

NOTES FROM THE ARCHIVES



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Canadian Moravian Historical Society, Edmonton Chapter
2304-38 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6L 4K9

What Have We Been Up To?

Annual Meeting -The 36th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Canadian Moravian Historical Society (CMHS) was held at Millwoods Community Church on Saturday, April 14, 2018. CMHS President Esther Vitt-Gonzalez welcomed 28 guests.

The business meeting was called to order at 2:12 pm and the minutes of the 35th annual meeting were presented for approval and accepted.

Joel Henkelman spoke about some of the updates in the Archives including progress in record sharing with the Alberta Provincial Archives and the Moravian Provincial Archives. He also provided a list of the digital file as of April 2018. The list is available upon request.

A new Board of Directors was elected as follows:
President - Esther Vitt-Gonzalez
Vice-President - Joel Henkelman
Directors:

Kerry Bloomer - Membership
Shirley Chandler
Darlene Nehring
BECD Representative - Rev. James Lavoy

Esther thanked outgoing directors Hazel Magnussen and Ruth Humphreys for their work in support of the Archives. A special thanks was expressed to Bill Brese for his support and ongoing work as our Archivist.

We enjoyed a Singstunde. Esther presented a brief history and led us in song while accompanied on the piano by Wilma Redberger. The program ended with prayer at 4 pm.

Special thanks to Wilma Redberger (pianist), Donna Goodwin (kitchen), Larry Goodwin (sound) and Elaine Bloomer.

Board Meeting - The first meeting of the new Board was held on June 27. The minutes of the April 14th annual meeting were reviewed and accepted.

The following Board members agreed to fill the currently vacant positions:

Secretary - Shirley Chandler
Treasurer - Darlene Nehring

Ruth Humphreys agreed to continue her support for the Archives in an advisory capacity. Kerry reported that as of the AGM the Historical Society had one new member and five renewing members for a total of 52.

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Efforts continue toward moving furniture and items from the Bruderheim Museum to the Archives in Millwoods. Kerry will coordinate this effort. Discussions were held on the best way to preserve the artifacts, particularly the musical instruments.

Efforts to digitize documents, registers, other holdings and possible translation of German Script was discussed. Help and support by individuals with skills in the German language and digital archiving is needed.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for the week of September 23rd.

Bruderfeld

120 years ago. On June 6, 1898, Bruderfeld celebrated the 3rd anniversary of the founding of the congregation and the 1st anniversary of the dedication of the church. After days of rain, the weather was sunny; however, there were no visitors from Bruderheim - blamed on the weather. Heimtal was strongly represented and the morning celebrations were attended by 200 individuals. Brother Schwarze opened the service, the choir put on a presentation and Brother Hoyler provided the sermon. The service closed with another choir number and closing hymn accompanied by the Trombone Choir. The instruments harmonized so badly that Brother Hoyler asked them to refrain from playing during the afternoon celebrations.

A large number of visitors from South Edmonton showed up in the afternoon. This brought the number of attendees up to 300 for the afternoon service. The Honorable Canon Newton was introduced as the guest speaker and spoke from the 11th chapter of Hebrews. (from The Hoyler Diaries, 1896-1909)



120 years ago - The Hoyer Map

On July 11, 1898, Brother Hoyer began drawing a wall-mounted map showing Edmonton and District. He was preparing for a trip to the United States. The map measures 6x9 feet and white muslin is used as the medium. The township lines are all shown as well as the farms of the members of the three Moravian Churches, outlined as green squares, roads and communities. After several days of work Hoyer determine that the walls in the parsonage 'hut' were too small so the map was moved to a wall in the Bruderfeld church. It was completed by July 28, 1898, in time for the trip to the US. The map was used in numerous presentations over the next two months. It showed the on-going work and needs in the Canadian District. The map currently resides in the basement of the Millwoods Church and is one of the prized possessions of the Canadian Moravian Archives. (from The Hoyer Diaries, 1896-1909)

Pleasant Point, Saskatchewan

100 years ago

The Pleasant Point Moravians migrated to Saskatchewan, primarily from the Dakotas and Minnesota, in the early 1900s. They were farmers and wanted to take advantage of the prime farmland the Canadian prairies had to offer. In 1909 Brother Hoyer left the Edmonton area and moved to Saskatchewan. By 1910 he had a church built at Pleasant Point.

By 1918 the Church was prosperous and growing. Robert Huebener was meeting the pastoral needs in Pleasant Point and Dundurn. The churches worked together to assist the pastor in purchasing a 5-passenger Ford car for use during the summer months. Besides paying for half the car, the Pleasant Point church was able, in 1918, to pay off its debt of \$1200 on the church building and continue its gradual growth.



The Pleasant Point Moravian Church was built in 1910 and had a growing membership of 60 by 1918.

1918 also had some difficulties. On October 20th the Sunday School, Church and Public School in Dundurn were ordered closed due to an epidemic of Spanish Influenza. The two communities were closely located and shared a Pastor. Two weeks later he came down with the flu and pneumonia. He spent six weeks in bed and remained very weak. It was February 1919 before church activities at either church could resume.

