



The Heritage

www.goesselmuseum.com

Summer 2019

The "Shocking" Truth About One Mennonite Mother

By Fern Bartel

The prevailing thought about wheat harvest in the "good old days" is that it was "man's work." Women were thought of as staying in the kitchen or doing farm chores. Not so with my grandmother, Maria Woelk Duerksen (1872-1936). She immigrated in 1893 with her Woelk family at the age of 21. Grandma was the mother of eleven living children. Jacob A. Duerksen was the oldest and Elsie Duerksen Schmidt was the baby. Recently, a copy of a letter came into my hands, written by my Uncle Jake to his daughter about his mother (my mother's mother). Jake was very well known in the Mennonite genealogy community for translating many documents and for research on an academic level.



"This [letter] gives you the background of your grandmother's life. I shall now give you my impressions of her life and character as it has impressed me during my growing up years. Mother was a sort of "tom boy." She had developed no special talents for sewing and cooking. Her zwiebach were frequently hard and sour. This caused her a lot of anguish when visitors would come over."

Back in Russia she did much field work as she grew up. During wheat harvest she rode all day on a horse that pulled a big threshing stone. Horses pulled the stone round and round the threshing floor until the wheat kernels were knocked out of the wheat heads. [paraphrased by Fern]

[The letter, cont.] "I remember mother shocking wheat in the afternoon for several hours between lunch and chore time. She worked fast. She has also made many wheat stacks. While Father would fill his wagon with wheat bundles, Mother and we children were in the shade of the stack. Mother would mend stockings and clothes, and we children would play. When Father's wagon was full, he hauled it to the stack. Then Mother would climb on the stack. Father

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Low German Proverb

Wea daut nich em Kop hat, Hat daut enna baen.
If you don't use your head, You'll use your legs.

Upcoming Events:

Art Show

Through June

Country Threshing Days

August 2 - 4, 2019

- See Pg 3 for additional information

August 2: Community Program: Irish Celtic music by Knocknasheega, 7:30 pm, Goessel High School, by donation

August 3: Traditional Low German Meal, 10:30 am - 1:30 pm, Goessel Elementary School - Food also available in 1906 Prep School

August 4: Schroeder Barn Open House, 2 pm

Second Monday Family History & Genealogy Group
7 pm, Goessel City Building

July - Ilona Abrahams, The Goessel Alumni Association

August - No meeting
September - Alexanderwohl Cemetery Tour

Fall Heritage Lecture

Details coming soon on goesselmuseum.com, Facebook, and local news releases.

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; Roger Bartel, Howard Birky, Myron Goertzen, Anne Harvey, Ladene Herrick, Nelson Voth, Connie Wiens, and James Wiens. *Non-voting members

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

How many people keep their first attempt at making cookies? Ann Boese showed me these wonderful examples of childhood play. Ann and her sister, Lois Janzen, were the “bakers.” Who knew that Marion County dirt could produce “mud pie cookies” such as these?

Schnetke Folk Song

This is a children’s action song in Low German. The subject is schnetke, a type of biscuit which resembles a baking powder biscuit.

Ve zent klene schnetke, Ma haft uns gebackt, Zure malk un zoda, Haft se tope gereht,
Zat uns in de ove. Nemt uns vahda rut, Kost en beske oabeit, Oba Schmackt uck goot!

Translation:

1. We are little biscuits; Mother has baked us.
2. Sour milk and soda.
3. She has mixed together.
4. Put us in the oven.
5. Takes us out again. It costs a bit of work.
6. But also tastes good.

Motions:

1. Point to self.
2. Show sour milk and soda.
3. Stir in the bowl.
4. Pretend to set pan in oven.
5. Take pan out.
6. Act as if it tasted good, smack lips.

From "Off the Mountain Lake Range" cookbook compiled in 1958 by the Gopher Historian Society, Chapter II of the Mountain Lake High School, Mountain Lake, MN.

My mother’s version of schnetke used pie dough that had been trimmed from the pie before it was baked. It was dampened with a little water then sprinkled with sugar and a bit of cinnamon. The dough was cut into long strips about ¾ inch thick and rolled like small cinnamon rolls. After the pie came out of the oven, the schnetke was baked for maybe 15 minutes.

Celebrate the 45th year of the Mennonite Heritage and Agricultural Museum with the Russian Passport Scavenger Hunt throughout 2019. Members receive one free Passport per visit; after regular admission, non-members may purchase a Passport for \$4.

Upcoming Event: Watch for the opportunity to “Welcome Home Rev. P.H. Unruh’s Russian Mennonite Kroeger Clock! The clock was always in the home of a direct descendant of Rev. Unruh, longtime minister and Elder of Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church.



Ann Boese with her “mud pie cookies”.

