



Focus on Floradale

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Floradale Mennonite Church

February, 2019

Potato bar lunch and fellowship

On Jan. 13 Floradale Mennonite Church had a potato bar lunch after church. The buffet table had baked potatoes with various toppings including meat sauce, sour cream, chives and cheese as well as a side dish of cole slaw.

This was a candidating weekend for Kim Rempel as she had applied to be our associate pastor. She preached the sermon in the morning and after lunch showed slides and described her family, childhood and other experiences of life.

People were invited to bring games and afterward a variety of games and conversations happened in the fellowship hall.



Donna, Rick, Elaine, Yvonne and Murray have fun with their card game.



Clarence Martin enjoys a conversation with Jim Loepp Thiessen.



Although most people brought plates and cups, there was work for the organizers in preparing the lunch. Thank you to Nancy Martin and her crew for their work.

A newcomer says “thank you”

Selim Budak shared the following with the Floradale Mennonite congregation on Jan. 13, 2019.

Good morning, this is my first time speaking in front of an audience, so I am a little bit nervous. My name is Selim Budak. I am a journalist—actually I was a journalist.

Three years ago, I had no idea I would come to Canada and live in a town with a Canadian family for almost a year. On March 4, 2016, the government of Turkey seized the newspaper where I had worked for 20 years. *Zaman* was Turkey’s best-selling newspaper.

A group of friends and I resigned, and we began publishing a newspaper, but four months later, on July 15, 2016, after the so-called coup happened, the government seized this newspaper too. After this date, a new chapter of my story began. This isn’t just my story, this is the story of hundreds of thousands of people.

I want to summarize the story’s beginning. The news we wrote about president Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey, showed his corruption in 2013. This made our newspaper a target. *Zaman* newspaper was connected to the Hizmet Movement, also known as the Gulen Movement, which has millions of volunteers. It confronted the corruption, criticizing the government and saying that those who robbed the people should be punished. The government which wanted to hide the corruption, targeted the Hizmet Movement.

For three years until July 15, 2016, the government put on all the pressure it could.

They seized the schools which had been opened by people who were in the movement who wanted to help others. The government closed dorms and imprisoned those who helped. The Hizmet Movement resisted in a democratic way despite all the pressure.

Erdogan, who discriminated against and expressed hate toward the Hizmet Movement in almost all of his speeches, wanted to finish off Hizmet and staged an attempted coup. There are still many unanswered questions about how it happened, who was behind it or whether it was in fact staged by the Erdogan regime in order to have an excuse to purge the Hizmet Movement and any other opposition.

Erdogan, who controlled the media, the court, the police and the military, made most of the people believe that this was a real coup attempt. On the night of July 15 July, Erdogan connected to television with his cellphone with a video call, claiming that the people behind the attempted coup were the Gulen followers and that night Hizmet volunteers were de-

nounced as a terrorist group. This was coming from the president himself and was announced country-wide.

But years have now passed, and it is yet to be determined who administered this coup attempt. After that night, thousands of judges, policemen, members of the military and civil servants were arrested. The government suspended nearly 150,000 civil servants and thousands of teachers at private and public schools were removed from duty and had their licenses cancelled. To the present, orders for the arrest of more than 200,000 people were given and nearly 80,000 were arrested. Three hundred journalists were put in jail, 190 media organizations, 3,000 schools, dorms and universities were seized and shut down.

I want to highlight that 17,000 women and more than 700 babies are in jail right now. In those cells, people spend months without seeing the sunlight. Husbands and wives are in separate jails and some had their babies taken away. Some are being cared for by their grandparents.

Thousands of people who want to leave Turkey can’t get out because their passports were cancelled. Those who escaped to Greece by illegal ways feel lucky, since they had the risk of being put in custody if they stayed in Turkey. But it’s



Selim and his family, while they lived in Turkey.

not easy to go to Greece. More than 30 men, women and children who tried to cross the Evros River between Turkey and Greece with in small boats didn't make it.

This is how my wife and my younger son fled Turkey. They walked for nearly 20 kilometers, crossed the Evros River and then stayed in a custody cell that had no door for four days. They waited 11 months in Greece to come to Canada.

There may be lots of people who have found a way to get out of Turkey, but they need to start a new life from nothing. In a country where they don't know the language and the culture, on top of the pain of leaving their friends and family behind, life has become hard for them.

I left two kids and a wife behind. Hundreds of my journalist friends were in jail. Two of my brothers-in law were arrested. My wife's teaching license was cancelled. My sister was jailed. In November 2016, I first went to the USA where Mr. Maruf was waiting for me and after a difficult 3-hour trip across the border, I was finally in Canada.

To learn the language better I wanted to stay with a Canadian family. A friend of mine, who was also in the Hizmet Movement, knew Leon Kehl and asked him about the possibility. On a snowy night on December 16, 2016, I found myself having dinner with the Kehl family. They knew what we had been through and they wanted to help. It wasn't important that our religions were different, this was about helping another human being.

Lester and Wanda Kehl prepared a small and cozy room for

me. I will never forget that first night. I could not sleep for hours. I thought about my family and what I left behind. I thought about people who were in jail, about my country, my job and everything else.

The most important question in my head that night was, "Why did this family open their door to me, a man who didn't know proper English, a man of another culture? Why were they being so nice to me?" After a while, once I got to know the Kehl family better, I found answers to these questions. They did it for God's sake.



Selim and his wife Meral with Wanda and Lester Kehl.

