



The Heritage

www.goesselmuseum.com

Spring 2023



www.goesselmuseum.com

2023 Heritage Dinner

Tabor Mennonite Church
Friday, March 31, 6:30 p.m.



**Special
Presenter:**
Brityne Rucker
KWCH 12
Morning Anchor
**“Communicating
Agriculture
in a Modern World”**



*Roast beef meal catered by
Goessel Grocery & Deli*

Ticket price: \$65 per person

(Ages 12 and under: \$5)

Will you be attending the Heritage Dinner for the first time?

Only \$35 per person

To make reservations, please contact the museum by Monday, March 27.

Call 620-367-8200 or email goesselmuseum@gmail.com

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

Low German Saying

En oola Hunt ess schwoa bale leare. It's hard to teach an old dog to bark. Or—you can't teach an old dog new tricks.

Mennonite Heritage and Agricultural Museum Board Members:

John Janzen, President; Pat Penner, Vice-President; Sandy Duerksen, Secretary; Aileen Esau, Treasurer;* Fern Bartel, Museum Director;* Roger Bartel, Myron Goertzen, Kris Schmucker, Lloyd Voth, Nelson Voth, Connie Wiens, James Wiens. *non-voting members

Upcoming Events:

Museum Hours

Spring hours have begun!
Tuesday—Saturday
12 noon—4 pm

Heritage Dinner

March 31, 6:30 pm
Tabor Mennonite Church
Speaker: Brityne Rucker
KWCH Morning Anchor
See page 2

Fourth Monday Genealogy Group

March 27, 7:00 pm
Goessel City
Community Room
See page 2

Country Threshing Days

August 4, 5, & 6

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

Celebration Planning Begins!

Time is fast approaching to the year 2024 and the 150th celebration of our ancestors emigrating from South Russia. Here are some ideas that are being considered.

Dramas: "Talking Tombstones," reading diaries.

Lectures: Immigration story, ship journey.

Souvenirs: T-shirts, tea towels, calendar, Christmas ornaments.

Church involvement: Venues, lectures, faspas.

Walk, run, or ride: Touring around the area.

Immigrant Trunk Display

One thing I think I would like to develop for this celebration is an immigrant trunk display. It would include items brought for life here in Kansas.

This photo is from the ship exhibit that Mayleen Thiesen Vinson did in 2007. I'm envisioning something similar.



Heritage Dinner March 31 to Feature KWCH's Brityne Rucker

Farming has deep roots here in Goessel. Generations of family farms started with the immigration of the Mennonites in 1874. Most immigrants were farmers who prospered here in Kansas by growing wheat. This year, our special presenter for the museum's Heritage Dinner, to be held at Tabor Mennonite Church, will be Brityne Rucker, KWCH morning anchor and reporter. The KWCH website tells us about her:

"Brityne is a central Kansas native and has strong ties to agriculture.

"Brityne attended Kansas State University where she graduated in the spring of 2020 with a degree in Agricultural Communications and Journalism and a minor in Animal Sciences and Industry. Brityne is from Hesston, Kansas and couldn't be more excited and honored to return home to cover news across the state.

"Growing up, Brityne was born into the agricultural life and participated in 4-H and FFA. She spent her summers preparing animals for the fair, spending long hours in the tractor and even artificially inseminating cows. That's what led to her love of ag journalism at K-State.

"While in college, Brityne was able to hold a variety of internships including K-State's agricultural radio

program "Agriculture Today" and anchor a statewide agricultural television program "Ag A.M. in Kansas."

"She joins the 12 News This Morning television team and provides viewers will the latest Kansas and national news. She'll also continue her work reporting on agriculture news from around the state.

"When she's not in the newsroom, you can find Brityne helping out on the family farm, spending time with family and friends and visiting her alma mater way too often - GO CATS!"

Dinner will be a delicious roast beef meal catered by Goessel Grocery & Deli. Call the museum at 620-367-8200 or email goesselmuseum@gmail.com for reservations by Monday, March 27 .

Genealogy Group to Visit "The Schmidtsonian"

The Fourth Monday Family History & Genealogy Group will meet on Monday, March 27, 7:00 p.m., at the home of Dennis and Jan Schmidt in Goessel to tour their unique collection of family and community artifacts known as "The Schmidtsonian." Shasta (Schmidt) Hamilton will serve as guide for the visit. The meeting is open to the public.

For more information, call the museum at 620-367-8200 or Anna Beth Birky at 620-386-0381.

Why Did the Alexanderwohl Mennonite Group Immigrate to Kansas?

2024 will see the 150th anniversary of our Mennonite ancestors' immigration from South Russia (now Ukraine) to Kansas. Museum Director Fern Bartel has been searching for how our ancestors prepared for the journey. Here are some of the stories she uncovered from a variety of museum sources.

"The Great Migration of 1874" by Velda Duerksen gives a glimpse into what motivated talk of immigration:

"Under the conditions of the times during the 1860's, the growing nationalism of middle Europe, unrest and revolts among the citizens, and the emergence of Russian militarism, it was becoming increasingly difficult to grant favors to a minority above those enjoyed by the citizenry in general. All of this resulted in convincing the Russian authorities that the day for the Russianizing of all foreigners had come. In 1870 a czarist decree rescinded or significantly curtailed the many special privileges for the colonists. . . . Russian was introduced as the official language in the Mennonite district offices, and Russian was to be introduced as a subject of study in all the schools. The German colonists were to be given ten years in which to accommodate themselves to the new order. After that they would become full-fledged Russian citizens with no special favors. Talk of immigrating started in earnest."

Another account told how the Russian Czar didn't want Mennonites to leave:

"When the Russian Government realized that it was about to lose a large number of its most desirable citizens, it tried desperately to stop the tide of emigration of the Molotschna Mennonites. Czar Alexander sent General Totleben as a personal envoy to the Mennonite communities and offered those who would remain certain exemptions from the most objectionable features of the new military law. He met the Mennonite civil and religious leaders in May of 1874 at Halbstadt, Cortitza, and Alexanderwohl. He informed his audiences that he was authorized by the Czar to offer them some sort of civil service as a substitute for compulsory military service. At the same time he tried to discourage the emigration movement by painting America in its darkest colors and pointed out that military exemption was not a guaranteed promise."

Note from Fern: The Russian government required that each individual boarding an ocean-going ship have a "death shroud" with them. Was this an attempt to put fear into the minds of these farmers: "You will die at sea"?



Rev. Goertz and wife

The Rev. Heinrich Goertz (1835-1904) memoirs detailed preparations to leave:

"In the fall [of 1873] we sold our farm land very cheaply, at half price; 2400 rubles. Grain, horses, cattle, house and furniture and everything salable amounted to another 2400 rubles. In all 4800 rubles.

"Since we owed my father 800 rubles, [who decided because of sickness to stay in Russia] we gave him the 800 rubles, although he did not want or need the money. After his death it was sent to us. So with 4000 rubles we started our trip to America. We left our dear home [Russia time] July 24, 1874, and started our journey with a sick son, Peter, and 2 pairs of twins, all four were small which gave us many sleepless nights and much worry. We stepped into the train and left Russia."



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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

(620) 367- 8200
goesselmuseum@gmail.com
www.goesselmuseum.com



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

Open by appointment
December through February

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

The Heritage
Written & edited by:
Fern Bartel, Director
Aileen Esau, Treasurer
Museum Board Members
Anne Harvey

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

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