

A picture is worth ...



On February 27th the NHF held its Annual General Meeting in the Neuberghal Community Centre. Even Ted Klassen was there.

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was completely built with brick walls and was used as the kitchen. This is where the chimney was located, which extended through the roof. They didn't have separate bedrooms, the parents usually slept in the big room and the children in the small room. The back room was larger than the front room, and was used as the dining room and the living room. The furniture – table, benches, bedsteads, and other furniture – was built by the head of the house or by a neighbour who was better at carpentry.

Two quarters, or 320 acres was designated by the residents of the village as pasture land for the cattle. This parcel of land was at the south end of the village. Cattle and sheep were gathered each morning by a herdsman who was hired for the job. Every evening they were herded back to their owners.

In 1884-85 a school was built in the middle of the village. Of the building of the school and the settlement of the village I don't have personal memories, but as was mentioned before I know only what I have heard from my forefathers, because I was born in 1883, September 3rd. Now to continue about the school, Johan Friesen, son of Martin Friesen, was the first teacher in the new school. I can still remember him because he was my first teacher. All the instruction was in German. The subjects were reading, writing, arithmetic and memorizing Bible stories and catechism, etcetera. In 1900 a new and bigger school was built.

In 1919 the Government of Manitoba passed a law that the English language should be instructed, and some over zealous fanatics wanted to ban religious instruction. The results of the mentioned law are described in detail in "Wohin, Woher, Mennoniten" section three, page 75-76. As far as we were concerned we didn't have any problem with the government, because in 1916 we already had 1½ hours of English instruction and religion. In 1919 our school was proclaimed a district school and was under the Department of Education. We had English and German instruction plus religion.

I, Peter G. Hamm, was elected a school trustee in 1919. In 1931-32 we had our first qualified teacher, Miss Eva Friesen. She taught for two years. It needs to be said that the good old school inspector, Mr. Finn from Morden served from 1919-28 and was very good to us at the time. The school functioned until 1962. Twenty-two teachers have taught in the three Village schools from 1881-1962.

The house the Jacob Friesens live in was built in 1882 by Martin Klassen. It is the oldest house in the village. The house B.F. Hamm lives in was built in 1883 by Gerhard Hamm. Jacob Schwartz's house built in 1883 by Johan Klippenstein, his father-in-law. Anna Klippenstein's house was built by her father in 1885, and Anna Funk's house was built by her father Bernhard Funk in 1886. The other buildings have all been built later except the barn of Elizabeth Klippenstein and the B.J. Hamm barn, they were built when they settled here in 1880-81.

Peter G. Hamm was a former school teacher, school trustee, secretary treasurer from 1920-51, as well as a photographer and farmer.



Spring 2005

Coming events

May 15

Mennonite Literary Society event featuring David Elias, Armin Wiebe, & Cate Friesen.
- 7 pm at the Krahn's barn.

June 2

Auction for Ed Schmidt at 6 pm, in Neuberghal.
Administrator for Ed Schmidt:
Dick Hildebrand, 324 5413.
Bill Klassen Auctioneer (204) 324 4433,
<www.billklassen.com>.

July 15-17

Mennonite Journey (begins at Altona EMM Church).

Come & visit

Tours of Neuberghal - a Mennonite street village - are available upon request:

- * 1 to 10 people @ \$5 per person, includes coffee
- * 11-25 people @ \$4 per person, includes coffee.

Call ahead to make arrangements

We also take special requests for other types of tours and events. Please call or e-mail us for details on how we can accommodate your group.

Ph. (204) 324 1567 or 324 1612
email: krahnp@borderland.ca

Neuberghal Heritage Foundation

*John Giesbrecht
Rose Hildebrand
Frieda Klippenstein
Karen Martens
Peter Klippenstein (treasurer)
Wendy Friesen (secretary)
Teresa Hamm (vice chair)
Margruite Krahn (chair)*

Neuberghal

Notes



Mr. Peter G. Hamm with his students.

