

**From:** "Abe Dueck" <ajdueck@mbconf.ca>  
**To:** <phiebert@juno.com>  
**Date:** Thu, 20 Jan 2005 10:01:21 -0600  
**Subject:** Fwd: Global MB Project

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Dear Paul,

Below is a copy of the email I sent to you earlier. I hope this reaches you.

I appreciated very much the conversation with you last night and your willingness to work on the project with us. I will provide you with more details as soon as possible.

With regard to travel arrangements to Abbotsford, I hope that everything works out well and we will reimburse you as soon as you send us the information.

I should also tell you that the Historical Commission begins its meetings on Friday, March 4, at 1:00 p.m. and continues through Saturday afternoon. While our main agenda will be to discuss this project, we also have some other issues to deal with. You are welcome to sit with us throughout, but would be free to pursue other matters if you choose when we deal with other agenda items. That might also mean that you would prefer to arrive on Friday as soon as convenient, but we would be happy if you came on Thursday by evening.

There may also be opportunities to connect with Columbia Bible College if you are available or to be involved in Sunday School or other church events on Sunday before your departure. If you would like, I could make some contacts.

Fraternally,  
Abe

Abe Dueck  
Executive Secretary  
Historical Commission  
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>>> Abe Dueck 1/17/2005 1:57:18 PM >>>

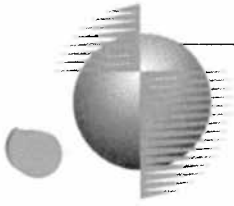
Dear Paul,

Warmest greetings! I'm not sure whether you remember me or not, but I have appreciated your work and remember in particular your fine contributions in a lecture series more than a year ago at Canadian Mennonite University.

I am writing on behalf of the Historical Commission which now operates as a bi-national body of the United States and Canadian Mennonite Brethren Conferences. Presently I am Executive Secretary of the Commission.

Last year ICOMB came to us to ask us whether we would undertake a project concerning the global Mennonite Brethren community. As I understand it this idea arose specifically out of a realization that Mennonite Brethren would be celebrating their 150th anniversary in 2010 and that they felt it would be good sponsor a global project in that connection. They suggested that we might think of a variety of formats, including a book with sections on MBs in various parts of the world (eventually in several languages), and perhaps also electronic formats (CDs, web-based formats, etc.). The details were left to us to define in consultation with them.

A representative group met in Fresno in November and the members of the Historical Commission have been in regular contact since then to begin



The CANADIAN CONFERENCE  
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*Historical Commission*

January 27, 2005

Dr. Paul Hiebert,  
3524 Old Mill Rd.  
Highland Park, Illinois  
USA 60035

Dear Paul,

Once again I want to thank you for being willing to help us in the task of editing a global Mennonite Brethren book project. At our meetings in Abbotsford we will address issues such as appointing a co-editor or assistant, an editorial committee, as well as the structure and content of the book.

Enclosed you will find several materials that should be helpful as background to our discussions with ICOMB and the mandate we received from them. There are other materials, but I believe these are the ones that will be most helpful to you at this point.

I look forward to your presence with us. As I believe I indicated to you, the Historical Commission will also deal with other items on its agenda, but you are welcome to sit with us throughout unless you decide otherwise.

Please feel free to call me (204-669-1950), or email me if you have further questions.

Fraternally,

Abe Dueck

Enclosures:

- 1) Minutes of meeting (ad hoc) of Nov. 1, 2004 in home of Peter Klassen
- 2) Minutes of ICOMB and Historical Commission representatives on Nov. 1 at Fresno Pacific University.
- 3) Abe Dueck email to Historical Commission members, Nov. 15, 2004
- 4) Peter Klassen email to Historical Commission members, Nov. 23, 2004.

**From:** Peter Klassen <peterk@csufresno.edu>

**To:** ajdueck@mbconf.ca, abrfriesen@sbcglobal.net, lhhecht@watserv1.uwaterloo.ca, doni@tabor.edu, kreddig@mts.net, bruce@csufresno.edu, guenther@twu.ca, peggyg@tabor.edu, kennsrem@fresno.edu, dg@paralynx.com, tedsfac@tiu.edu, cstoesz@mbconf.ca

**Date:** Wed, 09 Mar 2005 23:41:08 -0800

**Subject:** Meeting

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Dear Colleagues,

First of all, a big thanks to Dave and Bruce for all the preparations in Abbotsford. You are great hosts! And, thanks to all of you who made this an important, stimulating two days. Linda, we missed you; we hope you are fully recovered.

Paul, if I may quote very much out of context, you "made our day." We are delighted that you are willing to work on the daunting task of preparing a fitting tribute to 150 years of the Mennonite Brethren Church. Perhaps we can carry on email discussions for a time; then we can either have a conference call or a meeting of the editorial committee and you.

