



# Focus on Floradale

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Floradale Mennonite Church

June, 2016

## The Relief Sale after 50 years



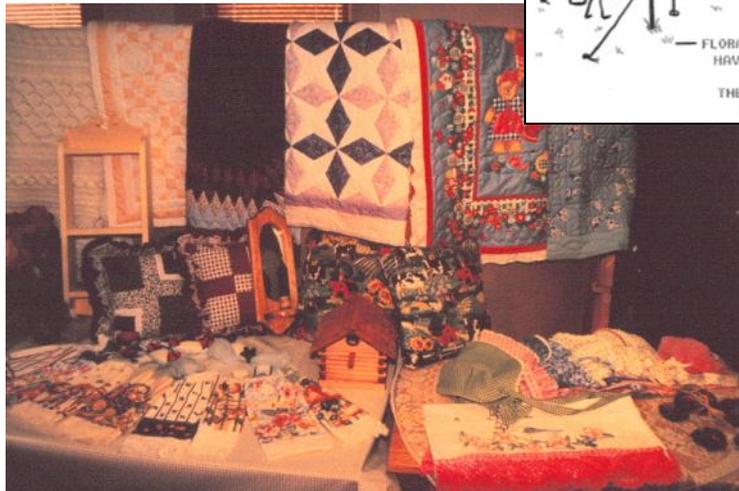
Above: Organizers had enough forethought to bring chairs for the 2016 relief sale. Rita Shantz (left), Marilyn Weber, Nicole and Tyler Woeschka and Howie Bauman (right) deserved their moments of rest.

Above: Alice Frey and Vietta Martin helped display quilts at the 1998 sale.

Left: Elmeta Bowman designed this Focus cover 25 years ago.

Below: In years gone by many crafts items, donated by church people, would be on display the week before

Below: The original relief sale Committee: (standing) J. Winfield Fretz, Elven Shantz, Karl Enns, Irvine Cober; (seated) Ed Wiens, Margaret Brubacher, Ward Shantz, Pauline Bauman, Oscar Snyder.



# A history of Floradale's tea ball project

By Barb Draper

The people of Floradale Mennonite Church have made tea balls for the relief sale ever since the beginning in 1967—50 relief sales ago!

When Mennonite Central Committee Ontario (MCCO) decided to raise funds with a relief sale in the mid-1960s, women's groups from the Mennonite churches were invited to send representatives to a meeting to get ideas about how they might contribute. All women's groups were encouraged to donate baked goods (pies, cookies, cakes, bread), but they were also invited to set up their own projects. The Floradale women's group decided to make tea balls.

Among the ideas discussed at this early meeting was selling "Mennonite" food. Organizers made sure there would be enough shoo fly pies to advertise them, and "Russian" Mennonites made and sold *rollkuchen* and *fleisch peroschki*. Over the years people have assumed that tea balls were a Swiss Mennonite tradition. I don't



In 1968 Myra Brubacher, Lydia Brubacher and Sylvia Schwindt make tea balls at Myra's house at 34 Church St. W. in Elmira. (Menn Archives of Ont. photo)

think our grandmothers made more tea balls than their non-Mennonite neighbours—I've always assumed that Myra suggested tea balls because she thought it would be a feasible project that people would buy and enjoy.

Fifty years ago women's groups were very active and for at least the first 25 years, this was officially a women's project with men helping. About 20 years ago it officially became a church project and now we probably have as many men as women working with the tea balls.

Food-handling regulations were more relaxed in the 1970s. The batter was mixed on Thursday and some tea balls were made on Friday at Elmer and Myra's house in Elmira. Trays of tea balls were transported to New Hamburg to be sold on Saturday. That is something the Canada Food Inspective Agency (CFIA) no longer allows.

## Memories from 1991

Those first years we would make the tea ball batter on Thursday and store it in the Egg Grading Station refrigeration room. On Friday we would make tea balls in Elmira and later in the day move to New Hamburg and continue all through the evening. Very early Saturday morning, a crew would be on hand to make tea balls while the crowd watched and waited for the tea balls. . . . There are still line-ups because this is a popular item and a very worthwhile project.

-from Myra Brubacher, June, 1991  
*Focus*

For many years the batter mixing was done in the garage at Laura and Phares' house in Floradale (which was the Redekop residence for 24 years). The pails and some other supplies were storied in the attic of that garage until 2006 when there was more storage space in the church building.

## Memories from 1991

I remember there were many anxious moments as the time of the first sale approached. The weather was nice and things sold well and this gave courage to continue on. I have attended most of the sales, but not quite all.

We have been making tea balls since the sale began. I remember we used to have a booth at the Elmira Maple Syrup Festival and sold tea balls there. The money we made there went toward the expenses of our tea ball project at the relief sale. . . .

-by Adeline Martin,  
*June 1991 Focus*

It may have been in 1969 that a table leg gave way, spilling a fryer full of hot grease. Following that incident, reinforced tables were built to avoid another accident. The fryer tables used today are incredibly heavy. Perhaps the following year, many booths were moved out of the arena. The first year the crowds were not sure how to find everything and I remember Laura bringing boxes of tea balls into the arena later in the day, trying to get rid of the last of them. By the 1980s the sale became a two-day event and now we sell half the tea balls on Friday.