They accepted us as God's guests and children. They asked about our families almost every day and prayed for them. They tried to meet all our needs.

For six months, Leon dropped me off for my English course every morning and picked me up every afternoon. I left a family at Turkey, but I got another one in Canada. They were no different than my own Mom, Dad, brother and sister and I could feel the family love. They were so sincere,

so warm with me, that I started calling Wanda "Mom" and Leon "Brother." They helped me with moral and material support. They lent me money when I got my first car. They still support me and ask about what's going on with our lives. I miss them so much when I don't see them for a week.

I stayed with this family for nearly a year and tried to come to the church every week. I met good people like all of you in Floradale. Most of you asked about me and my family. The Kehl family became my family here, and you became my friends in this town.

Canada welcomed us, and the government helped us. I delivered food, I was an Uber driver, something I continue to do, and I go to a college to learn English. I got my truck driver license at the beginning of this month.

My wife and younger son came to Canada two months ago, and she feels like as she has been here for years. She has also started an English course. My older son is studying Software Engineering at the University of Waterloo and my younger son is in grade 10 at WCI high school.

We are so happy that we came to Canada. Maybe we had to start our life from scratch, but we believe that it's going to be better every day. Most importantly, we are so happy that we know helpful and caring people like you. There are still people suffering in Turkey and I ask you to pray for them.

You are God's gift for me. I thank God for that, and I love you. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak.

Cleason Freeman

May 25, 1924 – Dec. 20, 2018

Duane Freeman presented this tribute from the family at Cleason's funeral.

Dad was a farmer for 35 years on the 6th line of Peel Township; he was a progressive farmer, embracing technology to make the work easier and to coax abundant crops of corn, mixed grain and hay from a farm of heavy clay.

Since Mom died in January of this year, we visited Dad often. His memory was excellent for long ago, and a little less sharp for recent information. So we heard a lot of stories from his early years. We heard about the death of his mother when he was almost five years of age. This must have been an important event in his life as the topic came up often. And it was also something that Mom and Dad had in common as both of them had lost a parent when they were young children.

After retirement he and Mom lived in a bungalow in Elmira for 32 years, close to the John Deere dealership, with Mark and Marilyn Weber as very good neighbours. When they needed more support, they both moved to the assisted living section of Parkwood Suites in Waterloo. This location was within a few miles of where Dad had grown up in Conestoga, and as he looked out his window, he often explained that he knew who had lived in the farm buildings he could see there. He often mentioned that Parkwood was built on the farm where Mark Weber had grown up.

Ken and Helen would take him out for drives, and if asked where he wanted to go, it was almost always to the farm where he grew up just outside Conestoga. Sometimes they would drive down to the river flats where Dad had good memories; one time they went into the barn to see the herd of cows.

Dad taught us many things and encouraged us to be successful with our schooling, work or other

tasks as we learned them. It was not good enough if we didn't at least try. He would be encouraging, but not critical. All of us remember him saying is, "I can't" is a lie." He did have high expectations. One such memory is that he expected if we had been somewhere once, we should know how to drive there.

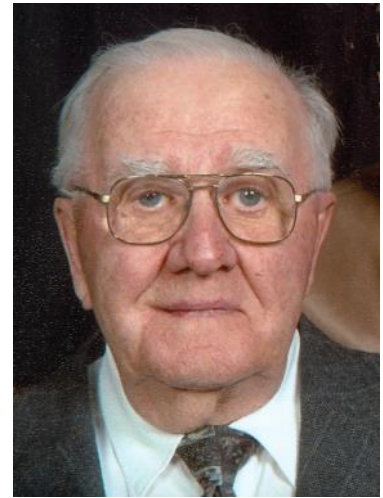
Dad modelled for us how to live a good life and showed us that hard work pays off. He was a successful farmer and pushed for modern conveniences even before other farmers had them, but he also knew when to hold off, making sure he could pay for them.

He has shown us how to live a fulfilling retirement and we've all been watching. He has shown us the value of volunteering, which he did at church as a Sunday School teacher and as Church Council Chair. In the community he was a volunteer on the school board and chaired the Peel Township School Board before school boards were centralized. And for many years he and Mom picked up food from various drop-off locations and delivered them to the Woolwich Township Food Bank.

Dad also taught us that people are important. He would engage in conversations with many people whether or not he knew them.

We always knew that Mom and Dad were both important in the farming operation. Dad would not make major purchases or decisions without consulting with Mom. When our family got together for celebrations, he made a point of speaking with each one. In recent years he would speak of Mom as "the best wife in the world" and since her death, he had her picture right beside his chair and often thought or talked about her.

Dad was a strong supporter of the Floradale Church. He was gen-



erous in financial support, and we have early memories getting ready for church on a Sunday morning, and Dad would take money out of his wallet for the church offering, regardless of other family needs.

Mom and Dad were married for more than 67 years and Dad was proud of that accomplishment. When we celebrated their 65th anniversary with family here at the church, the grandchildren offered memories of their grandparents.

They remembered visiting the John Deere dealership with Grandpa, going in through the back door, or sitting on the equipment in the parking lot. He also enjoyed taking them on his weekly trips to the stockyards where it was evident that Grandpa was well known and an expert on livestock prices.

Dad had an unwavering love for God. He was at peace with his life and was ready to go to be with his Lord when the time came.