I'd like to make a few comments to focus our planning. These are only suggestions; let's make this project a marvelous demonstration of team-work. Paul, I will try to summarize some ideas expressed. If you are not in agreement, they are open to change. The Commission respects your leadership; we want to assist you.

#### 1. "Shape" of the Commemorative Effort

There seems to be support for the following:

a. A book that is engaging, attractive, informative, and fair to all concerned. We want something that is not prepared only from a North-American and/or European view, but which would embrace the worldwide Mennonite Brethren constituency. We have been asked to present this from a "missional" perspective that will fully recognize our brothers and sisters in Congo, India, Japan, Angola, Paraguay, etc.

b. It was already suggested that we consider the inclusion of photos, maps, charts, sidebars and other features designed to capture the visual interest of the reader. We might have references to pertinent websites and links, a short bibliography, suggestions for further reading/study, and perhaps videos/DVDs.

#### 2. Writers/Creators of the Commemorative Effort

Here we need wisdom and diplomacy. We want to get the most informed and creative participants with whom you, Paul, are comfortable. ICOMB has asked us to be in consultation with them when it comes to selecting national participants. They do not want a veto on our selections, only to be consulted and informed. I suggest we use your office, Abe D., as a clearing house. Because no one person can possibly know all the potential contributors, let us each begin looking and evaluating. Think of your contacts; in Fresno, e.g. we have professors and students from Congo.

At this time we should not ask anyone to participate; that should be a shared decision. Also, we do not want to embarrass candidates who are approached but not selected. Let's gather information. Then, with Paul, we can evaluate and invite potential contributors. This process could begin immediately.

When you send information to Abe, give reasons for your proposals. Paul, I know you'll want to be directly involved with the selection process. If you are uncomfortable with this process, it can

be changed. We are open to your ideas and suggestions. Let's put everything on the table before we act.

3. Announcement of Paul Hiebert's Acceptance

At the appropriate time (soon), I think we should have an announcement in the Herald and Leader (at least) where we express our thanks to Paul for his willingness to take leadership here. This could also serve as a notice to our churches that this project is underway.

Good things are underway.

Peter

**Minutes of the Meeting of Historical Commission members  
with representatives of ICOMB**

Monday, November 1, 2004, 1:00 p.m.

On Monday, November 1, 2004, at 1 PM, members of ICOMB Harold Ens and David Wiebe met with Peter Klassen, Chair, Abe Dueck, Executive Secretary, and Abraham Friesen of the Historical Commission of the MB Churches of North America; Kevin Ens-Rempel joined the meeting in progress later.

Topic of Discussion was the writing of a global history of the MB Church. David Wiebe gave a brief overview of the history of the project. This was a new initiative under the sponsorship of ICOMB but with the Historical Commission carrying out the actual project, conceived at the 2002 meeting during the Mennonite World Conference. It is to be completed in 2010 for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of the MB Church. He provided the meeting with a memorandum entitled: "Perspectives from ICOMB" which gave a brief history of ICOMB's discussion of the matter and the purpose it hoped to achieve with the finished work.

After some discussion of ICOMB's recommendations, Abe Dueck provided the meeting with a brief review of the Historical Commission's earlier attempt at writing such a history, entitled: "History of the Global Mennonite Brethren History Project" (see attachment 2). This project had not gone well and was allowed "to die a natural death" when the global Mennonite History project was initiated. This last summer at the MWC in Africa an MB global history was again discussed, this time with the goal of celebrating 150 years of MB existence. David Wiebe's (ICOMB's) current initiative was the result.

ICOMB's initiative was discussed at the last annual meeting of the Historical Commission, and Abe Dueck presented the meeting with his subsequent letter to David Wiebe of 12 May 2004 where this discussion was summarized.

After agreement had been reached in principle to move the project forward there followed a discussion of the best way to approach the project. It was decided that the best approach would be to involve ICOMB since they represent their constituencies; such matters as selecting editors and writers from the various national churches, etc. It was also decided that the project should be taken in hand by the Historical Commission, which will choose the general editor, simply because the greatest expertise in these matters lies in North America.

Some time was then spent on what the project should look like: how it should be organized; what some major themes might be. The following approaches were discussed: centered around missions, MB confessions, institutions, geographical centers, chronological developments. No decisions were reached in this regard because it was felt that the first thing that needed to be accomplished was to select an editor-in-chief and an editorial committee; this committee would have to work out the details.

In order to select an editor-in-chief and an editorial committee it was also decided to hold a meeting of the Historical Commission as soon as possible, preferably as soon as February or March (Abe Dueck will investigate time and place of meeting). Abe Dueck will also write up a