

SHENANDOAH MENNONITE HISTORIAN

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Quarterly publication of the
Shenandoah Valley Mennonite Historians:
Randall Shank, editor

Annual Meeting to Be Held at Hildebrand Mennonite Church

The Annual Meeting of the Shenandoah Valley Mennonite Historians is set for October 19, 1996, at 7:00 PM. This year the meeting will be held in Augusta County at the Hildebrand Mennonite Church.

The meeting will focus on the history of the Mennonite Church of the Southern District. Speaker for the evening will be Kathryn Huber, a native of Augusta County who is presently working on a book about the Springdale Mennonite Church. She will give a short address which will be followed by a time of dialogue and interchange.

As usual a business meeting will follow. A slate of offic-

ers for the coming year will be presented and its approval voted on. Positions to be filled this year include vice president, secretary, and treasurer. These are for two year terms.

The time remaining will be spent discussing the ideas presented by the Heritage Center task force and the process which is being contemplated by the executive committee of the Shenandoah Valley Mennonite Historians. Those recommendations are contained in a Vision Statement which is included in this newsletter on page 5.

The suggested route of travel to get to Hildebrand Mennonite Church from

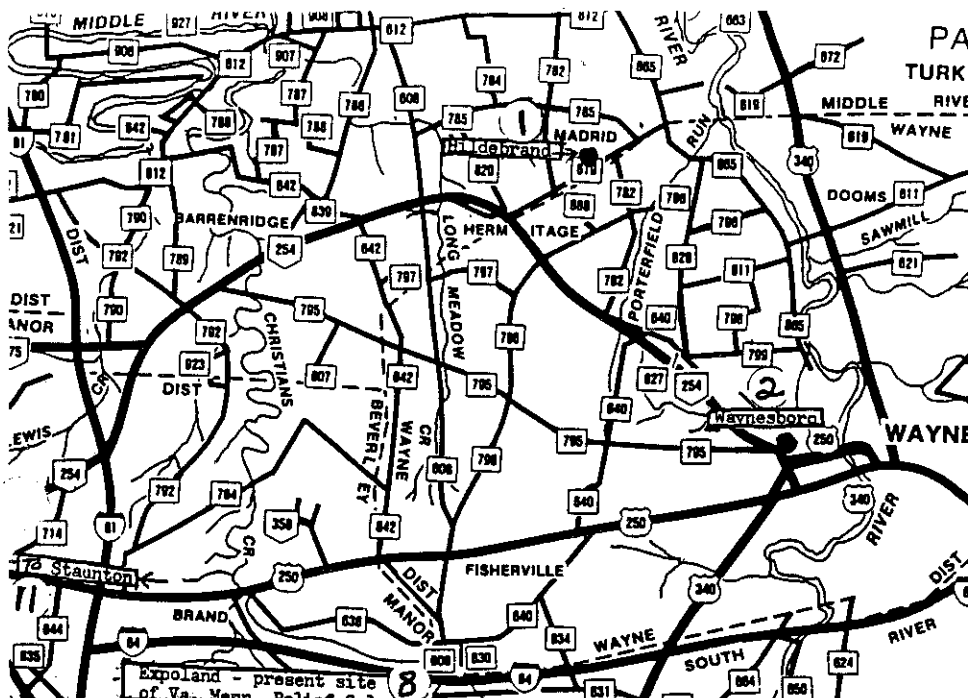
Harrisonburg is to go to Exit 225 of Interstate 81, just south of Verona. From there take Rt. 275 east 1/2 mile where it joins Rt. 254. Take Rt. 254 for 5 miles. Turn left on Rt. 619 (Hildebrand Church Road) and go 1 mile.

A bus may be available to take those from Harrisonburg who do not wish to travel alone or at night. For information call Jim Rush (434-0792) by October 12.

