

OMHGS Newsletter

OREGON MENNONITE HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 1, Number 1

September 1988

PROPOSED O.M.H.G.S.

The PURPOSE is:

- to record and preserve the history of Mennonite and related groups in Oregon, for present and future generations.

GOALS are:

- to collect, preserve and organize records, writings, and artifacts of Mennonite groups;
- to aid historians and genealogists;
- to increase interest in Mennonite history and genealogy;
- to involve persons in OMHGS from each Mennonite congregation in Oregon;
- to establish such facilities as are necessary to fulfil our purposes.

MEMBERSHIP is:

- open to any individual or organization supportive of the purposes and interested in the history, thought and/or genealogies of Mennonite groups in Oregon. The organization will be guided by its members, having one vote each.

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS shall include:

- holding semi-annual (or more frequent) meetings, to include varied and pertinent presentations;
- sponsoring occasional special events, such as genealogical workshops, heritage tours, exhibits;
- publishing a periodic newsletter;
- considering facility needs.

The ORGANIZATION will be adequate:

- to carry out purposes, goals, programs and projects;
- to become a non-profit organization in Oregon;
- to include an executive committee, consisting of chair, vice chair, secretary, and treasurer; and additional committees as needed, such as membership/finance, program, projects.

COSTS will include:

- operating expenses such as: stationery, postage, telephone;
- newsletter publication;
- promotion efforts;
- project and program needs;
- long range possibilities; establishment, maintenance and staffing of facilities such as archives, library, museum.

NEXT MEETING

October 30, 1988, 2:30 p.m.

Salem Mennonite Church
1045 Candlewood Dr. N.E., Salem, Oregon

Program - arranged by Marjorie Nofziger

Welcome and opening prayer - Allison Collingwood,
co-pastor
Salem Mennonite

Devotional

Schrock family history - Perry Schrock

Fairview Mennonite Church history - Irvin Gerig

Election of Officers - nominations from the floor

Benediction

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The JOSEPH SCHROCK (1852-1943) family history will be presented by Perry Schrock, a grandson. Perry was born in Lebanon, OR on August 8, 1927, the second child of Elmer and Bertha Heyerly Schrock. He married Sophia Miller on June 26, 1949. They had six children. After her death, he married Audrey Kenagy Bender on June 11, 1960. To this marriage a son was born. Audrey had three children from her first marriage.

Perry and family attended the Fairview Mennonite Church until he began helping in the Sunday School work at East Fairview, east of Lebanon, in 1952. He was then asked to be Summer Bible School superintendent at Plainview in 1953, and has continued worshipping and working in that congregation. He is presently teaching an adult Sunday School class, serves on the Alms Committee, is a Mennonite Mutual Aid representative, and a conference delegate.

For twenty years he was office manager and bookkeeper for Nofziger Feed and Seed, then he worked eight years at Commodore Mobile Home Manufacturing Co. For eleven years and currently he is a U.S. mail contractor with a route in the Lacombe area east of Lebanon.

He is residing on a small farm east of Lebanon and enjoying their twenty-five grandchildren and doing research on family genealogy and working on his stamp collection when he has time.

The FAIRVIEW CHURCH history is written by Irvin Gerig. He was born August 17, 1920 at Albany, OR, the eldest child of Christian C. and Ida Boshart Gerig. He married Lois Birky on June 12, 1947. They have four children and nine grandchildren. They attended the Fairview Mennonite Church where Irvin had been baptized by his grandfather, C. R. Gerig, bishop of the congregation. He has served as congregational chairperson as well as in other capacities at Fairview.

About 1973 the family began attending services at Bethany Mennonite Church nearer their home. Irvin is now teaching an adult Sunday School class and serves on the Pastoral Committee.

Irvin is retired and enjoying the work on his acreage near Albany, after working for twenty years at Northrup and King Seed Co., and twenty more years self-employed selling and servicing Surge Milking Machines, while also doing a little farming during all those years.

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SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES TO DATE

The first meeting of the Oregon Mennonite Historical and genealogical Society was held on November 7, 1987, at 2:30 p.m. at Albany Mennonite Church, Albany, OR.

There were fourteen persons present: Allie Kauffman, Charity Kropf, Mabel Roth, Margaret and Ralph Shetler, Mr. and Mrs. Sol Warkentin, Perry Schrock, Beulah and John Fretz, Hope and Cliff Lind, Marjorie and Alf Nofziger.

The meeting was in charge of Hope Lind, historian of the Pacific Coast Conference of the Mennonite Church. The stated purpose of the Society is "to record and preserve our history, including church and family history, for the present and future generations".

A discussion followed in which a number of persons shared their ideas of what we want to do in future meetings, since it was evident that all present would like to have more meetings. It was also the concensus of the group that we should go ahead with planning and organizing a society.

An offering of \$19.50 was received to cover any expenses, and John Fretz will act as treasurer.

The next meeting was announced for April 17, 1988, 2:30 p.m., to be held at Bethany Mennonite Church, Albany, OR. This date was later changed to April 24, 1988.

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On November 12, 1987 a letter was sent to about twenty-five

Mennonite historical societies, libraries, and conferences in the United States and Canada, as listed in the Mennonite Yearbook, informing them of the beginning of OMHGS, and asking for suggestions and ideas to help us get organized. Quite a number of these replied positively with literature and many good suggestions.

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THE SECOND MEETING was held April 24, 1988, at 2:30 p.m. at Bethany Mennonite Church, Albany, OR. Hope Lind opened the meeting, and re-stated the purpose of the society.