Myra's recipe for tea balls called for farmer's cream and buttermilk, and she insisted that pasteurized cream changed the taste. As the years went by it became harder and harder to get "farmer's cream." One year we were able to get three pails of cream from the creamery in Millbank, but the next year they had closed. Not sure what to do, I remember talking to Eileen Freeman about the advisability of using unpasteurized cream. The expression on her face



*Myra and Lydia in Myra's kitchen.*

said it all and we've been using pasteurized cream ever since. In my opinion it's not whether the cream is pasteurized that matters, but how much butterfat is in the cream. They turn out very well using whipping cream at 35 percent butterfat, so that's what the recipe calls for now. I've always thought it would be cheaper to use 10 percent cream and add some vegetable oil, but it can be dangerous to mess with the recipe.

As the CFIA became more sticky about relief sale products, we have had to move our batter mixing out of garages and into the church kitchen. That was a challenge in the years before we had our new building, but now it works well.

One year, probably almost 20 years ago, the batter was a little on the thin side and difficult to work with. Tea balls kept sticking to the wire grids in the bottom of the fryers. Edna Diefenbacher, who was one of the people in charge that year, came up with the idea of having one person measure the

flour, rather than having each of the mixers trying to count 10 cups of flour. She suggested using a four-cup measuring cup slightly rounded and that has helped get a consistent batter.

For many years Isabelle Bauman cracked all the eggs. She would sit at a table and crack six eggs for each batch—hundreds of eggs in total. One year we caught on that Mahlon Martin, who arranged the donation of the eggs, had to candle all of them by hand, since the company no longer sold eggs in the shell. So then we carefully measured some eggs and came to the conclusion that six eggs equals 1.5 cups of out-of-the-shell eggs.

Somewhere along the line we began to streamline our mixing. One person put the sugar into a bowl. Another person measured and added the salt, nutmeg and baking soda. A third person added the eggs and orange flavouring. The bowls then go to the mixers who make sure everything is well mixed as they add a pitcher of pre-measured buttermilk and cream. The bowls then go to the flour-and-baking-powder person for just the right amount of flour. Stirring is usually a man's job as it takes some strength. This assembly-line approach keeps each person's task simple, so if they chat as they work they are less apt to make a mistake.

The full buckets are stored in Erb Transport refrigerated truck in New Hamburg. One year someone tried to steal the truck overnight on Friday. On Saturday morning, some pails of batter had been tipped over when the truck was moved, but only a little batter had to be thrown out.

**Continued on page 4**

### *Memories from 1991*

The very first year when we made 200 dozen tea balls, using regular household deep fryers (one dozen at a time). By the second year we were using commercial-size deep fryers and for a number of years making more tea balls each year. I remember selling them for \$1.25 a dozen. I also remember being in the arena and how worried we were when they moved us outside. We were afraid people wouldn't find us.

*-from Laura Bauman,  
June 1991 Focus*

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Making tea balls is labour intensive. By 2009 it looked as though Floradale church might no longer have the will to carry on with this project. Many thanks to Mark and Marilyn Weber and the other leaders who have played an important part in reviving enthusiasm for the tea ball project.

An important change over the years has been the end to the idea

that it takes years of practice and only experienced women can be trusted to drop tea balls. It's wonderful to see men of all ages standing at the fryers. Thanks to Mike Towns who was one of the first young men to confidently drop nice, round tea balls!

Many thanks to everyone who has contributed to this project. It's great to know that our church has done this for 50 years. That's quite an achievement.

## Tea balls raised \$13,000 this year

By Mark Weber

So I think it was in 2009 after a golf game that Richard Bauman was talking about the lack of interest in the tea ball project and the possibility that Floradale Church would be dropping the project for lack of interest. Merle Shantz, Howie Bauman, Ozie Martin and myself decided we would run the project along with our wives for the next five years if we could get the selling price of the tea balls up to \$10.00 per dozen. Nicole and Tyler Woeschka are also on the committee so we continue having eight people, which works out really well in the event that all positions can't be filled. This still seems to be an issue every year.

Another thing that helped make the whole process a lot easier is having Rick Cressman and Tyler Woeschka looking after getting all the equipment to the New Hamburg Sale and doing the setup at the sale and giving the people that work in the tent for those two days a solid, double thickness, plywood floor. Awesome!!

It wasn't until 2016 that we were able to agree to put the price to \$10.00 for a baker's dozen. This worked out really well with having

to make very few change on the purchases.

Another change we have made is in the size of fryers we use. A few people have purchased larger fryers and are donating the use of them for this project. This has really helped speed up production to about 100 dozen per hour. This created another issue with getting the tea balls cooled faster to be able to apply the sugar mixture without having the sugar melt and making a less-than-desirable-looking product. This year we introduced furnace type cooling fans with a filtering system, to cool the tea balls prior to sugaring. It worked extremely well to speed up the whole process between the trimming table to packaging. As it turned out the health inspectors were also happy with the filtered air we used in cooling tea balls.