Shenandoah Valley Mennonite Churches 1822-1885

<u>Church</u>	<u>Date Built</u>
Trissels	1822
Pike (Moyers)	1825
Springdale	1825
Brennemans*	1826
Plains*	1826
Weavers	1827
Hildebrands	1828
Bank	1849
Powder Springs*	1858
Newdale*	1871
Mt. Clinton	1874
Mt. Pleasant*	1875
Mt. Carmel*	1881
Union Chapel*	1883
Zion	1885

* No longer in use



North American Mennonite Heritage Centers

The following information may be of interest to those who are traveling this fall and winter to other areas of North America. Taken from the Mennonite Yearbook, this is a list of some of the Heritage and Information Centers in other Mennonite communities.

In Shipshewanna, Indiana, visit Menno-Hof, an interpretive center of Mennonite and Amish history and faith. It opened in 1988.

When in Kansas, there are two locations to visit. The Kauffman Museum at Bethel College in North Newton. Founded in 1941 and relocated in its present facility in 1983, it details cultural and natural history of the Plains and includes the story of the Mennonites who came here to live.

The second Kansas spot is very unique. The Pioneer Adobe House Museum in Hillsboro is the only remaining Dutch-German-Russian Mennonite adobe house. This seven room whitewashed adobe house was built in 1876. In 1958 it was founded as a museum to provide a view of the life of the typical immigrant farmer following 1874.

There are also two places to visit in Manitoba, Canada. The Mennonite Heritage Village in Steinbach, founded in 1967, presently includes about 40 acres. Parts of this center are only open in the summer months, however the main interpretive centre is open year-round.

The second location in Manitoba is the Mennonite Heritage Centre in Winnipeg. It was founded in 1978 in order to further heritage education and record preservation in the Canadian Mennonite community.

The Meetingplace, in St. Jacobs, Ontario, serves as an interpretive center of Mennonite faith and life for the visitors attracted to this area of Canada. It was founded in 1979.

Pennsylvania has more information centers than any of the other areas. In the Lancaster area there is the Hans Herr House Museum, founded in 1974. This is a restored and refurnished 1719 farm home which is listed in the National Register of Historical Sites. There is a guided tour as well as a self guided exhibit and information center. Special events are held here three times a year.

Also in Lancaster is the Mennonite Information Center. It was founded in 1958 and seeks to interpret the faith and practice of the Mennonite Church both locally and worldwide. Of special interest is a actual size model of the Hebrew tabernacle.

Founded in 1976, The People's Place, in Intercourse, Pa. is dedicated to educating the general public about Amish and Mennonite peoples. It includes a bookstore, a quilt shop, an art gallery, and other shops as well as a museum and an interpretive center complete with video and film rooms.

In Harleysville, Pa. is the Meetinghouse. Founded in 1990, it includes a Heritage Center, an Historical Library and Archives, and a Mennonite Life Center, which focuses on present Mennonite life and ministry. The Heritage Center features changing exhibits of both past and present Mennonite life in eastern Pennsylvania.

The Germantown Mennonite Church Corporation in Philadelphia was founded in 1953 with the purpose of enriching the contemporary Mennonite identity and to present the history of the Mennonites through displays and a library. Preservation of the oldest Mennonite meetinghouse in North America, along with the operation of the William Rittenhouse Homestead are a part of this group's endeavor.

In Berlin, Ohio is the Mennonite Information Center. Founded in 1981 it provides the public with information on the local Amish and Mennonite community. The worldwide heritage of the Anabaptist movement is depicted on a very large mural.

Closer home, in Grantsville, Md., is Penn Alps, Inc. Founded in 1958 it provides a place for the marketing of Allegheny handicrafts, a place for relaxed dining and a place for conferences and family gatherings. Also on the grounds is a crafts village during the summer months and the Miller House Peace Center.

Henry Shank (1758-1836)

Henry Shank was born in Conestoga Township Pennsylvania in 1758. He was the youngest son of Michael and Magdalena Shank. Henry had four sisters and two brothers. In 1782 he married Anna Reiff, who was the daughter of John and Anna (Garber) Reiff. Anna was born in 1762 and died in 1819.