Founding Neuberghal

Tony Driedger (former teacher) with Peter G. Hamm

We begin with the memories that our parents and grandparents have told us. The settlement on the East Reserve had a lot of swampy stony land which was worthless for the grain farmer. So about half of the settlers decided to settle on the west side of the Red River. Among those were eight of our grandparents and their families. They chose a six square mile piece of prairie, three miles long and two miles wide. In the middle of this piece of land the village plan was surveyed. There were 14 yards on the east side of the road, each 16 rods wide and ½ mile long. To begin with they planned to have yards only on the east side of the road, but later on the west side of the road was surveyed too and soon homesteads appeared there too. The names of the above mentioned grandfathers and their families who settled here are as follows: Martin Friesen, Bernhard Klippenstein, Heinrich Klassen, Gerhard Wall, Peter Klippenstein, Cornelious Dueck, Martin Kehler, Martin Klassen.

Almost all of the homes were built in the same style. For example there were four rooms, the two rooms at the east end were the front room (fayatus), the others were the back room (hingatus) and the small room (kleineshtove). They were larger than the east rooms. The west and east rooms were divided by a brick wall which was called the "fire wall". At the east end was a room, eight feet by eight feet which

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While there may have been other Sawatzkys in Neuberghthal over the years, I will focus on the family of Heinrich Sawatzky (18 Feb 1867 to 28 May 1939)

1858 Johann Sawatzky married Justina Friesen (28 Aug 1836 to ?). After giving birth to Helena on 11 Dec 1859 and C(K)atarina on 28 Nov 1860, Justina

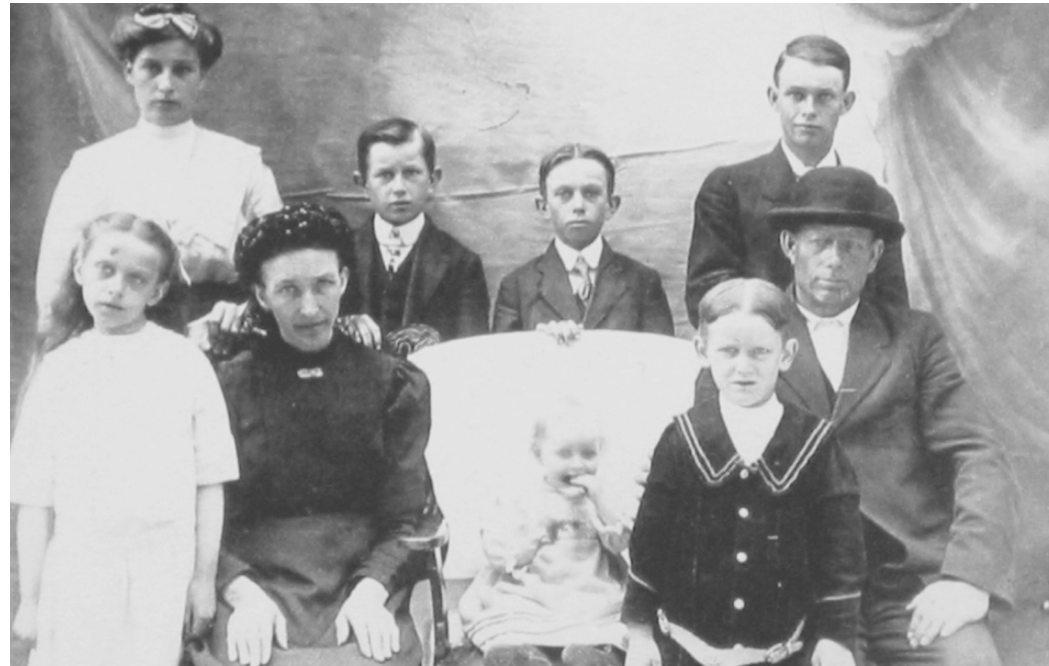
on 18 Apr 1877, Helena decided to move her family to southern Manitoba, probably settling down in the Hochstadt are, east of Altona. On 28 Jan 1879 widower

The Heinrich Sawatzkys

Lawrence Giesbrecht

and Anna Hamm (07 Oct 1872 to 18 Nov 1918). Heinrich's birthdate is based on the Julian calendar. In Canada his birthday was always celebrated on March 2, the "new calendar".

