

of the  
*Brethren in Christ  
Historical Society*

## Annual Meeting of the Brethren in Christ Historical Society

The 2011 annual meeting will be held on Saturday, October 22, at the Port Colborne Brethren in Christ church (pictured below) in Ontario, Canada. The meeting will begin at 1 p.m. with a meal. The dessert will be pie—a well-established tradition of the Historical Society's annual meetings.



experience as an outsider becoming a Brethren in Christ more than a half century ago; another will tell of Brethren in Christ who came to Canada from England as Barnardo boys. Singing will also be part of the program.

Reservations are needed for the meal. The cost of the dinner is \$15. Canadians attending the meeting should make checks payable to the BIC Fund and send them to Leonard Chester at 209-400 Steele Street, Port Colborne, Ontario L3K 5Z7. Persons attending from the United States should make checks payable to the Brethren in Christ Historical Society and send them to E. Morris Sider, P. O. Box 310, Grantham, PA 17027.

Reservations must be made by October 14. Refunds for canceling reservations will not be given after October 19. To cancel a reservation, telephone or e-mail Leonard Chester (telephone 905-834-6924; e-mail [leorchester@hotmail.com](mailto:leorchester@hotmail.com)).

Arrangements for lodging will be made for those traveling from a distance. For this service contact Leonard Chester. For directions to the church, also contact Leonard Chester.

Non-members of the Historical Society are encouraged to attend. **BICHS**

The program features storytelling. Various speakers will relate memories of earlier General Conferences, youth conferences, and Sunday school. One speaker will describe the

## Obtaining the Camp Kahquah Anniversary Book

The previous Newsletter indicated that *Chronicles of Kahquah*, written by Harvey Sider and celebrating the camp's fiftieth anniversary, may be obtained by writing to the camp administrator in Canada. However, the book may now be obtained in the United States, thus saving considerable postage.

Requests for copies should be sent to E. Morris Sider with a check for \$27.83 made payable to him (\$25 for the book, \$2.83 for the postage). Mail the check to P. O. Box 310, Grantham, PA 17027. **BICHS**

E. Morris Sider  
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The Newsletter of the Brethren in Christ Historical Society is published three times a year. No subscription charge. Comments, ideas, article suggestions, and letters may be directed to the Editor, Brethren in Christ Historical Society, P.O. Box 310, Grantham, PA 17027, (717) 766-7767. E-Mail: [msider@messiah.edu](mailto:msider@messiah.edu) Web: [www.bicweb.org/ministries/histsoc](http://www.bicweb.org/ministries/histsoc)

## Mailing of the April 2011 Issue of the Journal

Our printer made the understandable mistake of using the mailing list for a Church of the Brethren publication in mailing the April issue of *Brethren in Christ History and Life*. Thus some Church of the Brethren members received our journal, and some members of our Historical Society received theirs.

Evangel Press voluntarily reprinted our journal without cost and paid for the second mailing. This explains what some members may have considered to be a tardy arrival of the journal.

# Why I Am a Member of the Brethren in Christ Historical Society

By Audrey (Dear Dorf) Brubaker

**I**N 45 YEARS OF GRADING English compositions, one of the most frequent errors I have marked has related to verb tense shifts. On the students' compositions I circled the verbs, drew connecting lines, and then wrote "tense shift" in the margin. When students questioned these errors, I reminded them that tense shifts are understandable — but avoidable. After all, our present is often a result of our past, and our present is often conditioned by our anticipation of the future.

While we will never learn — let alone understand — everything from our past, our efforts to learn of the past can be most rewarding. One of the ways we learn is through reading. I often say that books are my friends. The Brethren in Christ

Historical Society has provided me with quality research and writings that I value. Membership in the Historical Society has given me a wealth of information: history of missionary endeavors, at home and abroad; details of the establishing/founding of specific churches and districts; biographies of church members; examples of peace endeavors and initiatives. All of these articles have given me a greater understanding and appreciation for my past and a clearer perspective for my future. So I delight in my present and appreciate all that the Brethren in Christ Historical Society has done to clarify who I am today. Therefore, I recommend and encourage membership in the Historical Society. **BICIS**



*Audrey taught English Composition at Messiah College and Lancaster Bible College for 45 years. Now retired, she and her husband Kenneth spend time volunteering at York Rescue Mission and ministering at the York Pathway BIC Church.*

## Historical Society to Publish a Book by Dwight Thomas

**T**he Brethren in Christ Historical Society will be publishing a book containing essays written by Dwight Thomas. The release date for the book is set for General Conference next year (2012).

