later, Fred again visited Menno-Hof and Oliver explained to him how they have volunteers stay for an extended time and assist with tours and various other things. “That’s when a light bulb went on,” says Fred. In 2003, Fred came to Menno-Hof for his first stint as a live-in host.

“Menno-Hof gives me a purpose that I didn’t have in my life,” says Fred. “When visitors come here, they see the workings of Christ through the Amish-Mennonite story in an audiovisual way which is powerful.” A highlight for Fred is meeting visitors from all around the world and in turn making new friends. It really is a small world after all. “If visitors can see how much I like Menno-Hof then I hope it rubs off on them. It’s rewarding to serve the Lord in this way.” Since his first stay in 2003, Fred has volunteered off and on at Menno-Hof for a total of 77 months.

Fred’s freelance volunteer lifestyle gives him the freedom to move from one volunteer opportunity to the next. He doesn’t own a

car, relying on public transportation, bicycle (especially when he’s in Shipshewana) and however far he can walk, weather permitting. He chooses to not own a house. What he enjoys most about the lifestyle is transition. “I changed my middle name ‘Thomas’ to ‘Transition,’” Fred jokes. Currently, Fred rotates between different volunteer locations in Maryland, Florida, Hawaii, Kansas and Shipshewana, Ind. “I feel very solid that it was the Lord that led me to the various volunteer opportunities,” says Fred. “The Lord has orchestrated these people in my life.”

Shipshewana and Menno-Hof are what Fred affectionately calls “home base.” “When I’m out and about and people ask me where I’m from, I tell them ‘Shipshewana, Ind.’” Whenever Fred’s in town, Wednesday is his day off and he can be found over at the Shipshewana Antique Auction. He always has an eye out for vintage brass instruments and often takes his own mouth piece and valve oil to pre-test potential purchases. In fact, on one occasion the auctioneer was trying to sell a large antique baritone and the seller asked Fred if he would play the instrument. It sold for over \$200! Fred enjoys the small town atmosphere in Shipshewana and appreciates how everyone does their best for the sake of the community. “The other volunteers and the people in the community fill such a void in my life.”

The biggest challenge about being a freelance volunteer? That scripture: *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding* (Prov. 3:5). “I try to map a course for all the different places I go, but ultimately I have to lean on the Lord and sit back and say, Lord, what’s next?” Fred has some heart health issues he’s dealing with currently. “Only God knows for sure how long I can keep doing this freelance lifestyle but I’m excited about the unseen possibilities that God has in store for me in the future.”



**Fred Tillery** (above), dressed for a day of serving as a tour guide at the Spruce Forest Artisan Village in Grantsville, Md.

### by the numbers | 2014

**18,448** visitors from

**71** different countries and

**all 50** United States. That makes **924,004** visitors to-date (since Menno-Hof opened in 1988)!

**Participate  
in global  
missions  
locally!**

Every year Menno-Hof welcomes visitors from all parts of the world and diverse walks of life. *Local* volunteers are needed to serve as tour guides to engage our visitors with the Amish-Mennonite story. Interested persons should be in agreement with Anabaptist values and beliefs. Also, one additional couple is needed for August 2015 as live-in hosts. Those responsibilities include conducting tours and some light housekeeping. A furnished apartment is available on-site. **For more information**, contact Susan Miller, managing director: 260-768-4117 | [smiller@mennohof.org](mailto:smiller@mennohof.org).

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

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

### 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.

### 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.

### Thank you for serving!

The Menno-Hof staff and board members would like to express our gratitude to **Rachel Hartzler, College Mennonite**, and **Andy Eversole, Townline Conservative Mennonite**, for their years of service as board members. Both Rachel and Andy shared their unique gifts and made critical contributions to the success of Menno-Hof during their terms. We pray that God will bless each of them in their life endeavors. Thank you Rachel and Andy!

Also, **Ruth Miller**, who served as guest services associate at Menno-Hof, ended her time in this position in December. Ruth definitely met a need in the book and gift shop during the 18 months she served in this position, using her creativity and teaching gifts to bless others. We're thankful Ruth will continue as a volunteer tour guide.

### Beginnings & endings

hosts & hostesses

#### Bill & Elsie Siemens

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan | Dec.

#### Frederick & Sandra Gingerich

Au Gres, Mich. | Feb - Mar.

#### Charlie & Leone Byer

Walsingham, Ontario, Canada | April

#### Susan Hallman

Waterloo, Ontario, Canada | April

#### Dave & Candace Stobbe

Winkler, Manitoba, Canada | May

#### Wally & Ruth Jansen

East St. Paul, Manitoba, Canada | May

BLESS YOU!

### Help keep the Anabaptist story alive: become a Menno-Hof member

Become a member and help us continue to tell the story of how God is working in people's lives—past, present and future.

#### Membership benefits

- the joy of supporting an organization with values similar to your own
- free admission for you, your family and friends
- quarterly *Reunion* newsletter
- 15% discount on gift shop items and books.

#### 2015 Menno-Hof membership

Yes, please enroll me as a member as indicated below:

**Individual—\$35** includes free admission for you; 6 admissions for your family and/or friends

**Family—\$50** includes free admission for you, your spouse and children; 10 admissions for your family and/or friends

Enclosed is an additional gift of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

*Gifts in excess of membership fee are tax-deductible.*

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

*Make checks payable to Menno-Hof and mail to PO Box 701, Shipshewana, Ind., 46565*



## DIRECTOR'S DESK



**Jerry Beasley**  
executive director

Much has been said in Anabaptist circles about the values of *stewardship* and *servanthood*. I think most of us would agree that many Anabaptist faith communities have left a visible trail in pursuing and attempting to live out our understandings and vision of these values in action. Often we immediately think of responding to crisis or extreme needs as ways to put action behind these two values. Participating in disaster responses and giving towards relief efforts are but two ways many have taken action to live out

these critical values. As we know, there are also many opportunities to implement stewardship and servanthood in our daily lives. How we display our wealth, how much we consume, how we care for the environment, how we care for our bodies, how we care for the sick and aged and how we participate and support the church and other ministries are just a few more of the challenges and daily opportunities we have to exercise these values. These values impact so many aspects of our lives and we hope you'll join us at our winter series events to hear the speakers present thoughts and experiences. We also welcome suggestions you might have for future series events related to this theme.



# MENNO-HOF

AMISH-MENNONITE VISITORS' CENTER

P.O. Box 701

Shipshewana, Indiana 46565

*See and Hear  
the Amish-Mennonite Story*

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

### Menno-Hof Amish-Mennonite Visitors' Center

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E-mail: [info@mennohof.org](mailto:info@mennohof.org)  
Web site: [www.mennohof.org](http://www.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

### Board of Directors:

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## Thank you

to all of our  
generous  
supporters that  
responded to our  
wish list  
needs in 2014!  
Your generosity  
is much appreciated!