Cleason was the father of Shirley (Gerald) Shoemaker, Helen (Ken) Eby, Willis (Eileen) Freeman, Gwen (Eric) Poot and Duane (Amy) Freeman. He is survived by his siblings Emerson, Leonard and Alice Martin. He was predeceased by his parents Addison and Selina (Bauman) Freeman, his step-mother Lovina (Weber) Freeman and siblings Lloyd, Gordon, Seleda Martin and Edna Bowman. The funeral was held on Dec. 24, 2018.

Allen D. Martin

(Feb. 13, 1943 – Jan. 9, 2019)

Having finished his work here on earth, Allen was called to his eternal home on Jan. 9. At age 75 he had fulfilled his role as a mentor and teacher. He pursued his dream of being an educator, a position he held for 33 years in Waterloo Region, with most of his career at Linwood Public School.

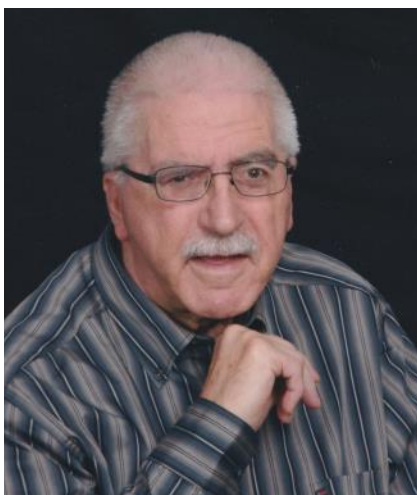
Allen served as a volunteer firefighter with the Floradale Fire Department for over 27 years. Having a deep love for music, Allen led church choirs, taught music, and sang in several gospel music groups. His other interests included photography, woodworking, fishing, as well as church and community involvement. Allen brought a smile and a laugh to everyone he knew. He lived life to the fullest every day.

When a diagnosis of Parkinson's Disease at age 50 forever changed the his life, Allen found a joy in writing "My Side of the Dam" for the *Woolwich Observer*. He also appreciated going with Pauline on bus trips during his early retirement years.

Allen will be missed by his wife of 52 years, Pauline (Gingrich) Martin, whom he married on July 2, 1966. He will be remembered by his children, Sherri and James Martin-Carman, and Tammy and Calvin Shantz. Allen will always be cherished by his grandchildren, Erika (Marty) Metzger, Amber Shantz and her friend, Jacob Vos, Justin Frayne and Caleb Martin-Carman.

Allen's daughters, Sherri and Tammy, shared the following thoughts at the funeral:

Dad made each moment of his life count; he left his mark in many places and on many people because of the way he engaged so fully with them. The theme for Dad's Retirement celebration, in 1998, was "Jack of all Trades," a very suitable description for our father. Except for sports, there really wasn't much



that Dad wasn't good at. He lived life with the belief that God had gifted him with many talents, and that his mission was to look for needs around him, and use his talents to bless others.

Some might think that with Dad's wide variety of involvements in his church and community that he didn't have any time or energy left for his family. However Dad's pursuits often became family activities. We remember Pioneer Days at Doon Pioneer Village, where we dressed as pioneers and sold shoofly pie. When the Gospel Tones sang at churches, the kids got up front to join along in "Daddy Sang Bass." By his varied involvements, Dad taught us that we could also share our talents by responding to needs around us. What a rich legacy gift that is!

Dad made sure our family had interesting vacations—we did lots of camping; we travelled out to PEI with our tent trailer, and also went north to Red Lake to visit Martin and Selina Frey. We remember a trip out west in 1986, to see the World Expo in Vancouver.

In the 1980s, Mom and Dad set their trailer on a seasonal site at Green Acre Park and that became a second home. Dad organized Gospel Music Concerts at Green Acre Park on the summer long weekends, and those occasions became opportunities to welcome friends to join us around the campfire after the concert. Our family life was filled with interesting adventures and

many people who loved us—this is another legacy gift.

The Parkinson's diagnosis forced Dad to go on disability leave which was not at all the retirement he had hoped for. But Dad took these changes in stride, and didn't let a terminal illness distract him from using the talents and gifts he still had.

Dad called friends to join in playing Scrabble; he participated in the Adult Day Program at Community Care Concepts, and travelled with Mom on many bus trips. His column in the *Woolwich Observer* brought humour to many readers, and his gift of music has continued to inspire and bless. For the past six years we have sung together for Memorial Services at his nursing home.

Dad's example of grace and acceptance of the gradual, yet life-changing realities in his health, have been a great inspiration. Dad didn't complain; he showed appreciation and kindness to his caregivers. And when Parkinson's robbed his voice from speaking with volume or clarity, he sang his faith and beliefs, through the old hymns which he'd learned when young. When dementia impacted his thought process, Dad remained kind and gracious.

We have been so grateful to the community who surrounded our parents with visits and who included Dad in their activities. Dad and Mom were blessed by the support and encouragement from the people at Floradale Mennonite Church. Dad's last decade could have been so different and for that gift we will forever be grateful.

Allen was predeceased by his parents Henry and Magdalena (Diefenbacher) Martin and his sister Marion (Gord) Longmire and brother Lloyd. His remaining siblings are Leo (Elsie), Menno (Laurel), Ernie (Carol), Raymond, Phares (Marlene) and sister-in-law Betty Martin.

Family keepsakes and heirlooms

The Focus committee asked various people about their special keepsakes and why they value them.

A family keepsake

by J. Lester Kehl

On our living room wall we have a large picture of a barn. It has special memories for me for several reasons. It looks just like the barn that my parents bought on a small farm when I was six years old. My parents had moved to Ontario from Saskatchewan when I was almost two. They lived in several different communities as my father worked as a farm labourer, so this barn has special memories for me. They only sold it after I was married and they moved into a retirement home.

