



# OMHGS

## Newsletter

OREGON MENNONITE HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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### HISTORY OF THE CALVARY MENNONITE CHURCH

Aurora, Oregon

June 1944 - January 1992

by Harold D. Yoder

*Author's note: A complete historical account should contain the names of persons who have been prominent in the life of the church. I have given much thought as to whose names to weave into this report. The names of all the pastors have been included but very few lay persons have been named. Many different lay people have given years of dedicated service to the work of the congregation. Thirteen of the charter members are still active. Since I did not have records of the activities of every member of the congregation and my own memory is not accurate enough to chronicle 48 years of history, I have named very few of these persons. The lay people named were listed because of their part in a special historical event. My apologies to the dozens of people whose names were not included. In this historical account I have tried to be as accurate as possible but I also recognize that I may have overlooked some important things. Please look at this report as the work of an amateur but sincere historian.*

The first public service of this congregation was held June 25, 1944. This service was held in a church building in Barlow, Oregon. The building was a church house seating about 100 persons and was about 50 years old at that time. The building was purchased from the Barlow Christian church at a cost of \$500 and was completely furnished with pews, hymn books and a piano. Of the 73 persons present that Sunday morning, 52 became charter members.

The folks who organized this congregation had left the Zion Mennonite congregation for reasons which, after 48 years, seem so vague that we sort of wonder why it happened. Perhaps it was

similar to the account in the book of Acts, chapter 15, verses 36-40, which is the account of Paul and Barnabas parting company. This actually resulted in two missionary teams going out instead of one team. It seemed to be a case of each group having the same goals but having different visions of how to achieve these goals.

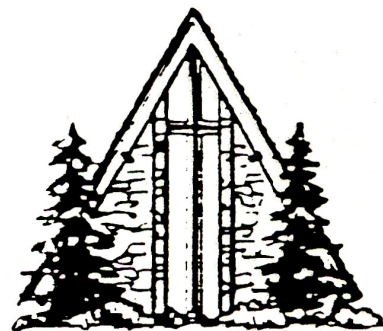
Barlow Mennonite Church was officially organized and became a member of the General Conference Mennonite denomination on August 4, 1944. Rev. Homer Leisy and Rev. John M. Franz officiated at this service. One person was baptized that day and 52 persons signed the charter membership roll. The roll remained open for several weeks to accommodate those who could not be present that day. The total number of charter members was 62. Paul N. Roth was the pastor of the group. Other leaders were Lester Conrad, Sunday School superintendent, and John Berkey, Lee Yoder, Lester Conrad and Harold Yoder as church board members.

Church growth was slow but more space was soon needed and in 1946 the building was enlarged and a basement was dug to accommodate a furnace, a small kitchen and Sunday School classrooms. Again in 1952 the building was enlarged to provide restrooms and office space.

In 1957 the home adjacent to the church was purchased and renovated to be used as a parsonage. In 1958 a new sanctuary seating about 250 was constructed just west of the old building. John Berkey and Sam Egli were the builders and total construction cost was just under \$20,000. By this time church attendance was averaging 150 and attendance continued to grow. A few years later the Barlow grade school across the street was no longer being used as a public school so it was rented by the church. Classrooms were used for Sunday School and Youth Fellowship meetings and the gymnasium was used for fellowship meals and other gatherings. By this time Sunday School classes were meeting in the old church, in the grade school building, in the parsonage and in the sanctuary. By 1968 average Sunday morning attendance had risen to 225.

Because of the crowded conditions at the location in Barlow, in 1967 a decision was made to relocate the church. Four acres of land located on Lone Elder Road were purchased from Joe Hershberger for the sum of \$9000. Richard Berkey was appointed as building superintendent for construction of a new church on this site. He worked with a small hired crew and using as much volunteer help as was available, construction of the new building was begun in 1969. This building was completed in late 1971 at a cash outlay of \$132,000. The seating capacity of this building is about 450. It has 14 classrooms, a nursery, library, offices,

kitchen and a fellowship hall in the basement. The first services were held in the new building



on January 9, 1972. After moving from Barlow, the property and buildings were sold to the Faith Baptist Church.

In 1974 Richard Berkey was again in charge of building a parsonage on the northwest corner of the church property. As of this date (January 1992) plans are under way to build an annex to the present church building. This would provide a ground level fellowship hall, classrooms and office space.

Paul N. Roth who assisted in founding the church served faithfully and energetically as pastor from 1944 until 1956 when he accepted a call to serve a congregation in Carlock, Illinois. Dr. Nobel Sack then served as interim pastor until May 1957 when Henry D. Penner became the pastor. He served until late 1959, when Dr. Sack again became the interim pastor until August 1960. At that time Harry W. Howard began serving as pastor and his faithful and able ministry continued for 13 years. In 1967 Rick Gydesen was installed as a youth pastor and he served for 2 years. After Harry Howard's service ended in

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1973, Calvary Church had a number of dedicated pastors whose names and dates of service are given chronologically as a separate part of this report. In the life of Calvary Church a number of young men and women have served as interns and observers as a part of their seminary field experience. These also are listed on that separate report.

The Barlow Mennonite Church was organized with a very simple system of church government. The pastor and a four member church board were responsible for the leadership of the congregation. The first church constitution was not formulated and adopted until 1949. Since that time it has been revised three times. In 1958 the name of the church was changed to Calvary Mennonite Church and was officially incorporated as a nonprofit organization in the state of Oregon. At the present time a board of elders, a board of trustees, a board of Christian education, a board of home ministries, the pastors, the moderator and representatives of auxiliary groups such as the Women's Missionary Society constitute the church council. The council provides leadership but the congregation as a whole has the final voice in making decisions which affect the entire body. "Continuing what Christ began" is a central theme of the congregational purpose.