This year we sold out again around 11:00 a.m. on Saturday and were able to raise over \$13,000.00 for the New Hamburg Mennonite Relief Sale (NHMRS) with this project. One of the reasons for the increase in money was for the 50-year celebrations, the NHMRS committee requested we make more product, so we made about 10 percent more. The other reason

### Memories from 1991

I worked on the Relief Sale executive board for 15 years and have enjoyed it. Every year I worked with the *Toronto Star* who gave us a full-colour page to advertise the sale. The last number of years the *Hamilton Spectator* has given us full coverage. The media has been very good to us.

-by Nancy Bauman (mother Steve (Ort) June 1991 Focus.



*Nancy Mann said she learned to count to 13 as she filled bags.*

for higher sales is the price increase over last year.

Like the last few years, we sold more tea balls on Friday evening than on Saturday and had to work hard selling the last 20 dozen on Saturday. (We likely sold over 1300 dozen tea balls this year.)

I realize it takes effort from everyone to donate time and money to make this happen, but I think as long as people are willing to purchase the tea balls at a price that makes a good amount of money for the NHMRS, Floradale Church should continue to support the project with a few hours of time, once a year.

Thanks again to everyone who contributes to this cause.

# Relief sale memories of Phares Bauman and Eleanor

By Mary M. Martin

I had interesting conversations with both Phares Bauman and Eleanor Metzger as I picked their brains for memories of the early days of the New Hamburg sale. It was well known that Laura had been one of the key players in the early years of the tea ball project and she missed only one year when she was receiving chemo treatment. I wondered what memories Phares had, and how he saw his role. Eleanor served on the NHMRS board following her sister Nancy Bauman in the early 1990s, and I knew she had been actively involved with the quilts for eight years.

It was interesting to learn that prior to the first sale, Laura Bauman and Elmer and Myra Brubacher sought opportunities to

## *Tea ball memories*

Elmer and Myra Brubacher were in charge with Irvine and Lydia Brubacher (Elaine Bowman's parents) working alongside. Elmer was very particular, wanting the tea balls as round as golf balls, stacked neatly on trays. I can still hear Myra say, "Oh, Elmer!" when he commented that there were too many tails on her tea balls.

I remember using household fryers the first year, making about 10 tea balls at a time. Needless to say, we used larger fryers after that...

I remember one year we ran out of cream, needing to go for more, only to discover that one of the pails in New Hamburg was full of cream, not dough.

- Laura Bauman,  
*June 2010 Focus*

practice their tea ball skills. For example, one time they set up in a parking lot near the Golf Steak House in Bridgeport for some event which gave them an opportunity to discover what the glitches might be, and find possible ways to resolve them. The recipe had also been tested and tweaked to their satisfaction to the point where they were confident of their product.

For 24 years, every Thursday night before the sale, the batter would be mixed in the garage at Phares and Laura's home in Floradale. Phares and Laura would pick up fresh cream from a farm around New Jerusalem and eggs from Metzger's Egg Grading station. The flour would be brought to Floradale by Flanigan's Wholesale. Phares would be involved in picking up these items and a slow smile crossed his face when I asked him if he was the "roadie."

Frying of the tea balls started at one o'clock on Friday and they fried into the early evening, trying to satisfy the long line of people waiting for tea balls to be cool enough to buy. Coffee was also sold in those early years, but not enough was sold to make it worthwhile. People who waited in long lines weren't interested in coffee unless the weather was very cold. Elmer, Myra and Laura would stay in a trailer on the grounds, starting to fry again between 4 and 5 a.m. Saturday morning. They took no breaks, starting on Friday early afternoon and going until Saturday noon or when they were done.

Tea balls were fried inside the arena for the first 3-4 years until the horrible "mishap" oc-



*Rosie and Rebecca make a good team. These days we use bigger fryers to do several dozen at once.*

curred when the table leg broke, spilling hot oil on women standing there frying. Phares was not there when it happened, but he remembers someone bringing Laura home with her legs and arms wrapped up in bandages. After this there were no more fryers inside and tents were set up outside. Setting up the tent became Richard and Phares' "job." The first years the tents were on grass and later plywood was laid down.

Initially hard lard was used and Phares described how the hard lard needed to be cut out of the pail, melted, and then poured into the fryers. With his memories of the early beginnings Phares is keenly aware of the changes that have happened and how things have become more efficient and stream lined. He is sure the initiators of this project would be in total disbelief that in 2016 the tea balls were sold at \$10:00 for a baker's dozen. He expressed heartfelt gratitude that "younger blood" has taken responsibility for a project he had dreamed would continue for 50 years.