Twenty persons were in attendance: Marjorie Nofziger, Margaret and Ralph Shetler, Mabel Roth, Charity Kropf, Hope and Cliff Lind, Floyd and Norlene Kropf, John Willems, Beulah and John Fretz, Dan Widmer, Perry Schrock, Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Hartzler, Wilbur Kropf, Eldon Birky, Mrs. Julia Snyder, Mrs. Mary Schlabach.

Beulah Roth Fretz gave a presentation on the history of the Joseph and Mary Egli Roth family. Margaret Shetler told of the history of the Zion Mennonite congregation, and the book she wrote on the Zion cemetery.

There was some discussion on the tasks of a planning committee; expanding the "purpose" statement; membership; how we should function; planning future programs; how should we contact Mennonite and related groups, and other interested persons and groups.

Nominations were opened for the Planning Committee. Names given were Margaret and Ralph Shetler, Marjorie Nofziger, Hope Lind, Dan Widmer, and John Fretz. John volunteered as treasurer. All five were asked to serve on the committee. It was decided the Planning Committee would meet May 10, 1988, 6:30 p.m. at Salem Mennonite Church, Salem, OR.

The next meeting was announced for October, 1988, with more information to come.

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THE PLANNING COMMITTEE met at Salem Mennonite Church on May 10, 1988. All members were present. The date for the October meeting was discussed, and October 30, 1988 was set.

The Committee worked at re-defining the statement of purpose. Hope Lind will write the up-dated statement. Future meetings and organization were also discussed, also kinds of meetings that would be of most interest to all. Election of officers will take place at the October meeting.

The October program will feature the Joseph Schrock family, and the history of the Fairview Mennonite Church.

Also discussed was the matter of old records, etc. now stored at Western Mennonite High School in the vault. Some items have apparently disappeared. Should we find a better place to keep these materials? The new chapel building in the plans for WMHS will have an archive department for OMHGS use.

Other items discussed were arranging for non-profit status with the state, and tax exempt status. The newsletter should be worked on soon and ideas were shared on how often to publish it, what contents, cost, etc. Membership fees were also talked about.

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A NEWSLETTER PLANNING meeting was held at Hope Lind's home on August 11, 1988, with John and Beulah Fretz. We talked about what to include, how often to publish, mailing list, etc. It was decided to go ahead with the first issue, and mail it gratis for the first or second issue to the mailing list we have already established through contacts by letter, and interested persons. This present issue was prepared by Hope Lind and John Fretz. We will try to publish twice a year until other plans are made, and send these out between meeting dates, so there will be some form of contact each three months.

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IDEAS FOR THE NEWSLETTER. We would welcome any ideas or suggestions you could share with us for the newsletter. What would you want to see in it? How could it be better used to get information out to recipients? We will be happy to listen to whatever you share with us.

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DONATIONS FOR THE SOCIETY. We would ask you to consider donations of the following items: books, charts, Bibles, hymn books, old style clothing, household items, genealogies (whether typed or handwritten), publications, manuscripts, letters, pictures, maps, deeds, wills, church records, artifacts, sermons, documents, diaries, etc. Some fear has been expressed that some of these can be lost or discarded, but they can be important to the Society.

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"THE HISTORY OF OREGON MENNONITES", the book by Hope Lind, is progressing well, and the co-editors have spoken favorably at this point in time. More information will be released as it is available.

BOOKS DONATED to this date are as follows:

From Raymond Urie Kenagy, donated to OMHGS, June, 1988,
Descendants and Ancestors of Johann Martin Bontraeger, by
Marion G. Bontrager, printed 1979;

Descendants of David and Alice (Kenagy) Hostetler, printed
1976;

Eash Family Record and History, by Levi T. Eash, reprinted 1978;

Kanagy Roots and a Branch, by Ezra Kanagy, printed 1987;

These donated as a memorial to Urie E. and Bertha (Neusch-
wander) Kenagy, parents, and Emanuel L. and Martha (Hostetler)
Kenagy, grandparents.

Two other genealogies he donated are Troyer (Dreier) Family
History, by Milo R. Troyer, printed 1974; and Descendants of
Joseph Miller and Christian Eicher, by Loretta J. Yoder, in
1970.

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IN FUTURE OMHGS NEWSLETTERS:

Vignettes on various persons - photos - sketches - drawings -
short items on families and congregations - history of Mennonite
settlements - first buildings - first cemeteries - book reviews -
information on how to preserve letters, records, etc. - reports
and speeches by program presenters - genealogy information, etc.

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NEWS NOTES

The NEUSCHWANGER REUNION (Henry and Froenika Neuschwanger; John
and Mary Elizabeth Shellenberger Neuschwanger) was held July 16
and 17, 1988 in McMinnville, OR, planned by Orville O. Neusch-
wanger, 2736 McDonald Lane, McMinnville, OR 97128, and Weldon D.
Neuschwanger, historian for the reunion, 3616 South Quince Street,
Olympia, WA 98501.

A BROCHURE to explain OMHGS and its purpose with full information,
will be ready for the next newsletter mailing according to plans.

YOUR IDEAS ARE WELCOME for future meeting programs. Let us know
what you feel would be of interest or most worthwhile.

THE SPRING 1989 OMHGS MEETING will feature one of the Mennonite congregations in Dallas, OR, and a history of one of the Dallas Mennonite families. Date and place will be announced in the next newsletter.

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MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership will be open to members of Mennonite congregations and affiliated groups. Other interested persons and groups, not necessarily affiliated, who have an interest in OMHGS and its purpose will also be welcome.

Membership dues, payable in advance, will be firmly announced in the next newsletter. We need to wait for final approval of state non-profit and tax exempt status before accepting dues.

Tentatively, dues will be as follows:

Student	\$ 5.00
Single	10.00
Family	15.00
Contributing	25.00
Sustaining	50.00
Life (to be announced)	

Membership will include the Newsletter.

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