We don't know the exact date when Henry and Anna moved to Rockingham County Virginia, but we do know he sold his share of his father's land in Pennsylvania to his brother John in November 1783.

Henry and Anna lived near Edom Virginia close to his brother-in-law Abraham Brenneman. They were blessed with seven children.

Henry was a farmer and one of the first ministers in the Virginia Mennonite Church. Bishop Henry died in 1836. The inscription on his gravestone reads "for 52 years a diligent minister of the Gospel".

The years he served the Church were years of change. The Church was growing in numbers so meeting in the homes was becoming a real challenge. By this time Henry was ordained as the first Bishop of the Virginia Mennonite Church. He felt strongly against the building of Church buildings. One other point of dissension was the switch to English in worship services. The "schism" was so deep the other group of Mennonites chose their own Bishop and ordained some ministers. These troubles went on for several years and finally a group of churchmen from Pennsylvania

called a meeting and set about to reconcile the two groups. Bishop Henry Shank agreed to their recommendations in the interest of church unity. By that time Bishop Henry Rhodes had died, so once again the whole Virginia Mennonite Church was united under one Bishop. The ministers of both groups were recognized as preachers in the Mennonite church.

Henry and Anna Shank are buried at Lindale Mennonite Church Cemetery. They had seven children.

"Hans" John (ca. 1783-1858) is thought to have been the oldest of Henry's children. The name of his first wife is not known, but they had five children. His second wife was Magdalena Smith and they had five more children. John moved his family to Columbiana County, Ohio following the disagreements in the Church of the 1820's. John was a farmer and minister in the Mennonite Church.

Magdalena (1784-1859) married Jacob Blosser and they had six children.

Henry (1787-1839) married Elizabeth Heatwole, the third child of David and Magdalena Heatwole. They lived near Cherry Grove before they moved to Indiana. They had twelve children. Some of the children moved on to Versailles Missouri.

Samuel (1790-1864) married Elizabeth Funk and they had eight children. Elizabeth was the daughter of Christian Funk and Susan Geil. Samuel and

Elizabeth lived in the Broadway area. He was a farmer and a minister in the Mennonite Church. After Elizabeth died in 1848 he married the widow Magdalena Miller Beery. Magdalena was a sister to Jacob's wife Frances.

Jacob (1793-1871) married Frances Miller and they had six children. Frances was the daughter of Elizabeth Brenneman and Michael Miller. They lived west of Harrisonburg near Weavers Church. After Frances died in 1836 he married Magdalena Stauffer and they were blessed with six more children.

Anna (1795-1867) married Christian Brenneman and they had twelve children. Christian was the son of Abraham Brenneman and his second wife Magdalena Shank. They were farmers near Edom. Christian was a strong supporter of building Brenneman's Church on part of his ancestral estate.

Elizabeth (1803-1879) married Samuel "Shem" Heatwole, the eighth child of David and Magdalena Heatwole. They lived near Edom first and then moved back to the farm where he grew up just south of Harrisonburg. They were farmers and had ten children.

There is a letter written in German that might point to and eighth child. His name was Joseph and the letter is written by Stevanus Rothgeb in 1831. In the letter Stevanus calls "Heinrich Schenk the preacher" to task for money he still owes "your son Joseph". This mystery Joseph may never be tracked down.

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Heritage Center Task Force Wraps Up Preliminary Study

As was reported in the winter issue of this newsletter, a task force was chosen by your executive committee to look at the several options concerning the establishment of a Mennonite information center in the Harrisonburg area.

This group met five times between June and September of 1996 with most members present at each meeting. During the first several meetings, the main thrust was to decide the purpose and direction for the proposed center. Input was received concerning how we can best tell our particular

story of the Valley Mennonites to others. This story should be for present and future generations of Mennonites, and for those who have little or no understanding of our story and our faith.

Later meetings focused on development of a center with the possibility of other closely related businesses and interests being included. This called for suggestions of a location and steps for its acquisition, including the steps necessary to develop the accompanying vision.