Just as the tea ball project has become more organized and stream-lined, so has the quilt sale. Eleanor said at one time there were “pages and pages” of very detailed notes that were stored in dresser drawers. Over the years quilt-making has shifted from using leftover patches to buying specific fabrics and creating real works of art. Even after she was no longer on the committee Eleanor would still go to view the quilts and watch with interest how much they sold for. Eleanor, like Phares, appreciates that other younger people have energy and passion to carry on the vision and work that began years ago.

## Making tea balls is a sacred act

*By Fred Redekop*

The tea ball project has always been for me, and maybe only for me, the most sacred act and expression of faith in Jesus Christ here at Floradale. I arrived here in 1991 to be pastor, and the tea ball project was talked about in solemn terms. It was what we sold at the Relief Sale. We had done it from the beginning and we would always do it. As I remember, there were specific jobs for people to do. In the preparation of the dough, and the cooking of the dough, it had to be done in certain way. We were raising money for MCC, and so we wanted to do it right.

We still want to do it right, but we are involving more drop-pers, more sugarers, and people of all ages. We try not to have one person do too much, but the coordinators are there all the time.

Part of being on the committee was to inspect each quilt to insure it met the expected workmanship standards and sometimes difficult decisions needed to be made if it didn't. Eleanor said the public has learned to trust the products of the sale and she also stated that it doesn't take much to betray this trust.

It seems to me the reputation and the goal of excellence needs to be maintained if the NHMRS is to continue to be successful and considering what I have seen, I am confident that it will.

The conversations around the fryers and tables are very important. We get to know new people every year, or talk to people from the church that we often do not get to talk to during the year. And we raised \$13,000 for the work of MCC this year.

We could probably ask people from the church to just donate money, and raise just as much, but that is not the point. We build a lot of congregational and social capital as we set up the tent, make the dough, drop the dough into the fryers, and sell them to the public. And the public just love those tea balls!!! The laughter around the tent is great to hear on Friday and Saturday of the sale. It is a sacred event.

In the New Testament, Jesus is born of a virgin, and is called the Son of God early on in the story, and then begins his three year ministry in Palestine. He is divine, and can do it all by him-

## Memories from 1997

“On Friday afternoon it poured and poured. As the tea balls were piled higher and higher and no one was around to buy them, we became anxious and shut down one of the fryers. Of course, by 6:00 p.m. it had stopped and the crowds came.

Steve Bauman, who had to scoop batter into the bowls in spite of the rain, got his shirt rather wet. Dana, his loving wife, gave him a dry shirt of her own and then went door-to-door in New Hamburg to find someone willing to let her use a dryer to dry his shirt. Dana was surprised at the number of people who insisted they didn't have a dryer. Roy Draper didn't realize that the blue and white jug had Javex water in it. He took a good swig to assuage his thirst and thought it was rather strongly chlorinated!”  
-from the Tea Ball report in the June, 1997 *Focus on Floradale*

self. But...one of the first acts of ministry that is recorded in the Gospels, is that he needs humans, women, men, and children, to help him with his work. God needs us? Yes, God needs all of us to complete the eternal work of life and salvation.

This is why, I believe, the tea ball project is so important. It makes us work together for work of God. It raises money for MCC, but it also invites us to look into each other's eyes, and know that we are a community of faith and love. We are the hands and feet, and the tea balls for God. It is about everybody's faith, and the faith of God in us to be partners in all of God's creation.

# Memories of the MCC Relief Sale

by Nancy Mann

I can most easily bring to mind the first time I watched the quilt auction. I was mesmerized by all the beautiful quilts, one after another, coming up in such rapid succession. And the energetic bidding, sometimes reaching several thousand dollars for a single quilt. I thought it was spectacular.

Over time, I learned about the generous contributions from so many women's groups and about all the people who had worked all year to prepare the quilts for the auction. What amazing art they had created from small pieces of fabric!

Since my first introduction to these beautiful quilts (likely

around 1989), I have purchased three quilts for my own home. One was purchased from a local Mennonite merchant, one was purchased at the MCC Relief Sale and one was quilted by the women at Nithview Mennonite Home, where I worked as the Director of Spiritual Care for five years.

I must say, buying the quilt at the Relief Sale was the most stressful! I needed to be there right at the right time to bid on it. And then I wondered—will it go too high? Can I afford it? In the end I got the quilt I was hoping to buy. Whew! Exciting—but a bit stressful.

Of course, many people come to the Relief Sale for the food. So

many wonderful treats! Every time I go I discover a new Mennonite specialty. This year it was the Floradale tea balls. It was fun to watch everyone work together to make them right on site at the Relief Sale. What a yummy treat.

It is interesting that Mennonite foods now include items like spring rolls and pupusas. Here in the Waterloo Region we have many churches from different ethnic backgrounds that now consider themselves Mennonite. Sharing our different foods together is a great way to celebrate our unity in the Anabaptist family. I always look forward to a joyful day of celebrating in our "Mennonite way" at the Relief Sale.

## Floradale's quilt donations for 2016

The quilting women from Floradale Mennonite Church donated three quilts to the New Hamburg Relief Sale quilt auction. Vietta Martin reported that the quilt auction went on for seven hours and that by the time the last quilts were being sold the crowd has really thinned out.