The church was purchased and put to use by the Mennonites. As of 2010, it showed an active membership of 87. It currently maintains a look very similar to its original configuration.

Strathcona and Edmonton

100 years ago

1918 was a 'flat' year for growth in the Strathcona congregation. 42 adults and children joined but 43 left. Most of those leaving transferred to other Moravian Churches, particularly Bruderheim and Bruderfeld. The congregation ended the year with 227 members and Rev. Hoyer as pastor.

During the same year the Edmonton, north side, Moravian Church continued to struggle. Its membership dropped from 28 to 25. The church lost its permanent pastor in 1914 and was being led by Rev. Hoyer or another pastor on an intermittent basis.

75 years ago

By 1943 the Edmonton church on the north side had been closed. Strathcona Moravian Church was now the Edmonton Moravian Church. Rev. Samuel Wedman was the pastor. He owned and lived in his own house. This allowed the congregation to rent out the parsonage and pay off an old note owing \$555 against the parsonage. The parsonage was now owned free and clear, by the church.



Rev. Samuel Wedman served as Edmonton pastor 1942-45 and 1947-51.

Despite an annual report that membership increased by only 4, 50 to 54, it was reported that "There is a slight increase in interest and attendance. Prospects are better for the future than they have been."

Eigenheim Church

75 years ago

Eigenheim Moravian Church was located in Carstairs, Alberta. By 1939 the church had lost its full time pastor. Since that time it had been sharing a pastor with Didsbury. In 1943 the pastor was Rev. William Kroening. The Sunday evening English service was dropped, leaving German services on Sunday mornings and afternoons. The Pastor was able to visit an average of only one Sunday a month; however, the prospects for the church looked good. The membership rose from 57 to 61 and the Annual Report stated that it was "A successful year."

In mid 1944 Rev. Clarence Riske took over as pastor. He was already serving Calgary and Didsbury. Several families left the church and, due to internal disagreements and division, membership began to suffer.



From the mid 1930s to mid 1940s the Eigenheim Moravian was a small but active country church.

Central Travelers

Central Travelers provides periodic tours to various parts of the world. This summer your editor, Joel Henkelman, and his wife joined a tour titled 'Moravian History Tour of Western Europe.' It was coordinated by Craig Mosebach of the Central Moravian Church in Bethlehem, PA, and set up through a travel agency. Dr. Paul Peucker, Archivist of the Moravian Church in America was our guide. We visited several European Moravian Churches and sites of significance in our Moravian history, including Hernnhut, Hernnhaag, Zeist and others. The tours are open to all interested individuals. Our group included mostly Moravians and individuals interested in learning about their European roots. More on the tour highlights to come...

The Moravian Star Factory in Hernnhut was one of the tour highlights.



Future Central Travelers tours include :

Nordic Splendor: A Coastal Adventure in Norway, departing November 2, 2019. The cruise takes you north of the Arctic Circle to see the northern lights. An optional add-on is a five day extension for a tour of St. Petersburg, Russia.

Cruise the Heart of the Rhine and Moselle Rivers: This is a river cruise through the Rhine country and central Europe, departing August 15, 2020. Several options are available including attendance of the Oberammergau Passion Play performed once every ten years.

For more information contact Craig Mosebach at cmosebach@rcn.com.

Canadian Endeavor Circle

75 years ago

The 'Canadian Endeavor Circle' newsletter was a periodical published primarily by and for the youth of the Canadian District through the 1940s and 1950s.

Summer camp at VanEs was particularly exciting in 1943. Rev. Clement Hoyler returned to Canada from the church he was serving in Green Bay Wisconsin for Camp. Besides the reunion with many friends, he ordained Rev. Elmer Stelter and Rev. Clarence Riske. They then had the opportunity to administer Holy Communion for the first time.

Other highlights from 1943:

- In March Heimtal held the dedication of their new bell. Guest speakers at the morning and afternoon services were Rev Wedman and Rev. Weiss. It was a wonderful feeling to hear the bell ring on Sunday mornings calling all to worship.
- In April the Rosedale Moravian youth formally organized a Youth Group and elected Martha Stern as president.
- Also in April the Bruderheim youth sponsored a district wide Missionary Rally. The guest speaker was Miss Burroughs from the Zanenna Indian Mission.
- In May, 54 youth from Edmonton and Bruderheim spent a day hiking. They ended it with a wiener roast, doughnuts and devotional.
- In November a Young Peoples Rally was held in New Sarepta. It was well-attended by youth from around the area.
- The war had a significant effect on the churches. The Endeavor Newsletters routinely listed the individuals from the Moravian Churches that were in active military service. The June newsletter reported that the Didsbury youth were concerned about making it to Youth Conference due to gas allowances. The Heimtal youth had a pie social on May 5th, to quote, "One could hardly realize that sugar was rationed when all the delicious pies were set out on the table."