Calvary Church has been a traditional Mennonite church in many ways. A Sunday School was organized when the church started and it has been a stabilizing influence in the history of the church. Classes for children and for all ages have been held continuously since 1944.

A Women's Missionary Society was organized Nov. 15, 1944. Sixteen women were present at that first meeting. Officers elected were: Velma Roth, president; Mabel Conrad, vice-president; Mary Jones, secretary-treasurer. This organization has been functioning regularly since that time. Their contribution to the life of Calvary is immeasurable. They arrange and provide food service for group functions such as funerals and weddings. They organize and provide food and/or clothing for

emergency needs. They help support numerous missionaries and mission activities with their cash offerings and with the proceeds from the sale of quilts, comforters and other articles which they make. They have made clothing and recycled used clothing for MCC and other worthy causes. They have faithfully supported Conference related mission projects as well as local projects. In recent years they have also served in the Et Cetera Shop in Lebanon as another means of helping the MCC program. The WMS is affected by the change in our society which has caused more women to be working at jobs outside the home. It seems that fewer women have the time to devote to the work of WMS and when the older workers can no longer serve, others must be willing to take their places. Much thanks is due the WMS for their faithfulness in service.

A Men's Fellowship group was active until 1962 when it was disbanded.

In 1957 the first Vacation Bible School was held and this school has been functioning annually since that time.

Music has also been an integral part of the life of Calvary Church. Calvary has been blessed with talented singers and musicians who have contributed much to the life of the congregation. There has been an adult choir from the beginning and at various times there were men's choirs, junior choirs and teenage choirs. Recent years have seen some change in the type of music being used in the worship services. Some of the currently popular praise songs have abandoned the traditional four part harmony of the past.

In 1965 the first weekend retreat for adults was held at Gearhart, OR. One adult Sunday School class participated in this event. Since that time this retreat has become an annual event open to all adults. This retreat program was the forerunner of other retreats for various groups in the church. In 1973 a family camp out was held at Suttle Lake and this event too has become an annual tradition for members



of the congregation. A co-operative camping program for children and young people has been carried on since the 1950's with other Mennonite churches in the area. Currently this is being done at the Drift Creek Camp at the Oregon coast.

Junior Fellowship and Youth Fellowship groups were begun in the early years of the congregation. Richard Gydesen was the first youth pastor employed. He served in this capacity from 1967 to 1969. Lay members have always worked with the youth groups and have provided the majority of the leadership for this work.

Bible study groups met in rather unorganized ways until 1975 when pastor Mendenhall organized home Bible study groups. It is still true that "the entrance of God's word brings light" and this has been demonstrated in the continuity of many of these home Bible study groups. Currently the congregation is organized into ten fellowship groups. These groups try to provide a closer relationship between members than is possible in the larger body. Home Bible studies are one part of the activities within these groups. These groups provide mutual assistance for their members through the use of a prayer chain and with any other help that can be given in times of need.

Calvary has held services at the Portland Rescue Mission one evening each month since 1975.

Calvary has been supportive of MCC work through the years. A number of people have spent several years of their time in MCC service both in the U.S. and abroad. They have served as teachers, mechanics and in other positions in the MCC program. Calvary has always supported evangelistic mission work both in the Mennonite conference and in assisting in the support of missionaries in other organizations. Some of the organizations in which Calvary has had or currently has workers are Mission Aviation Fellowship, Wycliffe Bible Translators, Youth for Christ, Campus Crusade and the Gideon's.

The Calvary congregation is not a traditional Mennonite congregation in

the sense of being ethnic Mennonites. Probably more than 75% of those attending at this time are from non-Mennonite backgrounds. Calvary has always been a member of and supportive of the General Conference Mennonite denomination and of the Pacific District Conference. Calvary's theme is that Christ is central to Christianity and welcomes all those who give allegiance to Christ to be a part of the congregation. Because of some distinctive Mennonite doctrinal emphases sometimes tensions develop but Calvary's goal is to "continue what Christ began" and to continue to invite all persons to come to Him.

Church attendance has fluctuated through the years and reached an average attendance of 225 in the early 1970's. This crowded the congregation out of the Barlow facilities. After moving into the church on Lone Elder Road attendance did not increase as expected but remained rather static for the next twenty years. Currently Calvary is seeing a trend towards increase growth and plans are under way to build an annex to the church. This building would provide a ground level fellowship hall, classrooms and office space.

At the present time Scot Bolsinger and Jeff Schwalm are co-pastors of the congregation. Dr. Nobel Sack is the pastor of senior adults and Ramiro Hernandez is the pastor of Hispanic ministries. The work with Hispanic people is a new venture begun in September 1991. The future for Calvary will be bright if the work continues to be built on "the foundation already laid which is Jesus Christ." ■

#### **BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE**

The cost for back issues of the OMHGS Newsletter has been \$2.00 each. Starting in 1993 we need to increase this to \$3.00. If you wish to have back issues, contact us before December if you want to save the difference.