Recent Events:

Art Show through June: On display in the Immigrant House are watercolor paintings by Darlene Schroeder and Carol Eck, acrylic paintings and photos by Fern Bartel, and quilts by Ruth Goertzen. Regular admission; free for museum members.



The 12th Annual Classic Car, Truck, and Motorcycle Show, June 15: Many enjoyed the seven decades of vehicles and the beautiful summer day! Kendall Heinrich’s ‘58 Edsel won BEST OF SHOW; Leon Guhr’s ‘68 Roadrunner won the PEOPLE’S CHOICE award.

Visiting Groups: First and fourth grade classes from Goessel Elementary School. Participants from both the Kansas Wheat Commission Tour and the National Association of Wheat Weavers Convention. The wheat weavers were particularly interested in the Wheat Bell.

Above - Leon Guhr’s ‘68 Roadrunner

Right - The Goessel Goal Getters 4-H Club helping with spring cleanup. Photo credit: Susan Nafziger



Spring Cleanup: Parents and members of the Goessel Goal Getters 4-H Club raked and bagged leaves and picked up branches around the museum grounds. A huge “thank you” to this group!

Heritage Dinner Fundraiser, March 15: Approximately 100 people were in attendance to hear Melissa Scheffler, KWCH News Anchor, talk about the business of TV news and hear stories about newsroom life.



Ruth Goertzen with one of her quilts.

46th Annual Country Threshing Days

presented by:

Wheat Heritage Engine and Threshing Company
wheatco.org

Mennonite Heritage & Agricultural Museum
goesselmuseum.com

August 2, 3, & 4, 2019 — Goessel, KS



Knocknasheega

Friday, August 2, 7:30 pm

(Doors open at 7 pm)

Goessel High School Auditorium

Donations Welcome (no admission fee)

A benefit performance for the Mennonite Heritage & Agricultural Museum.

Knocknasheega, a traditional Irish Celtic band will perform both new and old-world tunes from Irish and Scottish folk music. Dancers from the **Corry Academy of Irish Dance** will also be featured with the band.

Please join us for a fun evening!



Children's pedal tractor pull and activities



Threshing and field demonstrations

Admission charged to grounds, good all three days. Gates open at noon on Friday.

Downtown parade on Saturday, August 3, at 9:30 am

Hungry at Threshing Days?

The museum will serve a traditional Low German meal on Saturday, August 3 only, from 10:30 am to 1:30 pm, at the Goessel Elementary School. Priced per item.

Verenika with Ham Gravy
Bierocks
German Country Sausage
Cole Slaw
Zwieback
Cherry Moos
New Year's Cookies

The museum will also sell food in the 1906 Prep School on the museum grounds on Saturday, August 3 only. Priced per item.

BBQ Beef Sandwiches
Bierocks
Chips
Monster Cookies
New Year's Cookies
Pop, Water, and Coffee



Schroeder Barn Open House

The Schroeder Barn restoration is nearing completion. During Country Threshing Days, members of the Schroeder family and others interested are invited to an **open house at the barn Sunday afternoon, August 4, at 2 pm**. Come to reminisce and share stories of this barn or related barn stories from your own growing-up years.

Photo credit: Cindy Wiens



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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:
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 Editorial Staff:
 Museum Board Members
 Mayleen Thiesen Vinson



Goessel Community Impact Fund Grant

The Mennonite Heritage and Agricultural Museum is pleased to announce that it has received a \$250 grant from the Goessel Community Impact Fund through the Goessel Community Foundation Affiliate of Central Kansas Community Foundation. The funds were designated for the East Walk Bridge Repair Project.

Kudos to Galen Miller and Rod Boese (pictured at left) of the Bethesda Home Maintenance Department who completed the work in three days at the end of April before the wet weather set in.

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pitched the bundles on the stack and Mother set the stack. Seven loads made one stack. The stacks were usually several feet higher than our 16 foot ladder. Mother was awful scared to crawl down when the top of the ladder did not quite reach to the top of the stack. But Father had always lots of patience.”

These insights into my grandmother’s life seemed even more fascinating as I learned about bundle stacking. Joseph Dale Fry provides a detailed description in his book, *Pioneer Threshers: Joe Pete Fry and Sally Utz Fry 1884-1928*. The Frys operated a custom threshing business for almost 39 years in Central and Western Kansas.

“Stacking bundled wheat required a skill acquired by years of practice and know how. Starting with a shock of grain in the center of the stack site, bundles were then placed in a circle around the shock until they reached the desired diameter of the new stack. . . The next layer of bundles was again started in the center and moved to the outside, always with the inside higher than the out, and the heads to the inside. As the layers were added, each bundle was thatched with the preceding one. This allowed the stacker to always keep the bundles sloped to the outside, and yet stay in place without sliding off the stack. The rain and snow had no chance of penetrating the outer layer of straw to the grain. . . The stack was eighteen to twenty feet tall and twenty to twenty five feet in diameter when finished.