The barn depicted in the painting is special because it was on the property that we bought in 1977 next to our house here in Floradale. The barn was dismantled so Leon and Christine could build their house on the lot.

I also have memories of raising livestock in the barn for several years. Having grown up on a small farm I have memories of raising chickens and vegetables to sell at the Kitchener market. I also helped to dress chickens to sell at the market. So we as children all learned to pull off the feathers and remove the insides. So with this nice little barn in Floradale I thought it would be an economic opportunity to raise chickens for ourselves to eat. It could also teach our children where our food comes from.

Well picking beans and potatoes were easier lessons to teach than killing and processing chickens, so this didn't last very long. Even raising two pigs for cheap meat didn't get a lot of approval. The barn eventually was converted to an exercise room for com-



munity teens.

As we were preparing to leave Floradale to move to a pastorate in Niagara-on-the-Lake, the church commissioned Cole Bowman, a local artist from Elmira, to paint this barn, and the framed painting was given to us as a gift. This has held a special place in our home because of the memories I have shared, but more about the memories I have of the congregation here in Floradale. As I sit in my "easy chair" and read or look over at that picture, I give thanks to God for the experience our family shared in the years we lived here. We were blessed by the people who supported us in our experience here.

When we returned to retire here it seemed appropriate to dismantle the barn so Leon and Christine could purchase the lot and build their home. I enjoyed salvaging boards to build a garden shed and to make some garden seats for our back yard. I also used quite a bit of the material to burn in our airtight stove in the basement.

Over the years the frame and matting showed significant aging and so last year we had the frame and matting replaced by an art expert from Elmira so that it will be preserved for many years. I think Leon has put his name on the back, for when Wanda and I no longer have a place for it.

Meaningful keepsakes

By Brenda L. Martin

The most meaningful keepsake I have is my Mother's Bible. I find it interesting to see the notations she has put in the margins and to notice what she has underlined. I also have my Mother's Roxton china cabinet which she had in the farm kitchen. My Grandmother's quilts are also precious to me. I also have my Grandmother's Hoya plant which she had in the living room.

My Grandma Martin made a doll box out of a drawer. It had sections in it for the doll and clothes. She sewed several outfits including a coat and wedding dress. I have had this since I was about 8 years old. I have already given it to my youngest granddaughter, Ava.

My photos of the grandchildren are also a keepsake. I have started a photo album for each child. I have my Grandma Wideman's set of china which is a treasured keepsake. I am fond of dishes and china and have two other sets of china.

When it comes to these keepsakes I would like to keep in mind Matthew 6:19 and 20. "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven." As a result, when it comes to downsizing, I would give the photo albums to my grandchildren and give the other things to my daughters or to the MCC Thrift store.

Fond memories

By Florence Frey

As I considered the theme of heirlooms and treasures, I thought right away of the quilt that my Grandma Snyder gave to me when I was a young girl (still in elementary school). I remember at the time hearing about this quilt made especially for me; I wasn't all that impressed. "What do I want with a quilt? I have good parents that take good care of me," I thought. But as I grew older and more appreciative of things, receiving a ready-made hand-stitched quilt from Grandma had a whole new perspective.

My Grandma Lydian (Gingrich) Snyder was married to Amzi Snyder. Grandma had ordered this quilt from Mrs. Menno Weber which was a sister to my grandfather. So it's all family related.

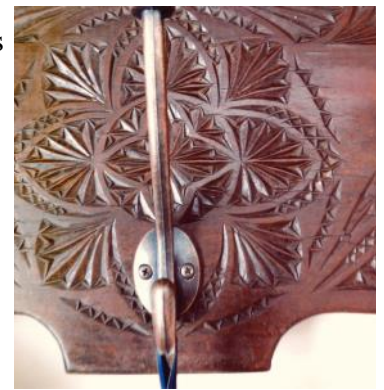
The quilt is a broken star pattern (one of my favourites) done in solid shades, no prints, the colours you would see in a rainbow. It is very pretty; it was unusual in those days to choose those colours with white around the star and also a white lining. The diamonds in the star are somewhat larger than quilters and piecers might make them today, but I treasured that quilt, mostly because it was given by a very dear and special grandmother.

To this day I hold fond memories within my heart of my dear grandmother and the good times we shared working together as I grew up living under the same roof. We lived on the farm with my parents and brother until Grandma's dying day. So this is why I treasure the quilt to this day; it reminds me of the loving, caring person Grandma portrayed in her lifetime.



This coat hanger was chip carved by my father when he was a teenager, probably about 100 years ago. He was born in 1901 and passed away in 1931 when I was only three years old. My father was a carpenter and builder and did careful work. The wood used in walnut I believe. My mother remarried after a few years and my step-father valued this piece. But after he died, the rest of the family saw to it that it came to me and I disassembled it to bring it from Holland to Ontario. Chip carving uses a small knife or chisel to remove small pieces from the wood after a pattern has been transferred onto the flat surface. I value this piece of my father's workmanship very much.

-By Onne Snip



Respect for an old coat

By Mary M. Martin

In reflecting on heirlooms, I have come to realize that I value the memories and connections more than the monetary value of the item. As an example, in preparation of the demolition of a shed on my property we had to empty it! This wasn't a job I was looking forward to, but then as I sorted through the items, I came across my father's old coat which was still hanging on a nail on the wall.