## Chronological record of pastors serving Calvary Mennonite Church

Paul N. Roth	June 1944 to Oct. 1956
Nobel V. Sack (interim)	Nov. 1956 to May 1957
Henry D. Penner	May 1957 to Oct. 1959
Nobel V. Sack (interim)	Nov. 1959 to Aug. 1960
Harry W. Howard	Aug. 1960 to Aug. 1973
Richard Gydesen (youth pastor)	Oct. 1967 to Sept. 1969
Paul N. Roth (interim)	June 1973 to Mar. 1974
Gerald Mendenhall	Mar. 1974 to Jan. 1978
Chester Kauffman (visitation pastor)	Jan. 1977 to Oct. 1986
Nobel V. Sack (interim)	Jan. 1978 to May 1978
Harry W. Howard	July 1978 to Jan. 1981
Mark Yoder (associate pastor)	Dec. 1979 to April 1981
Nobel V. Sack (interim)	Feb. 1981 to Aug. 1981
Victor L. Walter	Aug. 1981 to Dec. 1983
Nobel V. Sack (interim)	Jan. 1984 to Sept. 1984
Al Tscheigg (co-interim)	Jan. 1984 to Sept. 1984
Wm. Dale Rogers (interim)	Sept. 1984 to Sept. 1985
Kenneth Peterson	April 1986 to Aug. 1989
Nobel V. Sack (visitation pastor)	Nov. 1986 to present time (Jan. 1992)
Scot Bolsinger (associate pastor)	Jan. 1988 to Sept. 1989
Scot Bolsinger (co-pastor)	Sept. 1989 to present time (Jan. 1992)
Jeffrey Schwalm (co-pastor)	Sept. 1989 to present time (Jan. 1992)
Ramiro Hernandez (Hispanic ministries)	Sept. 1991 to present time (Jan. 1992)

Others who served as interns while doing field work for their seminary courses included:

Lee Campbell	Merle Kauffman	Mitch Woltersdorf
Jim Ernst	Don Livingston	Lynn Olson

### VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION

A volunteer orientation was held on July 14 at the OMAL (Oregon Mennonite Archives and Library) on Western Mennonite School campus. Hope Lind welcomed the volunteers present to a brief orientation and introduction to the Library and Archives.

Volunteers present were Dan Widmer, Edna Kennel and Mae Etta Kennel. Executive Committee present were Hope Lind, John Fretz, Perry Schrock, Charity Kropf and Margaret Shetler.

When the OMAL is open there needs to be two or more volunteers present. We do need more volunteers to help us on some of these open days. Contact one of the officers of OMHGS if you are interested.

#### Oregon Mennonite Archives and Library (OMAL)

The OMAL will be open on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. There will be staff persons here to help you in your research. It will be open by special request by contacting one of the executive committee:

Hope Lind (344-5974)  
John Fretz (364-1669)  
Margaret Shetler (873-6406)  
Perry Schrock (258-6054)

# JACOB ROTH: Roots and a Branch

1850-1928

Compiled and written  
by Marjorie Nofziger

Standing in the century old Knox Butte Cemetery several miles east of Albany, OR one can read the tombstones of those buried long ago. One small moss covered stone reads: Jacob and Mary Roth, with only their birth and death dates given. Lower on the hillside is the final resting place of their three youngest infants and Catherine Christner Roth, their grandmother who had accompanied Jacob to Oregon in 1894.<sup>1</sup>

Who are these people and where did they come from? The ROTH family name with Amish origins were found in two documents, the GEMEINDEBUCH of Mountbeliard, France, and the ministers list of 1779 meeting. ROTH was the second most numerous family in Mountbeliard, exceeded only by Graber. A Jacob Roth was the senior bishop from the beginning of the GEMEINDEBUCH (1790) until his death in 1766. These may not be our Roths. More research will need to be done before we know.<sup>2</sup>

The Roth's were Amish who were direct descendants of the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century. It is presumed that this Roth family had their origin in the Canton of Bern since most of the Swiss Brethren were forced to leave Switzerland and many of them settled in the Alsace Lorraine area and eventually became pre-dominantly Amish.

Tradition persisting to the present day is that originally the Roth name was Rothchild. The story goes that a son impregnated a maid in the family and the family disowned him. He rejected part of the name and shortened it to Roth. A variation of this story has been told by three of the Jacob Roth lineage and has

not been verified.<sup>3</sup>

Searching among records has revealed that Nicolas Roth, grandfather of Jacob, was born 19 JAN 1784, at Belfort, France to John and Anna Marie Stocky Roth. Jacob's grandmother Anna Shantz was born 19 FEB 1784, at Bollwiller, France to Benedict and Veronica Lehman Shantz.<sup>4</sup>

A copy of the marriage document of Nicolas and Anna Shantz Roth has been obtained by Lorraine Roth of Canada. It states the couple was married at Bollwiller, France and the birth records of eight of their nine children were found in the Archives of the Department of Haut Rhin located at Colmar.<sup>5</sup>

Jacob Ammann, the founder of the Amish Church, believed the church was lax in discipline and attempted to steer it into more rigid observance of "meidung" or shunning. The movement became one of strict observance of older customs which persists in some areas until today. We shall later note some of the affects it had in the life of Jacob Roth.

It is the year 1834 and Nicolas I and Anna Shantz Roth have lived almost all their lives under the French revolution and its impact. The imperialistic Napoleon Bonaparte had left a legacy of strong nationalism. Much of Europe was in upheaval, the Industrial Revolution was causing significant changes in the social structure and some of the most bitter political struggles had taken place in France between 1815 and 1830. The Amish believed in separation of church and state with their allegiance to God as the highest priority and in the belief that the teachings of Jesus to "love your enemy" meant that you could not serve in the military and for this many had given their lives.

So it was small wonder that there were struggles going on in the Nicolas Roth families. They were living in Dornach with five children still at home, the oldest was Nicholas II, twenty years of age, (father of our Jacob). Their oldest son, Christian was married to Catherine

Freinberg and they have one child. Daughter Barbara is married to Nicholas Schlegel and they have four children. Daughter Anna is married to Christian Wenger and they have three children. What should they do? Many of their relatives and church brethren had been leaving the area since 1816 when word was received that the Amish were prospering in America and were not being persecuted. The drafting of their sons or the hazards of the long and dangerous travel by sailboat had to be faced. Stories were told of the six to eight week trip including seasickness, severe storms, illness and even death. The rigors of the travel plus the frontier living in one room log cabins built by your own hands was not to be taken lightly. Neither was the prospect of leaving family and grandchildren and the religious community behind an easy decision. Nicolas also had the responsibility of deacon in his congregation to consider.