*Irene Freeman pieced this "Birds of the Wilderness" crib quilt which sold for \$1,100.*



*This ten-patch quilt was pieced by Laura Bauman and quilted by the Floradale women. It sold for \$850*



*This crib quilt in the Trip around the world pattern was pieced by Vietta Martin. It sold for \$100.*



# A tribute to my Aunt Selina

When the *Focus* committee was exploring the early beginnings of the tea ball project 50 years ago, I was surprised to learn that Selina Frey had never been involved in a significant way. I knew Selina to be a woman who spent many, many hours doing volunteer work so I initially was surprised. But of course she was not involved with the tea balls! She was busy making “wet bottom” shoofly pies in her hot kitchen and also organizing the jams, jellies, pickles, mustard beans, etc. that she had preserved all summer for the sale.

I don't remember how many years I helped Selina sell canned goods at the Maple Syrup festival and at the New Hamburg Relief sale. I know other people also donated canned goods but I also know that Selina's annual donated contributions were significant. I wonder if Selina ever counted how many jars of jam she made for the sale.

Personally, I believe Selina knew how many jars she filled and she also knew which jams were the favorites. Selina would not have thought it necessary to talk about all that she made, she would much rather talk about the money that was raised even as she was already thinking of making strawberry jam for the next year's sale.

Women like Selina, my mother, and many others who grew up during the depression years had much to teach us and to pass on. One never allowed food to spoil; one either preserved it or shared it or both. They may not have had actual money to donate but they were resourceful with what they had and they gladly shared it “In the Name of Christ”

with agencies like the New Hamburg sale benefitting from their dedicated zeal.

## *Editor's addition*

Selina not only made jams, jellies and pickles, she also made lots of pies and quilts. She would make Dutch apple and shoo fly pies on Thursday and then fruit pies on Friday. She set the oven for 375 and baked four pies at a time for 20 minutes, keeping the oven full for hours and hours. She deliberately did not count the pies, but I would estimate that some years she made up to 150 pies.



*A 1972 photo of Selina Frey with a wet-bottom shoo fly pie. (Mennon. Archives of Ont. photo)*

## *Selina's Memories*

“My memories of the first sale are not as clear as the meeting where women met to plan what they could do to help make it a success. I had been invited as a representative of a Markham-Waterloo Mennonite sewing circle. Mrs. Byler was there to talk about things that sell well at the Pennsylvania relief sale. Quilts are important, but she warned about competing with each other.

At their sale, wet-bottom shoo fly pie and fresh strawberry pie were in demand. Any shoo fly pie I had ever known were dry, very dry. Mrs. Byler promised to send us their recipes.

Margaret Brubacher, in charge of the women's section, called me to ask if the Markham-Waterloo ladies could bake enough shoo fly pies so that they could advertise them in their brochure. Farmers donated dark maple syrup and one year there were more than 20 gallons donated.

I believe it was the second year, early Saturday morning, while standing near the information booth that I heard Margaret Brubacher say, “Can anyone help me; the people want to buy canned goods and the ladies who are in charge are not here yet!” Being behind the tables, selling seemed more attractive than being in a crowd so I offered to help. By the time the ladies arrived, there was not very much left to sell. Seeing my interest, Margaret Brubacher asked me to be in charge of selling canned goods the next year.

I asked others to help and they too became involved. When we moved up north, Selina Brubacher (Clare Brubacher's mother) took over.

*-By Selina Frey, June 1991 Focus. (Selina joined Floradale Mennonite in 1972. She moved “up north” to work with a mission program between 1977 and 1986.)*

# A heart full of thanks

By Angela Ishaka

It has been a very good year. I know that some members of the congregation were a little hesitant to begin employing someone to lead music at Floradale Mennonite Church. There have been many excellent volunteers to lead singing and play piano and organ over the past number of years, so why would we bother paying anyone to do it? I wasn't sure how to explain my own vision for the position, but I believe that over the course of the past year, my vision has unfolded and has become apparent to all.

I wanted to enable volunteers to become even more skilled than they already were. I wanted to bring joy and life to the singing in our worship services, to give people confidence to try something they had never done before, to engage the children in songs that are memorable and meaningful for them, to give children an opportunity to act and sing.

I wanted to use drama to make certain scriptures jump out at us in a new way, to invite people to laugh and cry so God could touch their hearts in a spot that perhaps they had forgotten. I wanted to hear banjo, drums, violin, guitar, singing, organ, piano, bass...and any other instrument that anyone wanted to play. I pray that I have been able to accomplish some of these goals.

If I were to stay longer, this is what I would do: I would have a choir sing more often, maybe once a month. I would strive for even more variety of music in our services each week. I would ask more of you what your favourite

songs are and how we can incorporate them into our services. I would work towards a larger drama and musical production. I would volunteer in the children's Sunday School so they could learn more music and learn to love singing together.

I must say thank you to all of you for allowing me to try out this new position, and thank you that you will keep the position for Nichelle. Thank you, Nichelle, for agreeing to take it on, and for all the work you have done as a volunteer for many years. Thank you Rick and Nancy for helping to

maker and Steve Bauman (the three Steves!) for singing in front of all those people.