My dad passed away in 2001. He used to walk down from his house to my place to feed Frey's chickens in the barn and he had this

old coat as a backup in case he got rained on or whatever. Lucy saw me holding the black garbage bag and looking at the coat. Her words, "You can't keep everything," echoed my own, but I also couldn't throw that old coat in the bag!

I ended up hanging some of Dad's old tools on the nail beside the coat and taking a picture. Lucy didn't toss the coat in the garbage bag but respectfully laid it in.

For some people my reactions would seem weird but to me it was a keen reminder of the humble, gentle man my father was and how he shaped who I am today.



My downsizing decisions

By Erma Wideman

The year of 2018 was a year full of changes for my family and me. It was two years since Earl's passing, and I knew the house and property at 23 Spring Street in St. Jacobs was too big a responsibility for me. So I decided to sell and I moved to a rental property at 39 Spring Street. So then came the job of sorting through all the items that were stored for many years. What to put in the garbage, what to sell and what to give away?

My children went through and picked out what they could use or wanted as keepsakes. I also made sure each grandchild got a keepsake of Earl's. This way, when I go to their homes I can still get to see them, or like Earl's lazy-boy chair, I get to sit in it and enjoy and reminisce.

Here are some items I didn't even have to stop to think about whether to take or leave. The steel and knife just had to come along as that was something I can still



see Earl doing so clearly as he sharpened that knife a lot. It was his favourite knife in the kitchen.

These three items remind me of my parents, Emanuel and Leah Frey. There are my Dad's arm bands, do you remember those? This was my Mom's all-time favourite mat hook which she gave to me. She and I hooked many mats together. And then there is her most favourite change purse. I can so clearly see her hands as she would get change out of this little purse.



Mom and I shared this applesauce ricer as we both lived in St. Jacobs. So when she no longer made applesauce, it became mine. And the crock too.



My family insisted that this can comes along as it has my home farm on one side and on the other side is a painting of our home on 23 Spring Street. The can has my father's name imprinted on it.

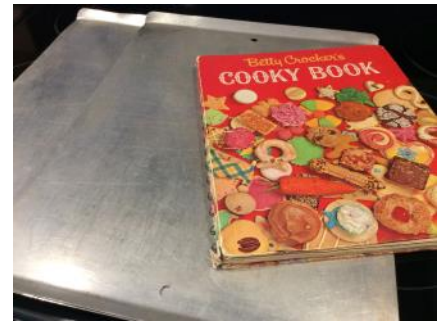


I wanted this painting to come to my new place as it was gifted to me from the Stone Crock for

my 15 years of service. I chose this particular painting because it reminds me of Mom's flower garden.

My Mom had a green thumb so she had a great flower gardens. At her auction I bought her favourite hoe. That hoe is now in

North Carolina with my daughter Laurie as she inherited the green thumb gift. When I go to her home I can use my Mom's hoe. I think that's neat.



The Cooky Book was given to me from Earl's mother in 1969. I use it every Christmas. The cookie sheets are very special to me as they were given to me by my oldest sister on our wedding day. So I think of her every time I use them. They are the best cookie sheets!

As far as quilts go, I didn't have many as that was not one of my Mom's gifts. The girls each took one and the rest I sold if I didn't need them.

As I was going through this process of parting with things, I did not see myself feeling guilty or obligated. After all, they are just things, right? All in all, it wasn't as difficult as I thought it could be. So basically I took with me what I still needed or what had sentimental value.

I am just so thankful I was able to do the decision-making on my own and move into the next step of my journey. God is so good. He is walking with me always.



Earl's mouth organs

A Special Plate

By Nicole Woeschka

I have a lot of antique dishes that I have collected over the years in my china cabinet. Some are gifts that have been handed down from grandparents, and some I have found myself. I have the plate in this picture displayed in our living room; it was a wedding gift from Tyler's Oma and Great-aunt Astrid who travelled from Germany for the wedding. A letter was given with it that shares "The Story of the Plate"



"At the end of the 1800s Tyler's Great-great-grandfather was a member of the German Emperor's Marine. So the family lived from 1905 to 1908 in the German Colony of Tsinglau/China, where Tyler's Great-grandmother was born in February 1906.

When the family returned to Germany they brought a lot of furniture and household equipment back home. Unfortunately, most of it was destroyed (bombed) during the 2nd World War.

So this plate—Japanese Porcelain—is one of the few memories of this time."

This plate and accompanying letter is one of my most cherished possessions as it has such an incredible story from so far back in our family's lineage. I hope someday my children will share my love of family history and heirlooms.

Special blanket box

By Veg Weber

(Vernelda Elizabeth Geiser Weber)

I have many heirlooms, antiques, and stuff that my kids have no interest in but are meaningful to me. If I chose just one of them it would be a blanket box that my great-grandfather made in 1894 as an engagement gift to his fiancé, whose name was Elizabeth.

It was then given to my grandmother whose name was Elda Elizabeth. My grandmother named my mother Velma Elizabeth and the blanket box was given to her. Because my middle name is Elizabeth the box has been passed on to me and I, in turn, will give it to my daughter Elizabeth.

When I was a teenager the blanket box was black. I stripped the box and found a nice red finish underneath. I repainted the edges black like they had originally been and repainted the initials and date on it.



Heirlooms

By Marj Metzger

Many years ago I started acquiring pieces of china—dishes—that had belonged to my grandparents, aunts and parents. Since then I've given some of them to my daughters and granddaughters. In the future I'll give them an opportunity to pick out more pieces that they would like.