During the final meeting of this particular task force, a state-

ment of this vision was completed and sent back to the executive committee of the Shenandoah Valley Mennonite Historians as a recommendation for action.

Page 5 of this publication contains this Vision Statement and recommended next steps. This statement will be presented at the Annual Meeting where the executive committee will be looking for approval from the membership to continue taking steps to implement this vision.

Bishop Henry Shank

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Editor's Note

In our Fall 1995 issue of this newsletter was an article on Shenandoah Valley Pioneer David Heatwole. Soon thereafter I received a letter from Minnie Carr, one of his descendants making a correction as follows:

"David Heatwole (1797-1867) was the father of "Potter" John Heatwole, who was my great grandfather. My information comes from HISTORY of the HEATWOLE FAMILY by Cornelius J. Heatwole and my family members. David was not a potter or silver smith. His wife died and left small children. Potter John was put in the home of his aunt, Frances Hildebrand; his brother, Gabriel was put in the home of his uncle Gabriel Heatwole at Mole Hill. David (FATHER) sent Gabriel

to Lexington to study under a silver smith at the age of 17. "Potter" John learned the pottery trade, perhaps under his uncles on the Coffman side (his mother's brothers).

David, the father, lived in Greenbriar County after his second marriage. After that wife died, he came back to Rockingham County and lived with some of his children. My great grandfather on the Rhodes side, was a deacon in the Mennonite church. In his diary of 1867, he mentions going to see "Old Uncle Dave" in May and baptized him. A month later he went to his funeral."

The Editor would like to thank Mrs. Carr for this information.

-Randy Shank
editor

Anna and Bishop Henry Shank's descendants are many with names like Bare, Blosser, Brenneman, Brunk, Burkholder, Good, Heatwole, Karicofe, Miller, Rhodes, Shank, Showalter, Swope, Weaver, Wenger and more.

Sources used:

The Shank's Family from Pequea Creek by Arthur Shanks
History of the Heatwole Family by Cornelius J. Heatwole
History of Mennonites in Virginia (1727-1900) by Harry Anthony Brunk
Abraham Brenneman Family History by Charles D. Brenneman
"Four Generations of the Descendants of Michael Schenk and Anna Stauffer" by Richard W. Davis., Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage January 1994.
Shank Family research by Randall and Janet Shank, unpublished.
--- Janet Shank

VISION

Final Draft

FOR A

HERITAGE / INFORMATION / MUSEUM CENTER

We visualize the development of a center that provides a means by which people can come to appreciate the history, faith, life and culture of Shenandoah Valley Mennonites.

We see it as a center to provide for the accumulation, preservation and display of artifacts and historical memorabilia that pertain to Mennonites of the Shenandoah Valley.

A heritage center such as this should be an outreach tool and an educational opportunity whereby appreciation can be gained regarding historical Anabaptist roots, past generations and the lifestyles and beliefs which they engendered. It should reflect past and present Mennonite life.

It should be a means of "telling our story." Children want stories and drama when they visit a heritage center and look at artifacts and memorabilia from the past. They want to explore and perhaps even "touch." Telling our story should include in a sensitive manner the history and life of all the varieties of Mennonites and Mennonite institutions of the area.

Permanent and rotating exhibits should be included. Programming should be such that interest is aroused among all ages.

The building should be architecturally attractive, inviting and expandable. It should be carefully planned and developed, taking into consideration selected businesses such as a restaurant, a gift shop/bookstore, quilt shop, etc.

We believe it to be desirable to consider a site large enough that might possibly support an annual outside event or a festival type of thing that would attract crowds of people, including Mennonites but also other-than-Mennonite people.

We believe that the center should be developed and operated independently from any other Mennonite institution of the area, but that it work in close cooperation with the Menno Simons Historical Library and Archives at Eastern Mennonite University and other local institutions that collect the documents and artifacts relating to Mennonites in the region.