Thank you, Sylvan for requesting a song that is so meaningful to you. Thank you Sunday School kids for all the work you put into the pageant. Thank you Worship Team for bringing contemporary worship to us. Thank you AV guys for making us all sound so good every Sunday and look so good on the videos, and for taking on MediaShout with me.

Thank you Veg for keeping me so well apprised of everything I need to know. Thank you Erin for your positive attitude amidst so many new pieces of your job.



*At the May 29 outdoor worship service singing was led by Luke Chamberlain (left), Richard Bauman, Jeanette Towns, Angela Ishaka and Nichelle Bauman. Dane Frede, the usual percussionist was travelling Australia at the time.*

create this job with your perseverance and belief in me. Thank you, Fred. You made time for me when I wanted to hash out the reasons for choosing different songs, and thank you for your vastly open mind.

Thank-you, Nancy for being so enthusiastic and willing to try so many new things with me. Thankyou Merri-Lee. You graciously handed the baton over to me and were so supportive. Thank you choir for having fun with me. Thank you Steve Ort, Steve Shoe-

Thank you Katie for your constant encouragement and servant's heart. Thank you David Lamble for singing Joseph for us in the middle of your most difficult journey. I know I've forgotten someone so please forgive me and hear me when I say I am SO THANKFUL, my heart is spilling over!

Wherever I go and whatever I do, I will love the people of Floradale Mennonite Church. You have become my people and I am one of you.

# Amsey Martin

May 14, 1933 – June 5, 2016



Amsey Martin passed away on June 5 at Listowel Memorial Hospital at the age of 83 years. A funeral was held at Floradale Mennonite Church on June 9, 2016.

Amsey was the beloved husband of Mildred (Steckle) Martin for 14 years. He was a step-father to Carolyn (Frey) and Harvey Shoemaker, Rose (Frey) and Brian Horst, Carol (Martin) and Dale Cressman, Keith and Barb Martin and Delphine (Martin) and Derrick Burkhart.

He was a brother of Urias and Melinda Martin, Lovina Brubacher, Ellen and Simeon Martin, Annie and Harvey Martin, Lena Martin, Clarence and Erla Martin and Mahlon and Erma Martin.

Amsey was pre-deceased by his first wife, Almeda Sittler (died Sept. 26, 1976), and his second wife, Eileen Frey (previously married to Henry Frey, died Sept. 18, 1998). He was also predeceased

by his parents, Clarence and Magdalena (Brubacher) Martin and brother-in-law, Israel Brubacher.

Thanks Amsey for the faithful husband  
You have been to me.  
The love you have shown my family,  
Has been very plain to see.

For the good times we shared together  
With friends and family too  
For the time you took to show you cared,  
Although you had so much to do.

You kept the lawn so neat and trim  
And cared for the flowerbeds well,

While I enjoyed that great front porch  
Sitting together there too was swell.

Watching you weaken over the last several months  
Was not at all easy to see.  
You put up a good fight, tried to succeed,  
But God in His love set you free.

While we as a family sat with you June 5,  
God reached down his hand to you,  
Saying "Dear child you tried long enough,  
I've a much better place for you."

I was right by your side as you breathed your last breath,  
Family was there with you too.  
Someday we'll meet you and see you again  
And spend Eternity in Heaven with you.

Love and thanks,  
Your wife, Mildred

## MennoHomes Update

Among the cyclists participating in the 2016 Out-Spokin' MennoHomes fundraiser were Nancy Mann, and Rick and Donna Freeman. On the motorcycle tour were Glenn Martin and Shirley Redekop. Due to his overseas travel, Fred was not able to participate on June 18, but will put in the miles at another time.

Construction has begun on the apartment complex beside Woolwich Community Services. This is an artist's rendering of the finished building.



## Special *Focus* issue as a tribute to the Redekops.

The *Focus on Floradale* committee is hoping to put together a special issue of photos and memories of the last 25 years.

Please write up your memories and sort out some photos. Use the Focus mailbox or send them to the editor at [rbdraper@golden.net](mailto:rbdraper@golden.net) by Aug. 21.

## Allen D. Martin receives Lifetime Achievement Award

Family and friends gathered at Barnswallow Place on May 6 to celebrate with Allen Martin as he was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Paula Osborne, Barnswallow's recreation manager, noted the many and varied ways that Allen made significant contributions throughout his lifetime, but also more recently as he sang at some of their memorial services with his daughter, Sherri. Tributes were also shared by Erika Shantz, Allen's granddaughter; Dave Chapman, principal at Linwood Public School where Allen taught for many years; Pat Merlihan from *Woolwich Observer* who

remembered Allen for writing the "My Side of the Dam" column; Dennis Frey, local Fire Chief where Allen served for 27 years; Warren Stauck from Waterloo County Historical Society where Allen was President; Nancy Mann, Associate Pastor, spoke of his many involvements at Floradale Mennonite Church.