But make the decision they did and they left home taking the five youngest children with them. They travelled between three and four hundred miles to sail from Le Havre, France. Their daughter Mary and Christian Wenger and their three children boarded the Normandie with the Roths arriving at New York on 9th of APR 1835. They immediately set out for the long journey to Ontario, Canada. By now many Amish from Europe had settled at Wilmot but land to the west seemed the best way to go and so the two families settled in South Easthope.<sup>6</sup>

In SEP 1837 Christian and family from France joined them and in 1839 Barbara and family also came and the family was reunited locating in the same area in Perth County, Ontario, Canada.<sup>7</sup>

In 1837 the South Easthope-East Zorra Amish congregation was organized and the only resident ordained man was Nicolas Roth, a deacon who had been ordained in France.<sup>8</sup> Deacons were often extended the privilege of preaching when other ministers were absent. The grandparents

of Jacob Roth, Nicholas I and Anna Roth death dates and burial are unknown.

We continue to pursue the roots of Jacob and find that Nicholas II married Elizabeth Christner in 1838 at Wilmot. She died the following year and in 1840 Nicholas II, married her sister Catherine Christner. The Christner sisters were daughters of immigrants, Christian and Elizabeth Christner, who with five children came to Canada in 1828 from Alsace-Lorraine.<sup>9</sup> Catherine born 4 OCT 1824, gave Bavaria, Germany as her birthplace.<sup>10</sup>

The Christner family had a traumatic experience crossing the ocean. Jacob, a several month old baby was thought to have died and the steward wanted to throw him overboard but the mother so vehemently objected, crying and praying so much, that they left her keep him. She continued to pray and they saw his little finger move. They then knew he was alive. They settled in Baden, Ontario and eight years later Jacob saw his father killed by a felled tree.<sup>11</sup>

Catherine was four or five years younger than her sister and was sixteen when she married Nicholas II. In 1842 the tax list gives him as owner of 100 acres located beside his father's property with 50 uncultivated acres, one horse, four oxen, five milk cows, and one horned cattle. His property was valued at 100 pounds. He was listed as having four members in his family.

Nicholas and Catherine had at least nine children. Jacob, the fourth child was born 12 DEC 1850 at Tavistock, Ontario. When Jacob was eight years old the family decided to move to Iowa where Catherine's widowed mother and some of her children had earlier migrated. Nicholas owned about 250 acres in Perth and Oxford County when he sold to move to Iowa in 1858.<sup>12</sup> He was drafted for the Civil War but paid to get out of performing military service.<sup>13</sup>

In Iowa the greatest immigration of all time was happening. Value of property

was soaring and had increased to \$50 per acre as the rolling prairies and river bottom, belted with wood lots were desired property. The Amish and Mennonites moving to Iowa brought with them a culture and social status that was different than their neighbors but they found the rich soil and timbered land to their satisfaction and many of them settled in Washington County. Nicholas II Roth is listed here in the 1860 census.<sup>14</sup>

Nicholas II died 15 JUL 1862, after seeing several doctors for his illness, and he was buried in the Sommers Cemetery near Noble, Iowa, beside his son Benedict, age twenty, who had died six months earlier.<sup>15</sup> The sorrowing mother now had the responsibility of eight children, Nicholas III, the eldest was fifteen years old and John only seventeen months old.

The probate papers filed in Washington County reveal that Catherine Roth was on 27th day of JULY 1863, appointed guardian of the persons and estates of Nicholas III, Christian, Jacob, Barbary, Catherine, Daniel, Joseph and John, minors in resident in said county.<sup>16</sup>

On 6 JUN 1868 Catherine reported to the court the settling of her husband's estate. The inventory of the goods, chattels, credits, stock, farming utensils, farming machinery and miscellaneous grains were valued at \$1,899.50. The charges against the estate included the \$8.00 coffin, medical and doctor expenses and \$9.25 for five kegs of beer to his brother Christian Roth. Total bills were \$280.72. At the same time she also reported that she is carrying on the business of farming with help of those of her children who are of sufficient age and ability to labor on the farm just the same as it was carried on during the lifetime of her husband. That the estate is not diminishing but is increasing under her management and that in the present circumstances of her family there is, in her opinion, no necessity for any other guardianship of

her children except that of her natural guardianship of them, as their mother and therefore hereby tenders to the court her resigning notice as guardianship-at-law, of her wards, and asks to be exempt of all further duties and responsibilities of guardianship-at-law. Instead of her signature she signed with an X her solemn affirmation that her report and petition was true.<sup>17</sup>

The Amish did not believe in the swearing of oaths and her solemn affirmation is in compliance with her belief and is in contrast to her husband when he was sworn and subscribed on the 30th day of August in 1859 when he gave his allegiance that he a native of France, intended to become a citizen of the United States, renouncing and abjuring forever, all allegiance to every foreign power, prince, potentate, state or sovereignty, whatsoever, and particularly allegiance to Louis Napoleon present Emperor of France and of whom he was therefore a subject.<sup>18</sup>

The family managed to take care of the farm and the 1870 census lists Catherine 45 years, and all her children living together except for Christian who had married Magdalena Wittrig. Nicholas III was married and his wife, Mary Gardner and daughter were living there as well.<sup>19</sup> On 4 NOV 1873 Jacob married Hannah Eicher, born 12 JAN 1853 by Bishop Joseph Schlegel at Wayland, Iowa. Hannah was the daughter of Martin Eicher, the red-headed Frenchman,<sup>20</sup> and Barbara Roth Eicher.

Hannah never knew her grandparents as they, John, an Amish minister and his wife Margaretta Conrad Eicher chose to remain in Alsace, France, with their congregation and three of their children. They are reported to have lived to a ripe old age. Five of Martin's brothers and one married sister all came singly to America settling first in Wayne County, Ohio before deciding on Iowa.