According to Horst Penner, the Sawatzky name descends from Johannes Zawacky of West-Prussian/Polish nobility, who attended the Elbinger University in 1620. Over the years several name transformations, such as Sawatzki, Seiwatzki, Sowatzki, and Sawatzke are



(back, l-r) Bernhard, Johann, Heinrich.

(front, l-r) Anna, Anna (Hamm) Sawatzky, Maria, Andrew, Heinrich Sawatzky - 1914.

recorded*. Although somewhat tenuous, Henry Schapansky draws a genealogical line to Johann Sawatzky in Wall dorf near Elbing, who was a minister in 1743 and married to Johanna Wiens. Their son, Thomas (1720 to c.1780), had a son, Peter Sawatzki (04 July 1760 to 19 May 1843) born in the Vistula delta area. Peter's second marriage (04 May 1801) to Margaretha Rempel (1780 to 28 March 1853) presumably took place in Schoenwiese, Chortitz Colony, South Russia.

From here the genealogy can rely on records in the *Bergthal Gemeinde Buch*. Peter and Margaretha had a son, Peter Sawatzke (13 Mar 1811 to 19 May 1843). This Peter married four times, the first time on 18 Oct 1832 to Helena Mandler (1814 to 04 July 1858). To this union was born Johann (09 May 1837 to 18 Apr 1877) in the Bergthal Colony. On 28 Sept

died. On 17 Apr 1866 widower Johann married the widowed Helen Kauenhoven

Heinrich Klassen of Neuberghthal married Johann's widow and now all of her six children by two husbands had a stepfather. Incidentally, Johann Sawatzky's daughter, (C)Katharina married Heinrich Hildebrand on 11 Dec 1883. The rest of Helena's children presumably grew up in the Klassen home in Neuberghthal. Her son, Heinrich Sawatzky, married Anna Hamm on 03 Dec 1893. Anna (07 Oct 1872 to 18 Nov 1918) was the daughter of Andreas and Maria Enns Hamm of Neuberghthal. Heinrich's younger brother Bernhard (30 Nov 1870 to 08 Mar 1926) never married and lived and farmed together with Heinrich. I am unaware as to when Heinrich Sawatzky took possession of the farmstead at NW25-1-1W on the south side of PR 421 and the east side of the village street in Neuberghthal where he and Anna raised their family. According to their daughter Anna, the house, attached to the barn in the usual house-barn style, was built in 1902. The floor plan was the usual one. There was an ample upstairs. The original house was moved into the backyard and served as a granary until recently. It was finally dismantled about 2003. The breezeway separating the house from the barn had a well with a pump in it. The barn was kept clean, the

Braun (30 Nov 1831 to 03 Aug 1891) whose husband, Jacob Braun (13 Oct 1816 to 28 Nov 1864) left her with sons Johann (06 July 1858 to 13 Sept 1924), Abram (17 Aug 1860 to 18 Oct 1919), and daughter Susanna (10 Aug 1863 to 10 June 1933). Of five children born to Johann and Helena only Heinrich and Bernhard Sawatzky survived to adulthood. In 1875 Johann and Helena Kauenhoven Braun Sawatzky took their family to North America. They arrived in Quebec on board the S.S. Quebec on 20 July 1875 in the company of 92 other Mennonite families. Whereas most of their fellow travellers settled in southern Manitoba, Johann and Helena took their family to the Fargo area in what was then Dakota Territory. From Cass County Land Titles Records we gather they may have bought land here. After Johann died here at the age of 39

