

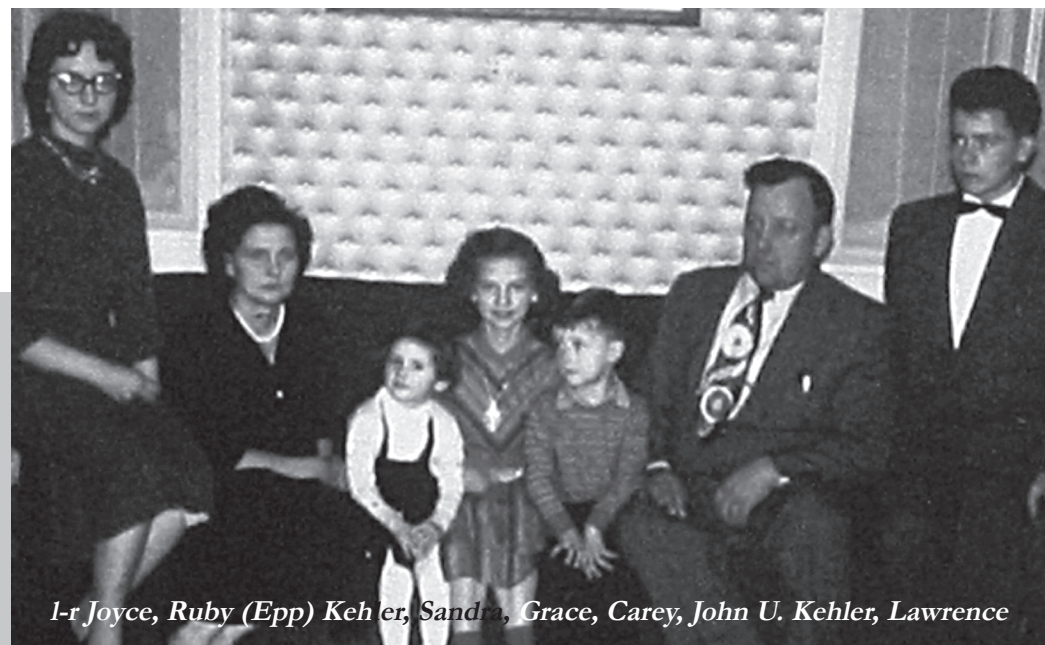
A picture is worth ...



The HF Hamm yard in the 1950s



Henry F & Helen (Kehler) Hamm



l-r Joyce, Ruby (Epp) Kehler, Sandra, Grace, Carey, John U. Kehler, Lawrence



There goes the neighbourhood! These Grunthal folks (in no particular order: John & Anne Funk, Bill & Evelyn Krahn, John & Hilde Toews) were just cruising by on a Sunday afternoon drive, and stopped in for a tour of the Housebarn.



Fall 2005

Coming events

December 6

NHF hosts
**“Kohmt mohl han,
d’backove es heet”**

(Come on over, the bakeoven is hot.) at the Friesen Housebarn.

7 pm - Thank you to funders
(by invitation)

8 to 9 pm - Open to Neuberghthal
community & friends

Come & visit

Tours of *Neuberghthal - a Mennonite street village* - are available upon request:

* 1 to 10 people @ \$5 per person, includes coffee

* 11-25 people @ \$4 per person, includes coffee.

Call ahead to make arrangements

We also take special requests for other types of tours and events. Please call or e-mail us for details on how we can accommodate your group.

**Ph. (204) 324 1567 or 324 1612
email: krahn@borderland.ca**

Neuberghthal Heritage Foundation

*John Giesbrecht
Rose Hildebrand
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Karen Martens
Peter Klippenstein (treasurer)
Wendy Friesen (secretary)
Teresa Hamm (vice chair)
Margruite Krahn (chair)*

Neuberghthal

Notes



The Kehler family homestead in 1959.

Three generations of old shoes

Joyce (Kehler) Friesen

According to information gleaned from books, my great grandparents, Martin and Eva (Wieler) Kehler, with their five children, came to Canada in July, 1874, on the S.S. Peruvian. They settled in Schoenwiese, East Reserve. In April, 1881 they cancelled their property fire insurance there, presumably to relocate. The 1881 federal census has them registered as living in Neuberghthal, West Reserve.

