



The Heritage

www.goesselmuseum.com

Spring 2017

Meet Our New Museum Director - Fern Bartel nee Schmidt



The Mennonite Heritage and Agricultural Museum is happy to introduce Fern Bartel nee Schmidt as our new Museum Director. She comes to the museum with lots of hometown experience. In fact, you may already know her!

Fern was born in Bethesda Hospital to Anton and Elsie Duerksen Schmidt, attended the one-room Antioch School for first grade, then Goessel Elementary, and graduated from Goessel High School. Fern and her husband, Roger, have two grown daughters. She lives on the family farm where she grew up and is a member of the Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church.

Fern has served on the Museum Board for over twenty years and has volunteered for almost every museum activity. For the past three years, she has also designed and maintained the Mennonite Heritage and Agricultural Museum's website (www.goesselmuseum.com).

"As a lifelong resident, I have knowledge of the Mennonite faith, area community residents, and, in some cases, their parents and maybe even their grandparents. Also, I am of an age to be able to know the use of an artifact. Living on a farm all my life, I have a knowledge of agriculture, too. I feel so blessed to be the new Museum Director and care for the artifacts!"

"I would like the museum to be full of new energy and stories to go along with the photos and artifacts, not just dusty old things." Fern is excited and proud to be our new Museum Director.

Come visit us at the museum soon!

Hab en Goota Dach! *Have a good day!*
Hope aules jeit diena wajch! *Hope everything goes your way!*

Upcoming Events:

*Museum Opens for
Spring Hours*
Wednesday, March 1, 2017
12:00-4:00 pm
Tuesdays through Saturdays

*Alexanderwohl Mennonite
Church Midweek Pizza Night
Fundraiser*
March 8, 2017

*Second Monday Family
History & Genealogy Group*
Call the museum for
meeting information

*Museum Heritage Dinner:
Living in Space*
Friday, March 17, 2017
See information on page 3

*150th Anniversary of the
Chisholm Trail*
May 12 - 13, 2017

*10th Annual Antique
Car & Truck Show*
June 17, 2017

Country Threshing Days
August 4 - 6, 2017

Mennonite Heritage and Agricultural Museum Board Members:

Steve Banman, President; John Janzen, Vice President; Anna Beth Birky, Secretary; Aileen Esau*, Treasurer; Fern Bartel*, Museum Director; Howard Birky, Anne Harvey, Michael Jost, Matthew Voth, Nelson Voth, Connie Wiens, and James Wiens. *Non-voting members

Did You Know about the Goessel Mennonite Silkworm Industry?

For more information, see the "Ill-fated Kansas Silk Industry" article by R. Alton Lee on the website www.kshs.org

Here's a teaser from the article:

The German Russian Mennonites, who came to central Kansas in the 1870's, are most commonly identified with the history of Kansas wheat, but they had long practiced the silk culture as a home enterprise. They successfully raised silk cocoons in Ukraine and continued the tradition on the plains of Kansas. In July, 1883, the *Home Journal* noted that they . . .

Find their new homes in America even more favorable for silk growing than their old homes on the plains of Southern Russia and declare there can be no better country for growing silk than this.

That same year a state department of agriculture report observed that "nearly all Mennonites raise some (silkworms) each year for pleasure and to teach their children." A traveler visited Jacob Schmidt's house in 1882 and found he was feeding silkworms "in his best

room." The visitor reported seeing thousands of worms on tables and platforms eating leaves and "they finally eat mulberry brush by the wagonload."

He continued to Johann Krause's home where he "witnessed the process of reeling silk" by Mrs. Krause on "a rude twister and reel of home construction." He reported the work of reeling required "more patience" than most Americans possessed.

In the Gruenfeld village near what is now Goessel, the Jacob Frey (1849-1898) and Eva Wedel Frey (1849-1917) family raised silkworms on their homestead. They got the seed (what the silkworm eggs were called) in Walton. Since it was still quite chilly, they put layers of newspapers on the floor of the barn, then the mulberry twigs along with the seed. The Jacob and Eva Wedel Frey family are featured in the museum's family history showcase #7.

Recent Events:

90 Years of Blue, Goessel High School Anniversary, October 8, 2016: Museum Board Member Anna Beth Birky researched and created a visual display of Goessel's first high school, the 1906 Prep School.

Fall Heritage Lecture, October 29, 2016 at Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church: Professor John Sharp talked about the life of Orie O. Miller and the times he lived through.

