

MINUTES of the BOARD MEETING:

**Mennonite Historical Society of Canada
7:00 pm, Friday, 2 December 2005**

**Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies in Canada
1310 Taylor Ave. (204) 669-6575
Winnipeg, MB**

Present: Ken Reddig (President; Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies)
Sam Steiner (Vice-President; Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario)
Lucille Marr (Secretary; La Société historique mennonite du Québec)
Richard Thiessen (Treasurer, Mennonite Historical Society of British Columbia)
Royden Loewen (Member at large; Chair in Mennonite Studies, University of Winnipeg)
Victor Wiebe (Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan)
Henry Fast (Evangelical Mennonite Conference)
Bert Friesen (GAMEO)
David Giesbrecht (Mennonite Historical Society of British Columbia)
Abe Dueck (Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches)
Judith Rempel (Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta)
Anna Ens (Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society)
Gilbert Brandt (Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society)
Alf Redekopp (Mennonite Church Canada)
Peter Penner ((Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta/GAMEO)
Don Peters (MCC Canada)

1. **Welcome:** Ken welcomed board members to the new Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies and thanked Abe for getting the library front and centre. After introductions around the table, Ken opened the meeting with prayer, then identified the purpose of this meeting as clarifying the agenda for the annual meeting.
2. **Minutes:** Lucille reviewed the minutes of the 3 December 2004 meeting and they were accepted as presented.
3. **Business arising:**
 - a. **Quebec historical society:** Lucille reported on the establishment of La Société historique mennonite du Québec and the proposal for meeting in Montreal.
Action: The board formally welcomed the Quebec society. M/S/C (Abe Dueck/Sam Steiner)

**Notice of Motion: to amend the by-laws to incorporate the Quebec society.
(Sam Steiner)**

- b. **MHSC historical award and follow-up:** Ken read the recommendations previously made by the executive that **Ted Friesen should receive this year's award** and that **the executive should nominate future candidates; people from the provinces may make suggestions.** After a brief discussion, the board affirmed the recommendation in principle. Roy and Judith were invited to wordsmith it to bring to the annual meeting as a motion.

At this point, Ken presented the Plett award for 2004 and brought forward Ted Friesen's name as a candidate for the 2005 award.

A lengthy discussion raised the following issues: names of candidates with reasons for their being honoured should be received by October 1st with a press release including a short citation, brief bio and picture that could also be posted on the MHSC website; the executive would make a decision regarding the appropriate candidate and bring it to the board which would present it to the AGM.

Recommendation: M/S/C (Roy Loewen/Judith Rempel)

Recommendation: Ted Friesen is to receive the 2005 award. M/S/C (Victor Wiebe/Henry Fast)

4. Approval of Agenda for Board and annual Meeting.

5. **President's Report:** Ken began by reporting on Bill Ballin's encouragement to give a Mennonite proposal to the German Canadian Congress. He proposed the following questions: Do we go with the German Canadian Congress? Do we go on our own? Or do we say we're not interested in participating at all? Noting that a key issue is whether we want to be implicated in 'guilt' money, Ken quoted Bill Janzen who stated that we're not interested in money from the ACE (Acknowledgement/Commemoration/Education) program because as Mennonites, we are only grateful for being in this country.

Discussion included Victor's representation of Saskatchewan's position that they wouldn't want to be associated with the German Congress because Mennonites are not Germans, but a Christian religious group. Roy pointed out that this would not necessarily contradict telling our story. Richard noted that the Germans have already made Mennonites a sub-group. Do we want to be the voice? If MHSC declines, someone else might step up to the table. Other questions emerged about Mennonite identity. Is it an ethnic group or a faith tradition? David cautioned the board to consider how the press might present the issue.

Sam reminded the table that the executive had already encouraged Ken to stay in conversation with both the German Congress and the Federal multicultural department

that was offering the funds.

Recommendation: We will continue to dialogue with the German Canadian Congress and continue to dialogue with the department of multiculturalism with regard to ACE (Acknowledgement/Commemoration/Education) funding. Moved/seconded/carried (M/S/C) (Lucille Marr/Anna Ens).

With one opposed, the motion was withdrawn.

David Giesbrecht suggested proceeding, keeping in mind the mixed support and objection.

6. **CMEO/GAMEO report:** Bert stated that the board had made good progress.
7. **DVCM Report:** Roy announced that MCC has approved DVCM II to the tune of \$48,000 with projects already outlined for the next six years.
8. **Mennonites in Canada Report:** Ted Friesen will relay pertinent information at the AGM.
9. **Finance Report:** Richard proposed to shift the AGM to the end of January to allow time to audit.

Recommendation: That we hold our annual meeting the 3rd week of January. M/S/C (Richard Thiessen/Victor Wiebe)

10. **Budget 2005/2006:** Richard remarked that book sales did well netting \$2000.00. The budget shows net expenses rather than an income line for annual meeting expenses. The budget for the Mennonite women project will only be spent when Marlene has completed her work. A line for the MHSC 40th anniversary booklet at \$1000.00 was added.
11. **Nominations Committee:** to report at AGM.
12. **Other items:** As a follow up to the new budget line, Ken noted that the CMEO is missing a history of the MHSC. With founding member Ted Friesen's keen interest in seeing our minutes collected, the executive decided to add the \$1000.00 for the project.

Victor raised the question of an MHSC seal, but no-one knew of its whereabouts.

Finally, Ken proposed working with the Canadian Pacific Railway in conjunction with MCC on a project that would allow people to relive Mennonite immigration history by boarding the train their ancestors rode in Montreal and travelling to Alberta.

