



The Heritage

www.goesselmuseum.com

Winter 2020

Green Valley One-Room School Christmas Memories

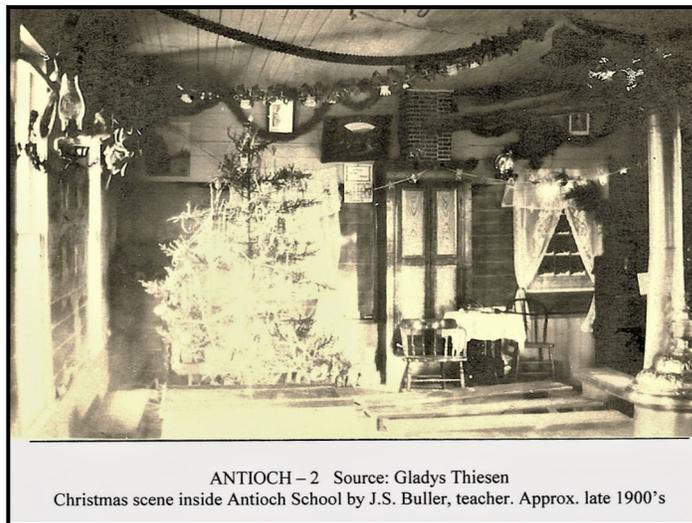
By Cora Duerksen Ketterman as told to her daughter Barbara Ketterman Pendleton

When I was a girl, I lived on a farm near Goessel, KS. In 1938, when I was six years old, I began my education at Green Valley Grade School. Perhaps the most important occasion at Green Valley was the annual Christmas program, held on December 24th.

Preparations for the program started almost as soon as the Thanksgiving program was over. Everyone had songs to learn or pieces to memorize, even the 3 to 5-year-old little brothers and sisters who were too young to even go to school.

My father was on the school board. In December one of his responsibilities was to contact all the families in the area to see how many would be attending the Christmas program. Each family was assessed ten cents or a quarter for each attendee, and the school board would use that money to buy treats from the Goessel grocery store. The biggest purchase would always be a special order—one bushel of apples and another of oranges.

One tradition unusual to our area was the “Nun Ist Sie Erscheinen” choir. For generations the carol has been a beloved staple of a Kansas Mennonite Christmas. Not only did we sing it at church, but the adults in the area formed a choir to sing “Nun Ist Sie Erscheinen” at the grade school program. I remember my parents dashing off for rehearsals after chores.



Christmas Memories, cont'd on page 3

Upcoming Events:

Giving Tuesday

December 1, 5-7 pm
Goessel City Building

Christmas Shopping & Toys through Time

Tuesday-Saturday
Noon to 4 pm
through Dec. 19

Annual Meeting

January 17, 2021
2:30 pm

in Tabor Church's
Hospitality Hall
if in-person.

Speaker: Ilona Abrahams
Virtual meeting may be
necessary instead.

See page 2.

5th Annual Art Show

Spring and Summer 2021
Wood carvings by
Clarence Klassen.

See page 2.

Second Monday Family History & Genealogy Group

Currently not meeting
due to COVID-19.

Low German Saying:

Wan dee Hunga too de Uäa enenn kjemmt, jeit de Leew derjchem Fensta erüt.

When hunger tells you to look at your watch, you'd love to throw it [the watch] out of the window.

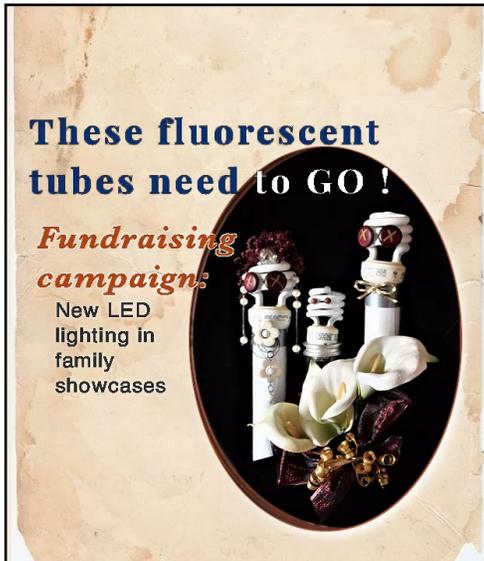
Mennonite Heritage and Agricultural Museum Board Members:

Steve Banman, President; John Janzen, Vice President; Anne Harvey, Secretary; Aileen Esau*, Treasurer; Fern Bartel*, Museum Director; Roger Bartel, Myron Goertzen, Don Herrick, Ladene Herrick, John Koehn, Nelson Voth, Connie Wiens, and James Wiens. *Non-voting members

Ditt unt Daut (this and that) by Fern Bartel, Museum Director

At the end of the year, one tends to look back at different events and then forward to plan for the upcoming year.

New lighting is needed for the family show-



cases. Details of planned upgrades can be found in the appeal letter included with this newsletter. Please consider contributing to this very necessary project.

I am so happy to have hosted the wheat marquetry of Marie and Martha Voth at the museum. They were such a team with their command of perspective and their ability to manipulate wheat straw. They were generous with their artwork, donating to silent auctions at Bethel College, Tabor College, MCC sales, Bethesda, the Mennonite Heritage and Agricultural Museum, and many other entities that we will never know.

