

Award of Excellence to Lorraine Roth

The Mennonite Historical Society of Canada (MHSC) named Lorraine Roth of Tavistock, Ontario as the recipient of its 2010 Award of Excellence for her lifelong contribution to the preservation of Canadian Mennonite history. The award, made at the Society's January 23 annual meeting in Steinbach, Manitoba, especially noted her meticulous research on the history of Amish Mennonite families who settled in Upper Canada beginning in the 1820s.

Roth, 79, became interested in family history as a teenager, and published her first genealogy in 1963. She began serious research on Amish origins in Europe in 1969 when she lived and worked there for 1 ½ years. Over time she compiled 25 family histories and assisted with another 15 or 20. She wrote the historical background when the Amish Mennonites celebrated their sesquicentennial in Canada in 1972, and in 1998 published *The Amish and Their Neighbours: The German Block, Wilmot Township, 1822-1860*, the definitive work on the early Amish settlement in Waterloo Region. She published a collection of biographies, *Willing Service: Stories of Ontario Mennonite Women*, in 1992. Roth was a charter member of the Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario, and served on historical committees for the binational Mennonite Church, the Western Ontario Mennonite Conference, and the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada. In retirement she continues to maintain detailed genealogical files on over 100 Amish Mennonite surnames. She received the award on January 30, 2010 at a meeting of the Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario board of directors.

The Canadian Society, hosted by the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, held its annual meeting at the Mennonite Village Museum in Steinbach. Board members enjoyed a tour of the Heritage Village Friday afternoon, and Village volunteers provided meals and coffee breaks for the meetings. Joining the Society's annual meeting for the first time was a representative of the Brethren in Christ Historical Society, Leonard Chester.

The Canadian Society celebrated several publication landmarks in the past year. The Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online (GAMEO), in which MHSC is a partner, completed inclusion of all articles from the print *Mennonite Encyclopedia*. Members heard that Marlene Epp's *Mennonite Women in Canada: a History* by University of Manitoba Press, which was sponsored by the Society's Divergent Voices of Canadian Mennonites (DVCM) program, had sold over 1450 copies since its publication in late 2008. It also heard the Society had donated 630 copies of Ted D. Regehr's *Mennonites in Canada, 1939-1970: A People Transformed* to the church libraries of Mennonite congregations in Canada.

New projects for 2010 included formation of a Genealogy Committee that will oversee a MHSC-sponsored website on Mennonite genealogy that will include digitized source documents. A committee composed of Bert Friesen (Winnipeg, Man.), Victor Wiebe (Saskatoon, Sask.) and Laureen Harder-Gissing (Waterloo, Ont.) will develop a plan for the site during the coming year. The DVCM project for the year will be an October conference at the University of Winnipeg on "Mennonites, Melancholy and Mental Health."

The Mennonite Historical Society of Canada was established in 1968 to sponsor the *Mennonites in Canada* history series by Frank H. Epp and Ted Regehr. Its membership is composed of six provincial Mennonite historical societies, four Mennonite denominational bodies, Mennonite Central Committee Canada and the Chair of Mennonite Studies at the University of Winnipeg.

The 2010 executive is Sam Steiner (Waterloo, Ontario), President; Royden Loewen, (Winnipeg, Manitoba), Vice-President; Lucille Marr (Montreal, Quebec), Secretary; Richard Thiessen (Abbotsford, B.C.), Treasurer; and Alf Redekopp (Winnipeg, Manitoba), fifth member. The board approved a budget for 2010 of \$27,800.

-30-

Photos attached. Caption: Mennonite Historical Society of Canada Board. Front (L-R): Connie Braun (BC), Alf Redekopp (Mennonite Church Canada), Richard Thiessen (BC), Sam Steiner (Ont.), Lucille Marr (Quebec), Royden Loewen (Chair of Mennonite Studies); Back: Conrad Stoesz (Man.), Barb Draper (Ont.), Richard Loughheed (Quebec), Leonard Chester (Brethren in Christ), Robert Goertzen (Evangelical Mennonite Conference), Wesley Berg (Alberta), Bert Friesen (Man.), Jake Buhler (Sask.), Laureen Harder-Gissing (Mennonite Church Eastern Canada), Victor Wiebe (Sask.), Linda Huebert Hecht (Ont.)

Caption: Award presentation to Lorraine Roth. L-R: Lorraine Roth; Sam Steiner, President, Mennonite Historical Society of Canada. Photo by Barb Draper.

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