The article I treasure most is a quilt that my Mom had started piecing but didn't get finished. All the fabrics in the quilt are

leftover cotton material from clothes she sewed for her family—mostly her daughters' skirts, blouses, dresses or aprons. Dave's aunt finished piecing it and also quilted it. Now it's displayed on a spare bed in our home. In the future, some interested person in the family will likely be the owner of it.

If family isn't interested in the pieces that are left, I won't be upset. I've had the pleasure of enjoying them for many years.

Enjoy family treasures

By Eleanor and Ab Metzger

My memories go back about 75 years when I would spend a week every summer with Uncle Abner and Aunt Lydian Martin. Grandpa Hoffman (the only grandparent I knew), lived with them and we spent many hours walking through the bush and along the river across the road from their farm near Three Bridges.

We would skip stones on the river and watch the minnows swim by. Grandpa always carried goodies in his pocket for us to enjoy. In the spring I would join my aunts in the bush to look for puffballs. I still don't know what was so special about them!

Another thing I did with Grandpa was to sit on his knee while he sat in his rocking chair. He would reach over and get his Jews Harp out of the drawer of his washstand and play for me. About 25 years ago I was lucky enough to get that same washstand. The runner on the washstand was embroidered by his daughter (my mother) when she was a teenager so it is well over 100 years old.

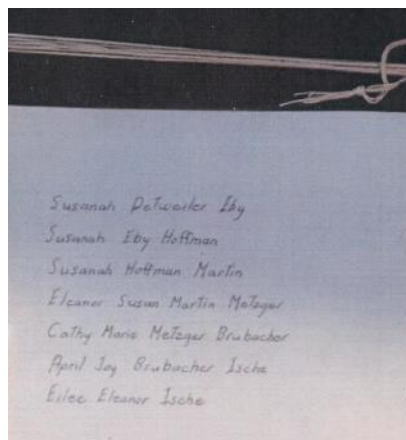


I still have many family dishes although when we have family dinners I will put a variety of dishes out for the children to choose from. I am thankful they all treasure family heirlooms.

I had many quilts stored away. Several from great-grandparents, others embroidered or appliqued by aunts and sisters. Each of our children and grandchildren picked one and were very happy with them. It was a joy to see their faces as they hugged their quilts.



Another special keepsake is a motto with the Ten Commandments that was handed down from my Great-Grandma Susannah Detweiler Eby as a name-sake. My middle name is Susan so I got it from my mother Susannah Hoffman Martin. Since



The back side

we had only one girl, I gave it to her. Last year she had a granddaughter named Eilee Eleanor. When Cathy suggested to pass it on to her I agreed. Hopefully Eilee will treasure it as much when she grows up as her parents do now.



My great-grandfather Benjamin Eby was a potter and I had several of his pots and a water ring which used to take water to the field at harvest time. I have also given those to the children. Little by little I am trying to downsize, but there are a few things the children will have to wait for till I am gone.

Ab also has a few family dishes including a set of flo blue dishes, handleless cup and saucer, several plates, coal oil lamp and parlour table. The table was used by the women to lay their coats and shawls on when they came to visit. The men hung their coats and hats on hooks.

Ab also bought and restored a John Deere A.R. tractor like his Dad owned when Ab was at home and helped with the field work. When we are forced to downsize the children will take what family things they want and the rest will be sold.

As you read this, we hope you have been inspired to get your family treasures out of storage (if that's where they are), and put them where you can enjoy them!

My parents values influenced my life

By Jim Loep Thiessen

Yesterday we remembered the one hundredth anniversary of my mother's birth. Although my parents weren't really heirloom people, or particularly sentimental, we inherited a few things that we hang onto after their deaths ten years ago.

There are a few teacups in the cupboard that huddle together along with our other cups. We use the cups my mom left us, and we do so without guilt because mom always said, "they are meant to be used." We also have a few pieces of her china, and cutlery, and these are all important because they represent hospitality, which my parents both dearly loved.

We also have two coffee tables that my dad made, and they remind me of him. Although he did carpentry for a living, he didn't love it and you can see that in his work. And of course, we have pictures as well. I'm not particularly sentimental around stuff, so the little we do have is a helpful reminder of their lives and influence.

The day will come when the little we have from them we pass on to our children, so they can enjoy the mementoes that are part of our history. However, the influence of my parent's history is found for me not so much in the few items we have, but in the activities I engage in that remind me of their influence. Like praying or reading scripture or engaging strangers in conversation, or having people over and making really strong coffee, which my mom loved to do, or peeling way too many potatoes which my dad used to do every Sunday morning before church. I used to joke that my

father wasn't afraid of dying, but he was afraid of running out of potatoes!

The heirlooms are a reminder of their influence on my life. Their values and faith influence my values in so many ways.

Downsizing is a process

By Joan Martin

As many of you know two years ago, we moved from the country to the "city" and to a much smaller property. We went from a 3600 sq ft house which includes the lower level to a 1400 sq ft house with unfinished basement. Also, Oscar had a 1200 sq ft "man cave" upstairs in the shed which was also fully furnished. Okay, so now, how do we downsize from 4800 to 1400 sq ft living space.

We started by having a "free" family GARAGE SALE. I had two kitchens and lots of dishes and bedding from my B&B so I extended my 15-ft table and started editing and loaded it up. When some families came by, they said they don't need anything but slowly they started their own pile. I loved to see my grandkids take

some as well. What was not taken that day, I took to the new house and had my first and last garage sale. What was not sold that day did not go back into the house but loaded up and took to the MCC Thrift shop. We also took a few loads to the dump.