NEXT STEPS

To accomplish the vision outlined above the task force suggests that the Shenandoah Valley Mennonite Historians pursue:

1. Ideas from as many sources as possible.
2. Putting together a group of 10-12 interested people who can give financial backing or artifacts to provide steering in the development of such a center.
3. Enabling the formation of a corporation or board in whom authority is lodged for fund-raising and the obtaining of a site, as well as its development. This corporation or board will be accountable to SVMH.

Book Review:

A Mennonite Journal 1862-1865: A Father's Account of the Civil War in the Shenandoah Valley Edited by John R.

Hildebrand and published by
Burd Street Press, a division of White
Mane Publishing Co., Shippensburg,
Pa., 1996. 100 pages, \$9.95.

This significant and unique story of Civil War life on the home front in a Mennonite home in Virginia scores a first! No other Mennonite diary or journal of this magnitude has been located heretofore. This journal kept by Jacob R. Hildebrand of northern Augusta County only came to light recently, thanks to John R. Hildebrand, a great-grandson from Roanoke, Virginia. It provides an unparalleled glimpse into a Mennonite home that was very involved in the Confederate cause in that unhappy and most destructive war. Except for a few German phrases the journal was penned in English. Spelling, punctuation, grammar and capitalization appear as in the original.

Jacob R. Hildebrand was a trustee of the Hildebrand Mennonite Church near Waynesboro where ten Civil War veterans were buried in the cemetery. At Christmas time 1863, in the middle of the war, Augusta County Mennonites nominated five men to go through the lot for minister as well as eight men from which two deacons were chosen. Hildebrand was nominated to both lists. The lot fell upon him to become one of the two deacons, whereupon he was ordained. Seven years later he was ordained to the ministry, in which capacity he served for several decades. The journal

provides unusual insight into a financially successful Mennonite father who was devout and faithful to his church and who attended Virginia Mennonite conferences after he was ordained.

Feelings and loyalties ran deep in this war that has been called the "Brothers War". From one perspective his unequivocal support of the Confederate cause is understandable. All three sons of Jacob R. and Catherine (Rodefer) Hildebrand eventually enlisted in the war, serving in the 52nd Virginia Infantry and 1st Virginia Cavalry. The oldest son, Benjamin, enlisted in July 1861, fought through the entire war, and was at Appomattox when General Lee surrendered. Jacob's brother, with whom he worked closely, also finally joined the 52nd, but only after he tried unsuccessfully to get a substitute. Because of the new Virginia militia law passed in November 1861, Jacob found himself enrolled in the reserve class of the local militia. Though never called to active duty he paid the \$500 commutation fee at least once (July 29, 1864), to exempt himself from war duty.

Politically and militarily astute, Jacob R. closely followed troop movements and whether

"our troops" were winning or losing in various battles. Often, he noted the number of casualties. Frequent trips to town kept him updated on war news. He voted in elections and occasionally attended a political meeting. He also served on the grand jury when called. There is no change of tone in his journal after he became deacon. Church news on a Sunday was at times much briefer than military news. Ecumenical in outlook, the Hildebrands also worshiped occasionally at the Barren Ridge Dunkard Church, but their primary loyalties were to the Mennonites.

Virginia Mennonites, as pacifists, faced dire straits early in the war and again late in the war when the \$500 commutation fee was rescinded. Quite a few were pressed into service early in the war. Eventually many Mennonite young men in the neighboring county of Rockingham, where by far the largest group of Mennonites lived, went into hiding or went North to escape service. In Augusta County, however, a larger percentage seem to have gone into service and did not go

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Next Page

Book Review: *A Mennonite Journal* continued from page 6

AWOL, as quite a few from Rockingham did. Days of prayer and humility proclaimed by Jefferson Davis were faithfully observed in Augusta County but not in Rockingham.

Jacob R.'s first cousin, also named Jacob Hildebrand, served as bishop for the several small Mennonite congregations in Augusta County. The bishop's dairy for 1861, a church record book, and other papers survive and are found in the archives of Eastern Mennonite University. A Mennonite Journal includes some background material regarding Augusta Mennonites from the bishop's collection. From his May 23, 1861 diary entry we learn that Bishop Hildebrand voted for Virginia to secede from the Union.