Next spring and summer's art show will feature the woodcarvings of Goessel's own Clarence Klassen. Come, be amazed by the large collection of birds and mammals he has carved and painted .



Wood carving by Clarence Klassen

Visit the museum store this Christmas shopping season. Books by local authors, cookbooks, Kansas history, and agricultural books. Gift certificates for the people who are hard to buy for. Consider giving a museum membership! (See back page.)

I'm thinking about the best way to tell the history of Goessel with photos and rearranging the artifacts in the bank building. If anyone has historic photos of Goessel businesses, stop by! Maybe your photo will have a building view that hasn't been seen!

You Could Buy *That* in Goessel? Learn More at Annual Meeting

Threshing crews moved around the community in the heat of the summer. A cold beer would surely quench the thirst after a hot day under the sun. Wait, beer? Yes, for a time it was available. Where, you might ask? At the local grocery store/sundries/restaurant in Goessel, Kansas. Yep, that's right, you could buy beer in Goessel. Actually, you could buy almost anything you might need.

You could always find ice cream, cold drinks, chili in season, bread, pie, fresh meat in the summertime, and of course a variety of groceries. If you needed a birthday present for your wife, a variety of "pefumary" awaited your purchase. Perhaps you were feeling ill and needed medication. Never fear, patent medicines were available.

If someone came to town unexpectedly, there just might be a vacancy at the local motel. With a room on the second floor, a visitor would have a bird's eye view of downtown Goessel.

Many things have changed since Peter Graves opened his grocery store at 215 E. Main. **Make plans to attend the annual meeting of the MAHM on January 17, 2021, to hear more about the building now known as Keith's Foods. Ilona Abrahams has been researching this building and will be our feature speaker! If COVID-19 allows us to meet in person, the annual meeting will be held in Tabor Mennonite Church's Hospitality Hall, starting at 2:30 pm.** We will not serve faspa after the meeting. The board is looking at options to hold the annual meeting virtually if it is not safe to meet in person.

Christmas Memories, continued

There was no school on Dec. 24th, so we could all make last minute preparations. Usually the high school kids would gather at the schoolhouse in the morning to help the teacher set things up. We'd usually expect 100 to 150 people, 14 or 15 families, so the first job of the day was to take all of the desks out of the schoolhouse and to bring in the wooden benches from the woodshed.

Then the high school kids decorated the schoolroom with streamers and set up the Christmas tree. They'd decorate it with the paper chains we'd made in school and shiny metallic icicles. Green Valley did not have electricity until I was in 7th grade, so before that they clipped tiny candles to the front of the tree for lighting.

Christmas Eve afternoon, we always did the chores early, grabbed a quick supper, and changed into our best clothes for the Christmas program. Often my mother would have made brand new winter dresses for my sisters and I to wear for the occasion. We would all pack into the car to ride to the school.

After the welcome, the first performance of the evening was always the preschool aged children [who sang] a song or recited a simple poem together. They must have practiced together somehow, but I don't remember how that was arranged.

After that, all the schoolchildren of Green Valley recited their pieces, acted out their plays, and sang their carols. All of us were Mennonite, and our program was almost entirely religious in

nature. Toward the end of the program, the "Nun Ist Sie Erscheinen" choir would favor us with a selection or two, and before we knew it, the program was over.

But that's when the fun started!

Schoolchildren each got a gift-exchange present from under the tree, plus a paper sack full of candy, nuts, and squishy circus peanuts. Every younger child got a matchbox full of peppernut cookies and a special toy, courtesy of an older couple I knew only as Tante and Onkel Voth.



Cora received this cat figurine at a Christmas Eve program

In the midst of this busy commotion, the school board would start tossing the oranges and apples out into the crowd. There was usually enough for most people to get one, but you had to be quick—and you didn't want one of those apples to come crashing to the floor!

Toys Through Time

Will you receive a toy in your stocking or a lump of coal? Take a break from Christmas shopping in the museum store and enjoy a special display of toys! "Toys Through Time" showcases vintage toys on loan from Lavina Schroeder, Clarice Voth, John Koehn, and Fern Bartel.

The museum store will be open for shopping local Tuesdays through Saturdays from noon to 4 pm. Plan your festive holiday food from our cookbooks, old and new. Discover unique handmade items to brighten any home. Decorate your Christmas tree with farm-themed ornaments. What surprises will you find at the museum store? Final Christmas shopping day at the museum is December 19.

**Visit 'Sylvia' at
"Toys Through Time"**





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Museum Hours:

March, April, October,
& November:

Tues - Sat: 12 pm - 4 pm
Closed Sundays & Mondays

Open by appointment only in
January & February

May - September:
Tues - Sat: 10 am - 5 pm

The Heritage

Written by:

Fern Bartel, Director

Editorial Staff:

Museum Board Members

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 \$20 Couple \$40 Family \$50 (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. Not valid for Country Threshing Days)

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 (Not valid for Country Threshing Days)
- No annual membership renewal

I would like an annual membership ___ Individual \$20 ___ Couple \$40 ___ Family \$50

I would like a life membership ___ \$500 / person Telephone: _____

Name _____

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City / State / Zip: _____

Please send future newsletters to my email address: _____