However, that was just a fraction of our "stuff." My heirloom dishes from my parents and Oscar's parents and grandparents were labelled and packed in bins to be distributed whenever. I love old dishes so hopefully the next generation will also see the value of keeping these items in the family someday.

I also have some antiques that I stored in bins that spark memories for me of my mother's kitchen. The quilts that my mother and Oscar's mother made for us are labelled and in the cedar chest.

Do I keep anything out of guilt? I would say for me that is the quilts. I appreciate the time and energy they put into them, but I personally don't use any. One of my memories as a child is when mom would have a quilting bee and we would always have lots of good food, we would sit under the quilt and play while the stitching was going on above us. Those were happy times!



The free family garage sale.

Heirlooms & treasures

By Barb Draper

What to keep in furniture? I sold some items on Elmira Buy-and-Sell, another wagon load of furniture went to Gerald's Auction. We have a large basement and unfortunately, we have lots of room for storage, sigh!

What did I keep? Just recently I was sitting in our basement where we have a makeshift sitting area; I went around the room and saw the old Hi-fi Oscar gave me before we were married. We had "snuck" it into my parent's house as we were not supposed to have a record player at that time.

My mother's old washstand was sitting there, my Dad's snow shoes were propped up against the wall, a mirror that the kids gave us for Christmas one year, Oscar's great grandfather's chair, a plate glass mirror we got as a wedding gift, a night stand my father made from the walnut trees that were in our front lawn as a kid, a dropleaf table Oscar made, an occasional chair we got as a wedding gift, a bookshelf Oscar made that is full of a fraction of my photo albums—that's another story!

I guess the furniture I kept has some sentimental attached to it. I had an antique bedroom set from Oscar's mother that I used in one of my B&B rooms. It has a high headboard with a matching washstand and dresser. This stayed at the farm and I hope it will stay in the family. We furnished the main rooms with the existing furniture we had on the farm, the excess was from the basement and mancave.

What to do with all of Oscar's tractors?? Some of them are at our house but the majority of them are stored elsewhere for now. Sooner of later he will also have to deal with them.

It was good for the soul to purge, however sometimes I say, why did I get rid of that? If I wait a few minutes the feeling goes away.

When it comes to heirlooms and treasures around our house, it seems there are far more items from Roy's side than from mine. Part of the reason is that Roy comes from a much smaller family than I do. When there are many children in each generation, there are not many heirlooms.

One of my treasures is a cup and saucer that belonged to my great-grandmother Barbara Steiner Brubacher. I always say I was named after her, but I was probably just named after my aunt who was named after her. Barbara Steiner was a second wife and married John M. Brubacher in 1867 when she was 30 years old. If she received this set of dishes around the time of her marriage, the cup and saucer are very old.



This bowl was used by my grandmother Susannah Brubacher Martin. She and her husband joined the Dave Martin church when it started in 1917. According to my mother, she had a very tender conscience and always wondered if she was plain enough. When visitors exclaimed about her beautiful set of dishes it made her feel that she was too fancy. In the end she exchanged the dishes for a plainer set owned by her sister-in-law. My mother believed that this bowl was part of the set she gave away.

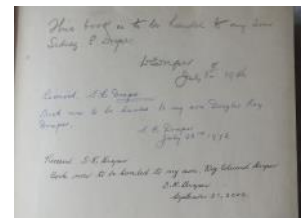


Roy's great-grandmother painted these flowers on glass. Eliza Catherine Sibley was born in 1851 in Nova Scotia and married George Ogilvie at age 38. She probably did the painting in her teens or 20s which would make it close to 150 years old.

This parlour table was special to Roy's mother and grandmother who always associated this table with her only brother who died in 1900 at the age of eight. After his death the coffin was displayed on this table.



Roy has a set of old books—a Bible dictionary, commentary and concordance originally from his great-grandfather. The flyleaf has the signatures and dates when it was passed from William Draper to Sidney (1947) to Douglas (1972) to Roy (2002).



One of the most important things I ever did when my mother and mother-in-law were in their late 70s was to go through their china cabinets and write down the history of each piece.

Working with Mennonite Disaster Service

By Valerie Cheaney

I have read that it takes an army of volunteers to aid victims of tornadoes, hurricanes and other natural disasters, with that in mind I decided to volunteer my time. In the last six months, I have volunteered at two different sites, both with Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS). My first trip was in Aibonito, Puerto Rico during Aug 2018, and most recently I was at La Grange Texas in January 2019.

These were two very different projects. The first project was in Aibonito, which is approximately 75 minutes from the San Juan airport. The crew was picked up on Saturday, we attended a local church on Sunday, and started to work Monday morning. The projects that week were all roofing.

On our first day we drove to Betania Mennonite School. The school is pre-kindergarten through ninth grade and here our task was to get the one building's roof top ready for steel trusses that were to be installed by professionals the following week. Later in the week we spent time on Raquel's house, where we installed new tin and old roofing.

For the week in Puerto Rico we were roofers; it was hot, hard labour. We worked hard, had sore muscles, and I know the three of us had happy hearts. Each morning we

started with coffee while watching the sunrise on a verandah and we all took turns in leading devotions.

As we drove to either the school or the house, I was drawn into the beauty of Aibonito, a lush green mountainous landscape where you could see the aftermath of Hurricane Maria. We saw many blue tarps on people's homes, twisted metal that lay in fields, or still in trees. I loved the people in Aibonito, how they cared for each other and the touching stories we heard. It was a truly blessed time. That week, I promised myself and the crew leader Cleat Yoder, that I would be serving MDS again.

