

EWZ Extraction Project

Presented at the GRHS
Convention in Portland, Oregon

July 14, 2006

Tim Janzen's initial involvement

- Tim and Elli initially began corresponding about the BDC microfilms in 1999 after Dale Wahl suggested I contact her.
- In August 2000 we began discussing my interest in the Mennonite genealogical data found in the EWZ microfilms.
- In April 2001 I offered to purchase EWZ microfilms for Elli if she ever began to “run low” on films to index.

Tim's ongoing involvement in the project

- In August 2001 I purchased 3 EWZ-50 series films covering the Janzens for Elli to index.
- Between 2001 and June 2005 I purchased films in groups of 5-20 for Ed and Elli to index.
- In June 2005 we learned of a pending price increase at the National Archives that would raise the price of each film from \$34 to \$65.

Collective purchase of the remaining EWZ-50 microfilms

- In July 2005, Elli, Ed, Richard Thiessen, and I began a collective effort to raise funds for the purchase of the remaining EWZ-50 films.
- As of June 2005 we owned 473 films.
- By September we collectively purchased the remaining 376 films before the price increase took effect.

Summary of those who have purchased EWZ-50 series films

- Tim Janzen: 439 films
- David Obee: 43 films
- Mennonite Historical So. of B. C.: 34 films
- Ed Bischoff: 30 films
- Rich Aspenleiter: 20 films
- Dale Wahl: 12 films
- Valerie Ingram: 11 films

Summary of those who have indexed EWZ-50 films

- Elli Wise: 285 films
- Ed Bischoff: 240 films
- Aubrey Marthaller: 67 films
- Jonathan Neufeld: 22 films
- Helga Rempel: 17 films
- Megan Wiebe: 11 films
- Waylon Klix: 11 films

Duplication of microfilms

- In Oct 2003 199 EWZ-50 microfilms were duplicated and copies were distributed to GRHS and 4 Mennonite archives.
- At some point hopefully within the next year or so the remaining films that contain Mennonite data will be duplicated.
- All archives will have opportunity to purchase copies of duplicates.

Donation of Tim Janzen's films

- GRHS will receive Tim Janzen's films that contain no Mennonite data
- MHSBC will receive Tim Janzen's films that contain some Mennonite data

Extraction of Mennonite data

- Richard Thiessen and Tim Janzen review the indexes looking for families that appear to have Mennonite ancestry
- All families that appear to have Mennonite ancestry are placed in a separate Excel file that contains only Mennonite data
- In 2002 Richard placed this file at <http://www.mennonitegenealogy.com/russia/ewz/ewz.htm>

Mennonite EWZ database

- In May 2004 Tim Janzen converted the Excel spreadsheet containing 60,000 people to a gedcom file using the mail merge feature in Word and by manipulating the file in other ways.
- In the fall of 2004 Erica Suderman and Jean Neufeld began extracting additional information from the EWZ microfilms and entered it into the database I created.

Mennonite EWZ database

- As of July 2006 the database contains 68173 people, indicating that over 8000 new people have been extracted from the microfilms and added to the database.
- Only the first 4600 people in the database have been linked together and have had the additional data extracted for them from the microfilms.

Future of the Mennonite project

- Remaining information needs to be extracted from the microfilms into the EWZ Mennonite database
- New database will need to be created for the estimated 25,000 people of Mennonite ancestry found in the EWZ indexes but not included in the original EWZ Mennonite database

Future of the Mennonite project

- Duplicate individuals in the EWZ Mennonite database will need to be merged
- Locations in the EWZ Mennonite database will need to be standardized
- When above completed, the EWZ Mennonite database will be merged into the Grandma database