The book will include some of Thomas's articles already published in the Historical Society's journal, *Brethren in Christ History and Life*, and a few articles on which he is presently working. In a beginning chapter,

Thomas will write about such subjects as his interests in research and writing, how he does his work, what he has learned from his work, and more.

Dwight Thomas is known for the breadth of his interests. Articles in the book will cover such areas as music (including an article on Old Order River Brethren singing), worship, the church in Africa and India, and biography.

In publishing this book, the Historical Society gives recognition to the numerous scholarly articles Thomas has

made available for publication in its journal, thus helping to maintain the quality of that publication. Publishing the book also is a way of saying thanks to Dwight and his wife Carolyn who have given admirable support to the Historical Society, not only in the articles given for publication but also in generous financial support and encouragement.

Those persons interested in helping to support this publication project may do so by making a financial contribution to the Historical Society. For every \$50 given, the donor will receive a free copy of the book. A receipt for income tax purposes will be issued for the amount of the donation minus the cost of the book. Checks should be made payable to The Brethren in Christ Historical Society and mailed to E. Morris Sider, P. O. Box 310, Grantham, PA 17027. In Canada, make checks payable to the Canadian Conference BIC Church, and mail to Leonard Chester (see his address on p. 1).

The names of those contributing \$50 or more will be listed on a donors page at the end of the book. **BICIS**



### Renewal Reminder

Please check the mailing label on this *Newsletter*. If it has "11" on the upper-left corner, that means your membership has been paid through calendar year 2011. If your label reads "10," our records indicate that your membership expired at the end of 2010. In order to continue receiving the Journal and this Newsletter, please send your renewal check as soon as possible. The cost of an annual membership is \$10.00; contributions above that amount receive a tax-deductible receipt.

**In the U.S.**, make checks payable to "Brethren in Christ Historical Society" and mail to: Brethren in Christ Historical Society; Messiah College P.O. Box 3002; Grantham, PA 17027.

**In Canada**, make cheques payable to "Canadian Conference BIC Church," and on the memo line, write "Historical Society." Mail to: Leonard Chester; 209-400 Steele St.; Port Colborne, ON L3K 5Z7.

# news and notes

FROM THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST HISTORICAL LIBRARY & ARCHIVES

## Diaries

Although the handwriting sometimes may be difficult to read and references to events and persons may border on the “cryptic,” diaries and hand-written autobiographies provide valuable insights into our history. In the “Special Collections” section of the Archives, we have diaries from more than 60 persons in the church, some dating back to the 1860s.

Readers of this newsletter who have historic diaries are urged to consider depositing them in the Brethren in Christ Historical Library and Archives as a way of preserving both their family history and the denomination’s history. For more information, contact Glen Pierce at the Brethren in Christ Archives, Messiah College P.O. Box 3002, Grantham, PA 17027. Email: [Archives@messiah.edu](mailto:Archives@messiah.edu).

■ *The Archives has a diary written in 1905 by Abbie M. Bert, who was 20 years old at the time. Also in the collection is a hand-written autobiography she prepared years later. Below are the first three paragraphs of her autobiography, followed by selections from her diary:*

“I was born in Dickinson Co., Kans., in 1884, on a 240 acre farm. I started to milk and drive a large [farm] wagon when 8 years old and from then for some years I helped on the farm like a boy. My brothers went away to school. I had a godly father and I dearly loved him and loved to work with him. Many times I heard him up in the barn praying for his children. My parents wanted us to be saved when young.

“I gave my heart to God when eight years old [and] was baptized when nine. At 16 I consecrated my life to God. I soon felt the call to be a missionary but did not tell anyone until about the end of 1904. My father said, how can I say yes, how dare I say no?

“I went to Africa in June 1905, just after I turned 21. I went with Bro. and Sr. Frey, Adda Engle, and Sr. Davidson. Oh the joy of yielding to God, even if it did mean leaving my loved parents, brothers, and sisters.”