Sherri Martin-Carman, Allen's daughter talked about how Allen shared his varied gifts and talents freely with his family, church and the broader commu-



nity. He is remembered especially for his giftedness in music (singing in quartets, leading singing, directing choirs, doing multimedia slide presentations) and photography (he took pictures at 78 weddings). Allen is a very worthy recipient of this award.

## A glass half full, not half empty

By Erika Shantz

Author. Teacher. Artist. Musician. Firefighter. Photographer. And now what? An old man in a nursing home? Many of you may think that. You may think that a man caught in the sea of Parkinson's Disease, a disorder of the brain that leads to shaking and difficulty with walking, movement and coordination, is just an "old man in a nursing home." But that's not who my Grandpa is.

About 20 years ago, my grandpa found out about a horrifying truth that would change his whole life and would some day take away many, if not all, of the things he loved to do. Writing, teaching, playing music, fighting fires, woodworking, fishing and taking pictures would be things of the past. That "some day" has come.

When I was younger, I would do many things with my grandpa. He had already been diagnosed with Parkinson's, but he was still able to do things with me. As I got older, my grandpa's Parkinson's got progressively worse. He wasn't able to continue doing all the things that were so important to him. However, my grandpa kept a positive attitude throughout it all. He never lost his sense of humour, or his kind, loving and helpful character.

My grandpa now lives in a nursing home. No, not the place he wants to be, but this is where Parkinson's Disease has brought him. He's not angry about it, he's not miserable. He's happy. It makes me think. Why does it take so much to make me happy? Why can't I just be happy, the way my grandpa is happy, with the circumstances I face?

Seeing my grandpa go through these difficult times is a great reminder to me about how I should be looking at life. I should have a positive attitude, and I shouldn't let things that happen in my life define who I am.

Author. Teacher. Artist. Musician. Firefighter. Photographer. And now what? An old man in a nursing home? No. How about this? Friend. Dad. Husband. Grandpa. He may not be all the things he used to be, but he is not just an "old man in a nursing home." He is a friend to many. He is a dad to my mom. He is a husband to my grandma. And he is a grandpa to me. Not a grouchy, old man in a nursing home, but rather, an inspiration, a role model. A man looking at life as a glass half full, not a glass half empty. That is my grandpa.

*Erika Shantz is Tammy's daughter and Allen's granddaughter.*

# Experiencing the “Blanket Exercise”

by Nancy Mann

I am holding a small green basket with a black “X” inside. The group facilitator walks towards me and then stands directly opposite me, looking directly into my eyes.

“You have been infected by small pox from a gift blanket you received from a British military officer. This illness will lead to your death. Please step off the blanket and leave the exercise.”

I release my basket and walk to the edge of the room, where I remain until the Blanket Exercise is completed. This is the most powerful emotional moment for me in this Blanket Exercise experience.

The Blanket Exercise was developed by KAIROS to help interested parties understand the feelings of First Nations peoples in Canada in response to the settlement and development of Canadian land by European settlers. I had the opportunity to participate in this exercise on April 23 at St. Matthew’s Evangelical Lutheran Church. (Kairos is an ecumenical movement through which churches and other religious organizations work together in faithful action for ecological justice and human rights. Mennonite Church Canada is a member of KAIROS.)

Scott Knarr, a Diaconal Minister in the Evangelical Lutheran Church, led our group of about 20 people in this exercise. The Blanket Exercise uses blankets, spread across a large floor area, to represent the lands of what we now call Canada. As participants in the Blanket Exer-

cise move onto the blankets, they are taken back to a time before European settlement. As we moved through the interactive script, events related to discovery, colonization, treaty-making and resistance were all explored. We physically watched the blanketed area shrink as First Nations autonomy was restricted to fewer and fewer areas. It was a new and challenging way to think about the history of our land and of our nation.

Hearing directly the voices of First Nation leaders, government officials and historians helped us to understand in new ways the complex history of the relationships between settlers and First-Nations peoples. Our growing awareness that the cities of Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge are situated on land which was formally ceded to the Six Nations people in the Haldimand Proclamation of 1784 makes many of us uncomfortable. What can we do to make amends for the ways in which we have dishonoured this agreement?

The Blanket Exercise concluded with a talking circle in which participants shared their reactions to the experience with

each other. Everyone felt they had learned something valuable and that it was a deeply moving experience. If you have the opportunity to explore the Blanket Exercise, I urge you to take this opportunity.



## Ponderings

Why do “slow down” and “slow up” mean the same thing?

Why do “fat chance” and “slim chance” mean the same thing?

Why do “tug” boats push their barges?

Why do we sing “Take me out to the ball game” when we are already there?

Why are they called “stands” when they are made for sitting?

*Focus on Floradale* is published 5 or 6 times a year.