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inside walls were painted and got regular washings. This was especially appropriate when dairying became part of the farm diversification in the 1930s. All the Sawatzky children* were born before WW1. When mother Anna died at age 46, likely of tuberculosis, one week after the war ended, Heinrich was left with a young family of seven children. Less than a year later his oldest son and daughter married and young Anna moved up into the responsibility of keeping house, cooking, laundering, milking, etcetera, for a household of six – before electricity and modern conveniences. Her younger cousin, by one year, Helena Krueger, from across the street and a little farther south often joined Anna in the chores, especially during busy times like harvest. She always spoke of those times as fun times. Heinrich, in addition to farming with a crew of growing sons, took up auctioneering. He conducted many sales for the Mennonites from southern Manitoba who were moving to Mexico and Paraguay in the 1920s. From all appearances he became quite prosperous. In the late 20s he drove a Willys Knight sedan and adopted tractor power for the farm. The farm buildings were well maintained. In the mid 30s he developed health problems related to diabetes. This began to show up when he broke a foot

Russian heater completed



NHF update

Recent work on the restoration of the Friesen Housebarn has included the completion of a rebuilt Russian heater. The initial budget was for a heater that was not fully functional, but later the NHF realized their longterm goals would be best served by a fully functional heater, including a bakeoven. Thus the NHF hired Keystone Masonry of Winnipeg after the original budget had been set. The new heater looks excellent, but the total cost of the project (\$14,000) went significantly over the budgeted \$6000. Recent fundraisers, private donations, and an additional grant have raised more than half of the shortfall. At the time of publication, the NHF wishes to thank these private donors:

- Paul & Jacqueline Bilonski (W'pg)
 - Brad & Karen Braun
 - Joe & Lois Braun
 - Menno & Helen Braun
 - John & Martin Friesen (Vancouver)
 - Anne Friesen
 - Menno & Joyce Friesen
 - Mary Braun (MacGregor)
 - Ted & Lintie Friesen
 - Vivian Friesen (Carter, MB)
 - John & Norma Giesbrecht
 - Larry & Teresa Hamm
 - Robert & Sybil Hamm
 - Henry & Mary Hiebert (Altona)
 - Peter & Rose Hildebrand
 - Debbie Jobin
 - Henry Kebler
 - Helen Kebler
 - John Kebler
 - John & Ruth Klippenstein
 - Mary Krueger
 - Ted McLaughlin (W'pg)
- *The NHF continues to gratefully accept & acknowledge donations.

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in a jump (or fall) off a load of hay. This resulted in a toe amputation. After some time a leg was taken as well. Then the other leg was removed and for some time he got along on a regular wheelchair as well as a device on bicycle wheels that were chain driven from hand cranks. With both legs missing from mid-thigh, balancing on wheelchairs became a bit of an art, especially after imbibing in spirits with friends.

Through all this I, his grandson, never saw him despondent. His humour was dry and wry. For example, when my father quite severely cut his hand with an axe through his mitten, his father-in-law commiserated by consoling him that his hand would heal soon enough, but what about that mitten? His youngest daughter, Mary, who learned how to give needles, etcetera, under the direction of Dr. Breitenbach from Altona took care of her father until he died at home on 28 May 1939. A double funeral was held at home under the trees on the west end of the house. His former neighbour and friend, Heinrich Klippenstein, had died the day before, on 27 May. The officiating minister was Rev. Jacob Friesen from Lowe Farm.

*If you wish to see the list of the writer's sources of information or the list of Sawatzky children, contact Rose Hildebrand of Altona, or Paul Krahn of Neuberghthal.

Comings and goings

Karen Martens has resigned as Vice chair of the NHF, but remains on the Committee, working on community events. **Peter Klippenstein** has taken on the role of treasurer of the NHF, while **Teresa Hamm** has assumed the role of Vice chair.

This year the **Mennonite Journey** will be dramatized once again, during the Sunflower Festival, July 15 - 17. This year the play will be directed by **Marilyn Houser Hamm**. For information about being involved, or to buy tickets, contact **Rose Hildebrand** at 324 6294 or <prhild@mts.net>.