My second volunteer trip was just outside of Austin, Texas, a small town called La Grange. La Grange is a 60-minute drive from the airport. This site is a large MDS project, where they will be building eight new homes. During my week, there were five new build project sites going on at the same time.

This week there were 33 volunteers; 22 short-term volunteers mostly horse-and-buggy Mennonites from Pennsylvania and Kentucky. We had five crew leaders, ironically all from Canada, one office manager, three cooks, and the project coordinator. This site I found out is a popular one, as the accommodations are at a camp with separate living accommodations for the long-term staff. The week-long volunteers we were in a two-floor building with several bedrooms; each room had eight bunkbeds, and there were six bathrooms on each floor.

We all arrived on a Sunday, had our orientation meeting that evening, and then it was off to bed. For the week I was working on



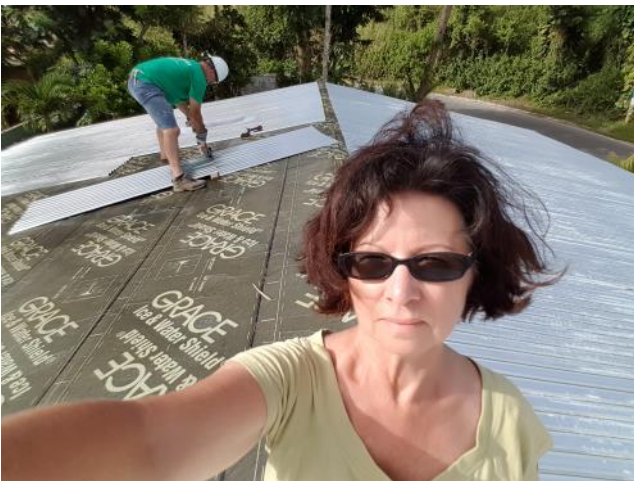
In Texas, Valerie prepared walls for painting, working mostly with horse-and-buggy Mennonites.

Sandra's house, where I mudded and sanded. Our mornings started with making your lunch for the day, then breakfast, devotions which was either scripture readings or singing hymns, loading the vehicles and off to the worksite. The projects were approximately 20 minutes from the camp.

These were two totally different projects and experiences, from a small crew that worked very well together, to a large site where five houses were being built and were in various stages. I especially enjoyed my time in Puerto Rico, for various reasons. It was a small crew and I really enjoyed getting to know them. I enjoyed attending the local church, having lunch made by the home owner and listening to their stories of when Hurricane Maria arrived on the island.

La Grange, was a wonderful experience. I met lovely people, and had an outstanding week. My highlight for the week, was on Wednesday when the ladies started to sing hymns, it sent goose bumps down my spine.

I've been home for a month now, and already thinking of where I want to go and volunteer later this year. Serving with MDS has been such a humbling and rewarding experience. I'm now hooked and want to serve again and again.



In Puerto Rico, Valerie worked at roofing.

Christmas choir festival

On Sun. Dec. 9, Floradale Mennonite Church hosted the annual Community Choir Festival with choirs from local churches. This was the tenth anniversary of this event and the second time that it was hosted by Floradale.

Each choir performed one song and the mass choir sang one piece at the beginning and one at the end of the evening. In between, while choirs were moving, everyone participated in singing Christmas carols.

As in previous years this was a fundraiser for Woolwich Counselling Centre. We have not heard how successful the fundraising was, but the place was packed out so we expect it was significant.

The previous time that Floradale hosted this choir festival the weather was not cooperative and we could comfortably seat all the choirs and audience in the auditorium. This time the foyer was full before the doors opened and the auditorium quickly filled up. The Floradale choir had seats reserved on chairs at the back, but in the end we had to sit in the back row chairs in the foyer. There must have almost 100 people in the foyer because there was no room in the auditorium!

The choirs who participated included Gale Presbyterian, Trinity United, St. Theresa's Catholic, Floradale Mennonite, Elmira Mennonite (with St. James Lutheran), and Woodside Bible Fellowship. The mass choir involved somewhere around 100 voices; the mass choir was led by Donna Lentz and Merri-Lee Metzger. Thank you to Richard Bauman for building a high platform for them to stand on so everyone in the choir could see.



Tim Greenwood and Kelsey Raidt were married on a farm near Harriston on August 25, 2018. They bought a house in Harriston where they are living. Tim works at the Harriston Public Library doing programming for children and teens. Kelsey works at Osim Interactive in Harriston where she does custom web designs and online marketing services.



Mandy Martin (daughter of Rod and Karen Martin) and Brandon Leis (son of Paul and Marilyn Leis of Elmwood, Ont.) plan to be married on Sat. June 27, 2020 at Floradale Mennonite Church.

Relief Kits



Thank you to everyone who contributed toward the under-the-tree, MCC relief kit drive at Christmastime. In the end there were 14 complete kits and lots of other items for many more kits. The most expensive item for each kit is the four towels. There were 72 towels beyond the 14 kits which would make 18 more kits.

Special Anniversary

Congratulations to Cliff and Mary Bauman who will celebrate their 15th wedding anniversary on Feb. 14, 2019.

Birthdays

Congratulations to the following who are celebrating special milestones:

Mervin Bauman celebrated his 90th birthday on Jan. 23, 2019.

Zenas Buehler celebrated his 80th birthday on Jan. 14, 2019.

Sylvan Martin will be celebrating his 80th birthday on Feb. 14, 2019.