■ *Excerpts from Abbie’s diary, tracing her travels from Kansas to Africa:*

**April 27, 1905** – “I left Detroit [Kansas] about 2 o’clock p.m., reached K.C. [Kansas City] about 7:00 p.m. Had some trouble in finding Emma but found her about 9:30 p.m. in the Great Western Depot. Mamma went to Chapman with me.”

**April 28** – “Arrived in Des Moines about 7:55 a.m. Bro. Mahler and Harvey F. met us at the train and took us to the home of Bro. J. R. Zook. Harvey left for Dallas Center about 1:00 p.m. Went to meeting [in the] evening.

**May 7** [at the Chicago Mission] – “Preaching in morning at mission also have a large S.S. Bro. Cress spoke on the purity of the church. Aunt Ella, Lona, and Bertha took dinner with us at the mission. P.M. Visted with aunts and cousins in evening. Had young peoples meeting. Bro. Cress asked me to speak to the young people and tell them how it came about that God called me to go to the Foreign field in my young years, which I did only for the honor and glory of God.”

**May 14** – “Attended church in morning and after S.S. papa came to mission about 11 o’clock. We all took dinner at mission. Attended meeting in eve. Edith Hoffman and I addressed young people in evening. [Then] we took train for Smithville [Ohio, where the Foreign Mission Board was to meet on May 16, followed by General Conference May 17–19].

**May 17** – “Right after breakfast Harvey, Emma, Adda and I and D. Gish and Bro J. Bock [?] went up to Smithville to meet the Foreign Mission Board and had a short talk. Came back to church about 10:00 and attended Conference.”


**May 18** – “Today is my birthday and I am twenty-one and the happiest birthday I ever enjoyed. Also attended the session of conference. Enjoyed some parts very much. J.R. Zook gave a

splendid talk on the need of [a] Bible School.”

**May 22** – “Anna Swolem [sic] and I went down to station at Smithville. I wanted [to] see about my trunk. We had a very nice talk with Bro. Willie Casper of Buffalo. Came back to house, then Edith, Abbie and I went down to store. Soon after we all went to Madisonburg to take the trolley for Cleveland. As we left we found out we could not take my trunk along so Bro. Walter Winger went back and saw that it would come to Cleveland allright [sic]. We arrived at Cleveland about 4 p.m. Got on boat about 8 o’clock and left about nine. As we left the dock we sang ‘Throw out the life line.’ Spent night on boat” [traveling to Canada].

**June 17** [departing from New York] – “Our trip across the Atlantic. At last has the time come for our departure for Africa. At 8:30 we were to be on board but it was a little later until we arrived down at the dock and at nine thirty our great house pulled out and O the thrill of joy as we obey the master’s will and with joy we could bid farewell to our native land and to the brethren and sisters who accompanied us to the docks. We waved our handkerchiefs as long as we could see them... The first day or so we enjoyed ourselves very well but a little later we felt quite sick and for a couple days we did not enjoy our trip very much or our meals either. After we were better again, we had Bible reading and Zulu lessons for a couple mornings. The latter part of our trip we enjoyed very well. After we sailed into the English Channel we enjoyed the scenery very much. We landed at Southampton June 25, 1905.”

**July 24** – “At last we have set our feet upon African soil. Oh, the goodness of God. We are now having a quiet little rest with Mrs. Lewis up at the Highlands at the foot of Table Mountain” [Cape Town, South Africa].

■ *Abbie spent three years in Africa, but due to ill health, returned to the States in 1908. As noted in her hand-written autobiography, she then married Walter Winger (mentioned in her diary entry for May 22) and soon returned to Africa, serving with Brethren in Christ Missions for 33 more years.* 

# THE Newsletter

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Historical Society*

Brethren in Christ Church

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Grantham, PA 17027

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## Images *from the Past*

From the photograph collection of the Brethren in Christ Historical Library & Archives

An undated photo of the Redwood Country Church building and congregation, Grants Pass, Oregon. The church sign notes that B. M. Books is the pastor, which places the date of the photograph between 1945–1950. At least 66 persons were present the morning that the picture was taken.

Unfortunately, the Archives has virtually no records from the Redwood Country Church, and has only three other photos: a slightly different photo of this scene, a photo of the parsonage when Glenn Diller was pastor, and a group photo of an early Vacation Bible School (which had 101 in attendance).

The Archives is always seeking to receive congregational records and historic photographs. Items deposited with the Archives can then be made available to churches for events such as centennial observations, etc.