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*After lunch on May 29, after the outdoor service, first responders displayed their work and equipment.*



*Mark Weber gave rides in the antique fire truck.*



*James Martin, Dale Martin and Lorne Bowman examine some of the tools of the trade when fire fighters are in rescue mode.*



*The police and paramedics answered questions and let people explore the cruiser and ambulance.*



*Randy Bauman offered rides part way into the sky. Here the paramedics are taking a turn. At left is other specialized rescue equipment.*

## Special Anniversaries

Congratulations to Florence and Darrell Jantzi who were married 55 years on June 24, 2016.

Congratulations to Homer and Melinda Martin who will be celebrating 55 years of marriage on Sept. 20, 2016.

Allen and Pauline Martin will celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on July 2, 2016. Congratulations!

Congratulations to Murray and Yvonne Martin who will be married 45 years on August 13, 2016.

Richard and Norma Bauman will celebrate their 30<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on Sept. 13, 2016. Congratulations!



Congratulations to Rob and Cheryl Martin who will be married 30 years on Sept. 6, 2016.

Congratulations to Rod and Karen Martin who will celebrate their 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on July 27, 2016.

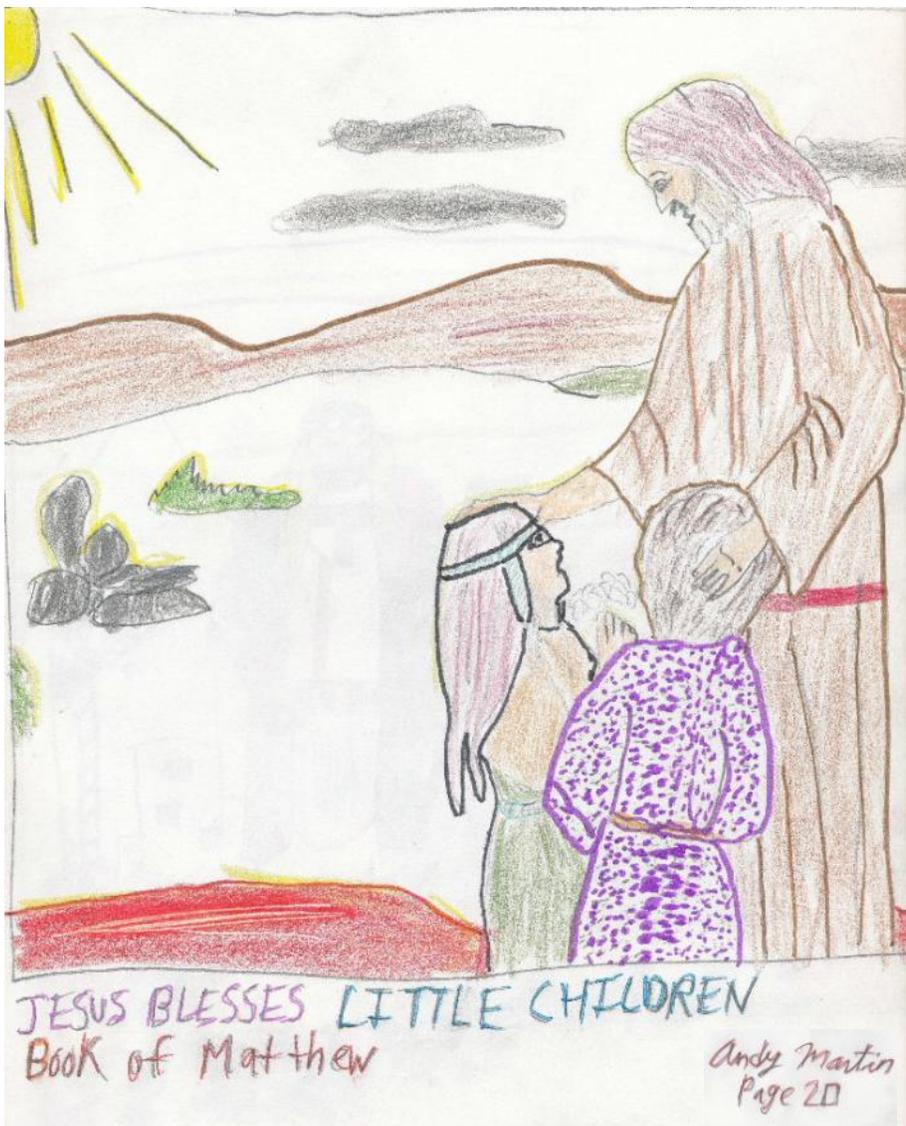
Tinus and Sherri Clemmer will be married 20 years on Sept. 14, 2016. Congratulations!

## Engagement

Justin Martin and Bobby Jo Hinsperger will be married in Prince Edward Island on September 3, 2016.

## Wedding

Edgar Bauman and Kaleigh Phillips were married with an outdoor service on a farm in Puslinch Township on May 21, 2016.



*Nancy Mann and Alina Kehl participated in a Good Samaritan story, set in Floradale. A priest and an Old Order Mennonite didn't stop to help, but a Muslim family played the role of Good Samaritan.*

*One of our adult Sunday School classes involves drawing. They meet every week in room 12. This is a reproduction of one of Andy Martin's drawings showing Jesus blessing the children.*