Martin had bought 160 acres of land in Washington County in 1851 and the next



year he wed Barbara Roth.<sup>21</sup> Seven years later Jacob Roth left with an Eicher brother-in-law to go to Seward County, Nebraska to build a house, leaving his wife who was expecting their fourth child. Jacob Jr. was born 16 FEB 1880 and five days later mother Hannah died at her parents' home and Jacob returned to care for four motherless sons, Martin, John, Wilhelm and the baby.<sup>22</sup> Hannah was buried in the Sugar Creek Cemetery near Wayland and Baby Jacob was buried beside her after his death 18 OCT 1880, eight months later.<sup>23</sup>

Census records indicate that Jacob moved in with his mother with the two oldest boys Martin and John.<sup>24</sup> On 16 NOV 1880 Jacob married Marie "Mary" Elizabeth Eicher, a sister to Hannah.<sup>25</sup>

In the next year we find the family at Milford, Nebraska and Bishop Joseph Schlegel ordains Jacob to be a deacon in the Amish Mennonite Church.<sup>26</sup> The following year, 3 MAR 1882, Jacob's fifth child Barbara was born.<sup>27</sup>

The year 1887 locates the family at Thurman, Colorado where Jacob is now ordained as a minister for the group.<sup>28</sup> We don't know the year that Jacob moved his family to Colorado taking his mother with them but his sister Catherine, married to Daniel Erb, and family had been there since 1882 and his brothers Christian and Daniel and their families also were living there. The Amish Mennonite settlement was located near Thurman which was 30 miles north of Flagler, the nearest railroad town. Some if not all of the pioneers lived in sod houses since timber was scarce. They had some good wheat crops and the cattle prospered on the range buffalo grass. Christian Roth had 50 head of cattle and hired boys to graze them in the daytime.

Jacob W. Birky wrote his autobiography in 1964 at the age of 80 and he recalled the years at Thurman, Colorado when he moved there in 1893 with his parents. He wrote, "Church practice and discipline were much the same as other Amish Mennonite churches in Illinois and the

west. There were three preachers: Bishop Joseph Schlegel, ministers Joseph Schrock, and Jacob Roth. There were about 30 members and their families. Peace and good-will was the rule, and the fellowship faithful and good in the fear of the Lord. Very simple dress clothes were worn. Some came in homemade work clothes cut and patterned from materials purchased at stores.

The worship service was in German, but for funerals Bishop Schlegel also preached in English for the benefit of those who did not understand German. There were two funerals that year, (early in 1894). They were those of "William" (Wilhelm) Roth, age 16, and his infant brother who were the children of Jacob Roth.

That year the crop failed and any vegetation was considered good animal feed. After the 1893 crop of wheat was harvested, fox-tail grew thick and tall in the stubble and ripened, seed and all. Chris Roth hitched to the binder again. He cut and stacked the fox-tail, threshed it in January, and sold the seed to farmers at 75 cents per bushel and kept some for himself. The farmers sowed this in '94 and '95 for hay."

Jacob Birky continued, "We got our mail from the post office at Thurman. There was no rural delivery. It was carried every other day from Flagler, a distance of thirty miles by a mailman on a bicycle. There was always a crowd there to see him come into town. In fact, that was the first bicycle that some had ever seen."<sup>29</sup>

Jacob Roth had visited Oregon twice in the 1890's. In 1893 when he visited with Joseph Schlegel he helped organize the Zion Congregation.<sup>30</sup> Evidently he had liked what he saw in Oregon and since things were looking very bleak in Colorado, he and Dan Erb made plans to move again. "They sold their livestock, selling cows for as little as \$10.00 and shipped their goods to Albany, Oregon in the fall of 1894.

As the Roth relatives were planning their move they invited the Chris R. Kennel family to go with them but they declined as they did not have the \$50.00 needed to make the move. Jacob, a generous man, offered to pay their way as a gift to them and so they made the move also.<sup>31</sup> Among those who came were the Daniel Erb family, the Chris Kennel family, the Jacob Roth family and his mother Catherine Christner Roth.<sup>32</sup>

When the group of about 20 persons arrived, they were welcomed by the Joseph Maurer family, the only Amish Mennonite family living in the Albany area. Jacob Roth always began a church wherever he moved and so they began meeting in his home for worship. The Fairview Amish Mennonite Church was organized with 12 charter members using German, as their familiar language.<sup>33</sup>

Jacob and Mary had four children accompanying them to Oregon. Martin, age 20 years, John, 18 years, Barbara, 12 years and Franklin, 6 years of age. Back in Colorado was 5 small cemetery plots, one in Iowa and possibly one in Nebraska.<sup>34</sup> To bury six children in six years is heart breaking. All of them were infants or young children except Wilhelm.

In 1895 Jacob purchased 200 acres of land in Linn County, from J.H. Burkhart and wife for \$7,000. and a year later he added 120 acres to it. On NOV 1897 Jacob purchased 47 acres of land, from Mr. and Mrs. Price for \$1,600., which in 1900 he sold to Martin for the same price which he had paid for it.<sup>35</sup>

The nine years lived at Albany were filled with sorrow as three more children were born in Oregon and they were all buried as infants. Mary was observed to be a very sad women, seemingly very "blue" most of the time. She was married at 18 years of age, taking on the care of her sister's three children right away. She had ten children of her own and only two of her children lived to maturity. This would be a sad experience for anyone.<sup>36</sup>

Martin had married Rosina Neuschwander on 15 OCT 1899, the first marriage in the small congregation. They were probably married by Jacob since Jacob had bishop oversight of Fairview from 1895 until 1903 when his family moved to Montana.<sup>37</sup> When Jacob moved he left two grandsons behind. Paul N., born 8 SEP 1900 (the branch we will pursue) and Henry N., sons of Martin and Rosina. Two more sons and seven sisters joined the Martin Roth family, the one son dying in infancy.<sup>38</sup>

Jacob and Mary took Frank with them to Creston, Montana. Lee and Barbara (Roth) Neuschwander and the John Eicher family accompanied them. They were the first Mennonite people into this territory and in the next few years other Mennonite families moved there. But just as in other places where Jacob moved a church was began, meeting in the Roth home until a large enough group had formed to build a place where they could meet to worship.<sup>39</sup>

In 1913 Jacob was still at Creston, Montana<sup>40</sup> and by 1918 he had returned to Oregon.<sup>41</sup> Of the interval, not much is known except some time was spent near Corpus, Christi, Texas at Tuleta. It is believed his son John was living at San Antonio, Texas at the time.