I assume that Martin and Eva built the homestead. Their oldest son Jacob (my grandfather) married Anna Unger. According to the Neuberghthal cookbook, Jacob and Anna first lived in what later became the Andrew Hamm residence. They must have moved into the Kehler homestead after his parents passed away.

When I came onto the scene, in 1941, the Kehler homestead was being occupied by my grandparents, Jacob and Anna Kehler, my uncle and aunt, Martin and Mary (Schmidt) Kehler and their children, Eva and Menno, and by my parents, Hans and Ruby Kehler. Many cooks and many bosses!

Two children, Lawrence and Rita, were born, making conditions even more crowded. Martin and Mary and their three children moved out into their own house in the country in early December, 1944. Grandma passed away in 1945 and grandpa in 1949, leaving the Hans Kehler family in the homestead until they retired to Altona, 20 years later.

Henry Kehler bought the place, but soon sold it to Jake and Hilda Friesen, thus ending the Kehler possession. Residents on this site after Jake and Hilda were: Rod and Linda Buhr, Mr. and Mrs. Cornie Froese, Mr. and Mrs. Cornie Thiessen (who dismantled the house and built a new one), Isaak and Maria Fehr, and presently Cornie and Helena Neustaeter. Of the homestead I remember huge family gatherings (coming to see grandparents), Schluwesot (sunflower seeds) over all the floors, and many boisterous kids sliding down the stairs and

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Jacob & Anna (Unger) Kehler



Kehler children: Eva, Anna, Jacob, Peter, Henry, Maria, Henrietta, (front) Martin & John

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bannister. I remember moms and aunts sitting around the oil lamp-lit table, visiting and mending, bowls of roasted sunflower seeds and apples, and dad and the uncles retreating to the store across the street. I remember Eaton's catalogues in the outhouse. I remember being chased by Grandpa (with his whip) for playing "tea party" on his chopping block (he liked order). I remember waffles and Olbassem pancakes baked on the Spoaheat (clay oven) in the summer kitchen, which was also the site of our weekly Saturday bath. I remember that the day I was vaccinated in school Grandpa died in the barn, and the aunts prepared his body for burial. He lay in the coffin in the living room for several days – a traumatic event for a seven year old. I remember raking huge pile of cottonwood leaves in Fall. I remember calves grazing in the front yard (before lawnmowers). I remember huge gardens to hoe, big melon and potato patches, and fruit trees and bushes of every kind. I remember water troughs under the barn downspout – a home for tadpoles, drinking water for horses, and swimming pool for kids (when Grandpa wasn't around). I remember daily fresh cow pies in the yard. I remember hauling up syrup pails of milk from the ice well. I remember picket fences around the flower garden and the front door to keep the chickens out and the children in. I remember frosty winter nights when the fire died in the "warm morning" stove, when water froze in the drinking glass, and when the Fada Dakj (feather tick) was not thick enough. I remember dripping from the Gank ceiling that brought jubilation, for Spring had arrived. I remember modernizing by gluing tiles over hardwood floors. I remember relatives and neighbours coming for dark, early morning breakfasts on hog-slaughtering day.

I can still smell fresh hay and cat spray in the hay loft, the putrid cistern water in summer, the wet wood pile and sawdust after a

rain, thawing clothes on the wooden clothes rack, a mixture of schroot (chop) and drank (slop) in the pig trough, crackles frying in the big cooker on hog-slaughtering day, the oiled floor, cigarette smoke and stale drink-cooler water in Uncle John's store, an attic containing three generations of old shoes and mouse dirt.

I can still taste homemade ice cream, fresh spareribs and liverwurst, night snack of raw Knackworscht, onions and vinegar, milk, when the cows had eaten Tauschkjekruet (stinkweed), and fried Fescheia (caviar).



Martin & Eva (Wieler) Kehler

I can still hear Annie's call for Frank to do chores, and Frank's thunderous laughter and reply, "Jo, Jo, eckj kom!", sleigh bells, horse and caboose crunching in the snow, the meadowlark calling in the pasture, "Mame haft dee Kjelkje goal!" or "Meine Taunte Trienkjemum!"

Of the village street I remember white wooden fences lining the village street, a full moon shining through the tall cottonwoods, men hurrying to the store for some ... mail, gossip, and "Old Chum" for the Tziogoarespets (cigarette holder), Annie Funk in her big straw hat, off to the store for an ice cream cone, young boys on their way to Fensta beluere (look in neighbours' windows), little girls walking from door to door selling "Very Best" greeting cards, young and old alike skating along frozen ditches in Spring, dogs running for visits and cows being led for visits.