Periodically, our journalist, Jacob R., took food and supplies to his sons in the army and stayed overnight to be with them and catch up on how the troops were doing. War news, crops and farming, weather, significant dreams, grand jury duty, attendance at church and "sacramental meetings (communion), his longing for peace, paying taxes, having grain "impressed" by Confederates, economic activity, deaths, loving concern for his sons in the army-- it's all there. At least once, he along with others, went to the battlefield "to bury our dead". Many daily entries were quite short. First-handedly we sense the relief numerous times when the sons return home safely. When they leave again they are committed to the Lord "who doeth all things well", or he commits their

bodies and souls to God's care.

War's many impacts came all too close home in 1864, when General Sheridan and the Yankees, with destructive vengeance, burned barns, mills and some houses in the Shenandoah Valley in September and October. (Hildebrand's buildings on several farms apparently were spared.) Within a short time a nephew was killed, first son Benjamin came home with a painful wound, second son Gideon came home with a wound after a bullet passed through the heart of his horse and hit Gideon's leg. All this occurred only several months after Gideon and three others on a scouting expedition were surprised by Yankees and they "had to Run". What was the end result of that fracas? Jacob R. simply wrote that "Gideon shot one of them but lost his horse" and his pistol! A week before the war ended, Gideon died from a wound "by an accidental shot of one of our own men".

The book deserves wide reading. This family was not typical among Mennonites but it is also a part of the story. As more of the Mennonite experience during the Civil War becomes known we find the whole range of responses and reactions to the war that one can imagine. Regrettably, the journal has numerous lapses of time when Hildebrand wrote nothing. The longest such stretch is June 15, 1862 to July 25, 1863. Very briefly, son Benjamin recorded a few things for several days and

weeks during that time period.

Editor John R. Hildebrand is a retired civil engineer, a graduate of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and he served in the Air Force during World War II. An amateur historian of the Civil War, he has very helpful and explanatory comments on war developments, specific battles and military officers mentioned in the journal. He provides genealogical background for the family and gives helpful information about persons frequently mentioned. The volume concludes with a number of appendices, endnotes, and an index.

James O. Lehamn, Archivist
Eastern Mennonite University
and Virginia Mennonite
Conference

Scheibli: Jakob Tschumi to America in 1750 with two daughters. To Berkeley Co. W.Va.; one daughter married Daniel Scheibli who lived near Shepherstown W.Va. Jakob's will in Nov 19, 1782 made Scheibli sole heir. Who is the Scheibli? Who are his descendants? --Ruth R. Acevedo, Rt. 4, Box 107, Laurel Del. 19956.

Notes & Queries

Shank: Would like to trace further the family of Henry and Elizabeth (Heatwole) Shank. The Heatwole genealogies seem to know nothing about any children other than David, Jacob, and Samuel J. Other children named are Henry, Abraham, Anna, Martha, Frances, Rebecca, Elizabeth, Barbara, and Susan. Parents Henry and Elizabeth lived in Va. and then in

Indiana, but apparently returned to Va as they are buried in Breneman Cemetery near Edom. ---Janet Shank, P.O. Box 870, Broadway, Va. 22815

To become a member of Shenandoah Valley Mennonite Historians and to receive future copies of this newsletter, send name and address and 1995 dues (\$10 per couple, \$6 for single) to:

Jim Rush, 780 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA. 22801.

The "Notes & Queries" section of this newsletter is meant to be a forum whereby the reader can obtain information about Shenandoah Mennonite families and happenings. If you have a need for such information, send us a letter with your inquiry. We also will consider short notes which may be of interest to others. Be sure to send your name and address so that others can reply to you. We will attempt to print as many queries as space on this page allows. Send to Randall Shank, P.O. Box 870, Broadway, Va. 22815

Shenandoah Valley Mennonite Historians
780 Parkwood Drive
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

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