Jacob and Mary lived at Harrisburg, Oregon before moving into a small residence on the Frank Roth property at Sandridge and lived there for some time before moving to a small home just south of his son Martin's home on Goltry Road where Jacob died a painful death from cancer on 23 MAY 1928.<sup>42</sup> The grandchildren would walk down the road to the grandparents to sing for Jacob when he was sick. Some of his favorite songs were, "I Will Sing the Wondrous Story", "I'm Bound For the Promised Land", "Shall We Gather at the River" and "When the Roll is Called Up Yonder I'll Be There".<sup>43</sup> Mary, who was a diabetic, lived until 24 AUG 1946. She was at the home of her granddaughter Eva Kauffman when she died.

Memories of Jacob include that he was a very friendly and hospitable person. People had faith and trust in him. He was conservative and did not allow the church members to wear buttons on the outer garment. Plain dress and hooks and eyes versus buttons was one of the issues as was mustaches. Married men were to wear beards but mustaches and buttons were symbols of the military. Roth also frowned on telephones.<sup>44</sup>

Martin would say to his father, "You have a beard, so why don't you let all your hair grow?" This was very upsetting to Jacob.<sup>45</sup> Maybe the younger generation did not understand that both the mustache and buttons were to the Amish, symbols of the military. Most of the Mennonites and Amish had strong sentiments about the military, believing that Jesus taught his followers to love their enemies and that it was sinful, even in war, to take the life of any man. Many of their fellow believers accepted a martyr's death and their ancestors had fled from country to country instead of serving in the military.

Simplicity and humility in daily living was another emphasis of theirs so that when Jacob heard that his married daughter had sewn an underskirt with lace on the bottom, he wrote her a

reprimanding letter from Montana.<sup>46</sup>

Back in Oregon the grandchildren were growing and Paul N. decided to follow in the steps of his ancestors and follow the Lord. He was baptized in April, 1915 by C.R. Gerig at Fairview Amish Mennonite Church.<sup>47</sup> On 13 MAY 1923 Paul was married to Velma Victoria Burck, born 12 MAY 1904. They were living in Portland and attending the Portland Mennonite Gospel Mission when it was decided to organize into a church on 27 JULY 1924 with Allan Good as pastor. Paul transferred his membership from Fairview Church. The organization was completed AUG 31 with a total membership of twenty-five and Paul N. Roth was ordained to the ministry by F.J. Gingerich and N.A. Lind, who had bishop oversight of the congregation.<sup>48</sup> There followed a fruitful ministry for Paul in various places in Oregon, Carlock, Illinois and other places. Paul N. Roth died 28 NOV 1979 and his wife, Velma died on 5 OCT 1984.<sup>49</sup> ■

Compiled & written by Marjorie Nofziger  
777 Binshadler St., Lebanon, OR 97355  
March 5, 1992 (Additional history of Paul N. Roth ministry is given in *Apart and Together*, the one hundredth year history of Mennonites of Oregon and surrounding area, by Hope Lind.)

#### NOTES

1. Mary Erb Gerig Notes, ca 1942. Marjorie Nofziger's copy. Alfred and Marjorie Nofziger have often visited the cemetery where his grandparents Dan Erb and Catherine Roth Erb are buried near by Jacob and Mary. Jacob and Katherine were siblings.
2. Joseph Stoll, *The Diary*, APR/MAY, 1974.
3. Interview with Philip Roth, Nathan Roth and Mabel Schlegel.
4. *Family History and Genealogy of Nicholas and Barbara Roth Schlegel* by Henry and Mae Yantzi, 1986, 14-15.
5. Research in Europe by Lorraine Roth uncovered the marriage record of Nicholas and Anna as well as birth records of all but the oldest child. Located in Archives of Haut Rhin, Colmar, France, *Family History*, Ibid., 13-16.
6. Lot #9 concession 3 in South Easthope township, Perth County according to the Canada Land Co. Records of 1835.
7. *Family History*, Ibid.
8. Paper from Dorvin Christner.
9. Information from Dorvin Christner, La Porte, IN 46350
10. Catherine Christner Roth obit. *Gospel Witness*, 1905. Catherine gave her family this information.
11. Dorvin Christner notes.
12. Ibid.
13. Information from Dennis Roth, Lacey, WA.
14. Marion Twp., Washington Co. 1860 census, 28 JUN 1860, p. 63
15. Sommers Cemetery Records.
16. Copy of same in Marjorie Nofziger's possession.
17. Ibid.
18. Copy obtained at Washington Co. Courthouse by Marjorie Nofziger.
19. 1870 Marion Twp., Washington Co. Census
20. Mae Burck interview, FEB, 1992.
21. *The Amish in America* by David Luthy, 117. Daniel Eicher story from Henry County history, 392.
22. Information from Dennis Roth, Lacey, WA.
23. Sugar Creek Cemetery Records.
24. 1880 Soundex Marion Twp., Washington Co. Iowa, Vol. 32, ED 146, sheet 13, line 46.
25. Roth Family Bible in German, owned by Nathan Roth, Lacombe, OR. Translated into English by Henry Becker, Albany, OR. Marjorie Nofziger has copies of the same.
26. *Church History of the Pacific Coast Mennonite Conference* by S.G. Shetler, 90-91.
27. Barbara married Levi Neuschwander 11 MAR 1902, when she was 19 years old.
28. Ibid., *P.C. History*, 90-91.
29. Jacob W. Birky Autobiography, *Mennonite Heritage*, Vol. XI, No.1, MAR 1984, 1, Ibid., No. 3, SEP 1984.
30. *Church History of P.C.M.C. Dist.*, 15.
31. Conversation with Edna Kennel, Eugene, OR, 1991.
32. Mary Erg Gerig notes ca 1942.
33. Mary Erb Gerig notes. (Mauer pronounced Mau-ree)
34. There is no record of where Katharina, age 2 years, is buried.