History Channel film crew from London, England arrived December 1, 2016 to film Judy Camp in the Wheat Palace. She is the great, great, great, great-granddaughter of Bernard Warkentin. The documentary will focus on immigration to America. No information available on when it will air.

Museum Annual Meeting, January 22, 2017, at Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church. After a short business meeting, Rod Ratzlaff spoke about "The Low German Mennonites of 19th Century Volhynia". Faspa followed.



January 28, 2017 - Museum Board Member Anna Beth Birky leads a Kansas Day activity with some of our visitors!



Left - Who is the baby in our buggy in this 1974 photo?

The buggy, dating back to the turn of the century, was purchased by the museum and is on display in the Immigrant House.

Here's a clue: He is now a well-known farmer in the Goessel area and his grandfather was a photographer in town. See page 3 for the answer.

Please visit our website: www.goesselmuseum.com for more photos and information about the museum. The most popular page accessed on the website is the "Faspa" page!

Future Museum Projects

Major Projects for 2017

- Painting the Schroeder Barn
- Replacing siding and painting the Krause House

Your monetary donations for building maintenance will help keep our museum open for the next generation to enjoy.

Thank you!

Museum Volunteers Needed:

- Saturday front desk volunteers to welcome guests, four hour shift
- Group Tour Docents, on call, once a month or so
- "Behind the Scenes" volunteer, make your own hours, help with various tasks around the museum
- Hustler mower operator for the summer, once a month commitment

"Who is the baby in our buggy in the 1974 photo?"

Answer - Darcy Nickel, see page 2 for the photo



Heritage Dinner

Friday, March 17, at 6:30 p.m.
Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church

Ticket price: \$50 per person
Only \$25 per person for first time attenders!
Children are welcome! Age 12 and under \$5
Not a museum member? You are welcome to attend!

Please call the museum at (620) 367-8200
by Monday, March 13 to reserve your tickets
or

Send the form below with your check payable to MHAM.

This event is a fundraiser for the
Mennonite Heritage and Agricultural Museum.

Yes, I know the value of the museum and would like to support it financially.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Please send future newsletters to my email address: _____

____ Heritage Dinner tickets (\$50 each) ____ First time attender (\$25 each) ____ Children age 12 and under (\$5 each)

I am unable to attend the Heritage Dinner but would like to designate my gift for:

____ General Operating Fund ____ Building Maintenance ____ Most Needed

Please return this form by Monday, March 13, with payment to:
Mennonite Heritage & Agricultural Museum, P.O. Box 231, Goessel, KS 67053

Your gift is tax deductible. Please make your check payable to MHAM.

Thank you for your gift!

Help us use our resources wisely by receiving your color copy of the museum newsletter and other occasional communications by email. We do not sell or share our mailing lists.



Mennonite Heritage and Agricultural Museum
200 N Poplar
P.O. Box 231
Goessel, KS 67053

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

(620) 367- 8200
mhmuseum@mtelco.net
www.goesselmuseum.com

Museum Hours:
March, April, October,
& November:
Tues - Sat: 12 pm - 4 pm

May - September:
Tues - Sat: 10 am - 5 pm
Closed Sundays & Mondays

The Heritage

Written by:
Fern Bartel

Editorial Staff:
Museum Board Members
Mayleen Thiesen Vinson

Visit us soon - the first 20 people who come into the museum every day
will receive a free gift while supplies last!

Become a Museum member!

It's easy to become a member. Choose a membership level below, fill out the form, and return it with your check payable to MHAM to: Mennonite Heritage & Agricultural Museum, P.O. Box 231, Goessel, KS 67053.

Individual \$15 Couple \$30 Family \$40 (Includes children and grandchildren age 18 and younger)

Annual memberships run from Jan. 1 - Dec. 31.

Benefits of annual membership

- Unlimited free visits to the museum
- 10% discount on museum store purchases
- One guest pass (two guest passes for couple and family memberships)

Life memberships \$500 / person

- Membership fee is added to museum endowment fund
- Unlimited free visits to museum
- 15% discount on museum store purchases
- Five guest passes per year
- No annual membership renewal

I would like an annual membership ____ Individual \$15 ____ Couple \$30 ____ Family \$40

I would like a life membership ____ \$500 / person

Name _____

Address _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Please send future newsletters to my email address: _____