Our homestead, along with other old sights and sounds of the village, has all but disappeared. The only things remaining of our former yard are the pig barn, granary, and the two concrete gate posts on either side of the driveway. I loved our village; I love our Low German language and find it very sad to know that the language of our fore fathers is disappearing as well. I am grateful for my heritage and that I had the chance to grow up in a Mennonite village, a very special village, a village which is now a National Historic Site.

NHF update

The panels on the Kiosk that is on the Community Centre yard are being designed by Aniko Szabo.

The NHF has recently received \$10000 from the **Prairie Icons Program** (supported by the J.M. Caplan Foundation, New York, Sill Foundation, and Manitoba Culture Heritage & Tourism) for the ongoing restoration of the barn on the Friesen Housebarn.



Contact Margruite Krahn if you know of **old Mennonite painted floor patterns** (in photographs or still existing), from housebarns or other older homes.

Left: This summer Herb Heinrichs and Paul Krahn prepare fir beams to replace the sill plates of the Herdsman's House. This building's foundation has been replaced; it now rests on a concrete gradebeam, and all the sills have been replaced with reconditioned fir beams, donated anonymously to the NHF for use in building restoration. The Herdsman's House has been lifted and levelled to its original position.

Remembering HF & Helen Hamm

The Family

Henry F. Hamm was born in Neubergthal on October 13, 1914. Helen Kehler was born in Altona on September 12, 1921. They were married on October 13, 1940 and raised their family on the dairy farm in Neubergthal until their retirement in 1972. The Hamms stayed on the farm until March 2005 at which time they moved to the Ebenezer Apartments in Altona. They were there for two nights at which time HF had another stroke. This put him in the Altona Hospital. Following this, life brought many changes for them, from the Altona Hospital to Boundary Trails Hospital, back to the Altona Hospital and finally becoming residents of the Eastview Place.

The Hamms are survived by son Brian and Janet Hamm and their children Brent (Carla) Hamm, and Jason Hamm; daughter Phyllis and Glenn Friesen and their children Jennifer (Brad) Derksen, and Joelle Friesen; four great-grandchildren, Tanner, Madison, Trey, and Kemper; sister Maggie; and many nieces and nephews.

The Hamms were baptized into, and attended, the Sommerfeld Church in the village of Sommerfeld. Later they attended the EMM Church in Neubergthal and then transferred to the Altona EMM Church. Their faith remained strong and through their many hardships they found things to be thankful for. How often have we not heard HF say, "Thank you, thank you, thank you?"

They enjoyed many things in life such as taking rides in the country and going to Winkler to eat out. HF loved to garden and took great pride in it. In his earlier years he also enjoyed playing hockey. After his retirement he took up curling and bowling where he made many lasting friends. HF and Helen also enjoyed their many trips to BC to visit Uncle Abe and Aunt Susie.

Shortly before his passing his sister Maggie took HF for a ride in the country. He took great pride in showing everyone the sunflower he had picked, and saying the next time he was going out, he would get a bigger one. Unfortunately this was not to be. HF's love of farming never left him, and even with his short term memory being severely affected, he still had a terrific interest in farming.

HF and Helen celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary and HF's 91st birthday together a week before HF's passing, together with the family, Maggie and lifelong friend Ruby.

They will be remembered for their love and devotion and the happy memories they gave us. It is a comfort to know that they have retired from their earthly trials to be with their Lord and Saviour. We will not say goodbye, for we know we'll meet again someday.

Comings and goings



On Thursday, October 20, 2005 at 12:05 pm **Henry F. Hamm** (HF) of Eastview, Blue Ridge, Altona, and formerly of Neubergthal passed away peacefully at the Altona Hospital at the age of 91 years. On Wednesday, October 26, 2005 **Helen (Kehler) Hamm** of Eastview and formerly of Neubergthal passed away peacefully at the carehome at the age of 84 years.

CORRECTION:

Javad & Razi (of the "little house on the prairie") will donate \$1 of every \$7 container (1 Kg) (not 500 g) of honey sold, to the NHF. This honey is available from Margruite Krahn.