35. Linn Co. Courthouse Records, Albany, OR, Vol. 51, p. 276, deed; Vol. 53, p. 398, deed; Vol. 64, p. 409, deed. (Sections 10, 15, 14). 36. Roth Family Bible record of Deaths, Births, Marriages and Memoranda. 37. *Church History of P.C.M.C. Dist.* 26. 38. The Martin ROTH Family History compiled by Mavis Morris, 10992 S. Toliver Rd., Molalla, OR 97038 and Marilyn Broomfield, 4000 SE Evergreen, Albany, OR 97321. 39. *Church History of P.C.M.C. Dist.* 26, 27. 40. *Ibid.* 41. Mae Burck said she was 6 yrs. old when her grandparents returned to Oregon. 42. Mabel Schlegel interview 43. Josephine Borth memory, MAR 1992. 44. *Apart and Together*, Hope Kauffman Lind, Herald Press, 1990, 53. 45. Mae Burck interview, 1992. 46. Mabel Schlegel interview, 1992. 47. *Church History of P.C.M.C. Dist.* 95. 47. *Church History of P.C.H.C. Dist.* 95. 48. *Church History of P.C.H.C. Dist.* 42, 95. 49. Martin Roth Family History.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Oregon Mennonite Library and Archives has DUPLICATES of a number of Mennonite periodicals. Other libraries or individuals may have the duplicates free of charge, except for the costs related to shipping. At present, duplicates include:

--*Youth's Christian Companion*, bound volumes for 1920-1921, 1926-1927, 1932-1933, 1934-1935, 1940-1941.

--*Missionary Evangel*, (the periodical published by the Pacific Coast Conference, MC), assorted issues of the 1940s to the present.

--*Mennonite Life*, a few assorted issues of the 1960s.

--*Christian Monitor*, a few assorted issues of the 1920s and 1930s. To request duplicates or for more information, write to:

Oregon Mennonite Library and Archives;  
9045 Wallace Road NW; Salem, OR 97304.

\* \* \* \* \*

OMHGS is planning a WORKSHOP on October 31, 1992, 9 A.M. to 12 noon, with two sessions, one on HOW DO I GET STARTED?, one on PRESERVING PHOTOS, RECORDS AND ARTIFACTS. Pre-registration is requested. See the enclosed program and registration form for details.

\* \* \* \* \*

OMHGS is tentatively planning a dinner meeting for June 1993, with John Ruth of Harleyville, PA, as intended speaker. John Ruth is a pastor, story teller, historian, author of numerous books including a biography of Conrad Grebel; a Mennonite view of the American Revolution titled *Twas Seeding*

*Time*; a history of the Franconia and Eastern District Mennonites titled *Maintaining the Right Fellowship*; and a forthcoming history of the Lancaster Mennonite Conference. He also leads Tourmagination tours to European sites of Anabaptist heritage. More information will be included in the Spring 1993 newsletter.

\* \* \* \* \*

Researchers of Mennonite and Amish Mennonite church, congregational and family history find a major resource in *Herald of Truth (HT)*, published by John F. Funk, 1864-1908. The Mennonite Serials Preservation Project is micro-filming this periodical, along with many others. *Herald of Truth* (12 reels) may be ordered at a discount before October 1, 1992, at \$28/reel. Normally, the cost per reel (100 feet) is about \$50. OMHGS does not yet have a micro-film reader (or a good place for one), and the executive committee has decided we should not purchase the HT microfilm reels at present. However, if an OMHGS Newsletter reader should wish to purchase the set (or selected reels) for either their personal use or to donate to the OMAL, contact Margaret Shetler (503 873-6406) for details about ordering. Individuals could check the possibilities of using their own microfilms on readers in public or other libraries.

## Executive Committee Highlights

**January 7, 1992** We met at the OMAL for a workday and meeting. The morning was spent getting the remainder of the new shelving in place and dismantling the temporary shelves, with the assistance of Cliff Lind, Al Nofziger and Ralph Shetler. We reviewed the article Hope Lind had prepared to be sent to *Mennonite Family History* about our society. Cliff Lind took some pictures to accompany the article. The remainder of the afternoon was spent accessioning a few of the boxes/items on the shelves and bringing the *Gospel Heralds* from the Western library.

**February 25, 1992** We met at the OMAL and worked on archival materials. We met for two hours over the lunch period with the Consulting Board. Hope read a letter she has received from Bernard Showalter concerning the temperature and humidity controls in OMAL. The situation is still being worked at. We discussed finding a replacement for John as Newsletter editor. Marjorie Nofziger's term as librarian expires this fall and she asks to be replaced. Also discussed was the appointing of a nomination committee. Positions to be filled at the fall meeting are president, treasurer and one member of the consulting board.

**March 10, 1992** We met for a brief meeting at the OMAL following a work day during which time we continued to sort through periodicals that have been donated, shelve books that have been processed and get others ready for processing, accession a few items and sort other miscellaneous papers and programs. Charity Kropf and Martha Yoder assisted in the above work. Hope will draft a letter to be sent to retired ministers and leaders in the conference, asking them to consider donating their records and personal mementos to the Archives.

**June 12, 1992** A very informal meeting was held during the noon hour of

conference. Perry Schrock shared some of his experiences from his short-term voluntary service term at Akron, PA. We did affirm that Dianne Jeli of the Zion congregation will be the new Newsletter editor, beginning with the Fall 1992 issue. Margaret and Ralph Shetler will be working with her, assisting in whatever way they can. John Fretz, former editor, will also be helping wherever needed. We confirmed that we will be open for business on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month, beginning June 23. Plans were also made to have open house the evenings of June 12 and 13, during the conference sessions.

**June 23, 1992** We met for a work day in the Archives and spent the morning continuing with our sorting of periodicals and accessioning donations. The terms of our president and treasurer will expire this fall. Both Hope and Perry indicated a willingness to continue but we will try to give the members a choice at our election to be held in conjunction with the September meeting. Charity Kropf has indicated a willingness to serve as librarian on a one-year interim basis. Members will be invited for a training session Tuesday, July 14; to come see the library and archives and receive orientation for volunteering. Plans for a workshop in the fall were discussed.

**July 14, 1992** We had volunteer orientation in the morning. Perry reported briefly on our financial situation: \$284 in general fund and \$390 for furnishings. The workshop scheduled for October 31 was discussed. Plans for the spring 1993 program were discussed. The remainder of the afternoon was spent continuing our sorting of periodicals and other donations and accessioning of same. The availability of the *Herald of Truth* on microfilm was discussed. If reels are purchased before the deadline in October, the cost is about half of what it will be later.

## COMING MEETINGS

**THE FALL MEETING OF OMHGS** will be held on Sunday, September 20, 1992 at Albany Mennonite Church, Albany, OR. The program will be presentations by several persons on experiences as CO's during World War II. Also will be one presentation on World War I experiences. See more details on the enclosed program sheet. The same program will be given over three days at WMHS Chapel in the following week for the benefit of students there.

**THE SPRING 1993 MEETING OF OMHGS** will feature the Sheridan congregation history, and the Shenk family in that area. More details later.

**THE FALL 1993 MEETING OF OMHGS** will be on the history of the Portland congregation. We have yet to decide on a family history.

\* \* \* \* \*

**DONATIONS** - We recently processed and added books to our library from these collections:  
Book Collections from Clif & Lois  
Kenagy Oscar Wideman Collection

\* \* \* \* \*

*Apart and Together, Mennonites in Oregon and Neighboring States, 1876-1976*, by Hope Lind, is available for \$26.95, plus 10% postage and handling (if mailed). Make your check to "O.M.H.G.S.". It can be ordered from any officer of OMHGS.

\* \* \* \* \*

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND CONSULTING BOARD MEETING

A joint meeting was held on February 25, 1992 at the OMAL on the Western Mennonite School campus. We began by introducing ourselves and telling a bit about our interests in history and

genealogy; how we became interested and where this interest has and is leading us. This was time well spent and very interesting. Margaret Shetler gave a brief history of the beginnings of OMHGS. Needs of the society were discussed. These include money for operating expenses, volunteers to get the library and archives organized and functional and then to staff it, and more space. The programs and newsletter were discussed. We talked about the future of OMHGS. "How do we help people to realize we are serious and that we plan that this be a permanent organization? How do we get more people interested, especially younger people and students? Workshops and tours were discussed.

\* \* \* \* \*

One way to get younger members interested in preserving their heritage is to have them begin interviewing their grandparents or other relatives. The older people enjoy telling the stories to an interested listener and it helps the younger people to learn about their heritage. My greatest regret is that I didn't begin to write down all the stories my grandmother used to tell me. Now her memory has become too befuddled to rely on. She had some great stories about growing up as a young Amish Mennonite girl. She often told the stories of how the people around Hubbard welcomed them when they moved here. I hope my aunts and father can remember enough of the stories so that I may begin to record them for my daughter, my siblings, nieces and nephews. Don't wait until it is too late. The stories are what make all the information we gather come together. An easy way to begin collecting the stories is to use a tape recorder so you can listen and not worry about catching every detail on paper. If it is not easy to get the person reminiscing, looking at an old photo album together can usually stimulate conversation and may make the person remember a story that they would not have otherwise. dj ■

# Membership Information

Membership in the Oregon Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society is open to persons or groups who are interested in and supportive of OMHGS and its purpose. Dues are payable annually, and will be effective from January 1 to December 31. Individuals wishing to make a contribution of \$10.00 or more annually, in lieu of membership, will receive the Newsletter, and will be informed of the Society's activities.

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## Membership Form for 1993

I want to become a Member of, or Contributor to, the Oregon Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society. I will be informed of all Society activities; will receive the OMHGS Newsletter; and as a Member will be eligible to serve on committees of the Society. My contribution is enclosed, payable to O.M.H.G.S.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Enroll me (please check one):

- |                         |         |   |                    |
|-------------------------|---------|---|--------------------|
| _____ Student           | \$5.00  | _____ Sustaining Member   | \$50.00            |
| _____ Single Membership | \$10.00 | _____ Non-member Contributor  | \$10.00<br>or more |
| _____ Family Membership | \$15.00 | _____ Life Membership   | \$500.00           |
| _____ Contributing "    | \$25.00 | payable in one sum, or increments of<br>not less than \$100.00 a year for five<br>(or fewer) years. |                    |

OMHGS is a non-profit organization and is supported solely by membership dues and contributions. The first \$7.00 of your dues or contribution represents services rendered by OMHGS, such as Newsletter and library use; amounts above that are tax deductible.

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## **OMHGS Newsletter**

OREGON MENNONITE HISTORICAL  
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30681 S. Arrow Ct.  
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