



Mennonite Library & Archives Fresno Pacific University

MB Mission work in Colombia

An Inventory of Records

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Creator: MB Mission

Title: Records of mission work in Colombia

Inclusive dates: 1944-2001

Quantity: 10 linear ft.

Record Group No.: A250-13

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Mennonite Brethren mission work among the Indians in the Choco region of northwestern Colombia was first proposed by G. W. Peters following his visit to that country in 1943. The first Mennonite Brethren missionaries, Daniel and Elsie Wirsche and Daniel's brother David, arrived in Colombia in 1945. The mission board purchased a station in the village of La Cumbre from retiring independent missionary Annie E. Woof. In July of 1946 John A. and Mary Dyck took possession of the La Cumbre station, the first permanent headquarters for Mennonite Brethren mission work in Colombia. In the following two years, stations were also established at Istmina and Noanoma. A medical dispensary was opened in La Cumbre in 1947 and a school (*Colegio los Andes*) established there in 1952. Missionaries also established medical programs at Noanoma and Istmina.

Beginning already in the late 1940s but particularly during the 1950s the Roman Catholic Church and Colombian government placed severe restrictions on all Protestant missionary programs in Colombia. The Noanoma medical dispensary was closed by the government in 1956, and the missionaries experienced frequent harassment and physical threats. This situation forced the mission board to explore new approaches to the work in Colombia. In 1957 the board adopted a "New Colombia Plan of Work." The plan emphasized the training of Colombian Christians to carry out further evangelistic work, the establishment of a mission center in Cali, from where the missionaries could direct the work in the Choco without actually residing there, and greater outreach efforts in the city of Cali. Mennonite Brethren missionaries in Colombia also explored the possibility of working with Indians in Panama, where government opposition was less severe than in Colombia. A separate program was later established in that country (See record group A250, subgroup 17 for records of the Panama mission).

Even though government opposition to Protestant mission work declined after the 1950s, the Mennonite Brethren missionaries still moved in the directions suggested by the "New Colombia Plan" of 1957. The work in Cali increased, while some programs in the original Choco locations were closed. A dispensary at

Istmina, for example, closed in 1964 due to lack of trained workers. *Colegio los Andes* was moved from La Cumbre to Cali at about the same time and renamed *Colegio Americas Unidas*. Numerous churches were established in Cali, so that today it is the leading center for the Mennonite Brethren Church in that country.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS OF THE COLLECTION

This subgroup contains files from the North American offices of Mennonite Brethren Missions/Services and from the Colombia mission offices relating to mission work in that country.

LANGUAGES APPEARING IN THE COLLECTION

Some records are in Spanish.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

Box 1

Series 1: Minutes and reports

- Missionary Council 1946-1960
- Missionary Fellowship 1961-1977
- Administrative Committee 1947-1983
- Field Visit Reports 1949-1986
- Cali Station Center Minutes 1961-1963
- Reports, Other 1949-1983

Series 2: Individual files

- Ardies, Rick and Sheila 1985
- Bartel, Harry and Martha 1949-1953
- Buller, Herman and Anna 1961-1967
- Dirks, Howard and Kathy 1974-1979
- Dirks, Sylvester and Mattie 1977-1979
- Dyck, Annie 1961-1981
- Dyck, John A. and Mary 1946-1957
- Dyck, Roland and Martha 1977-1981
- Fadenrecht, Bennie J. and Ruth 1951-1955
- Friesen, Ebner and Martha 1956-1980

Box 2

Series 2: Individual files

- Friesen, Ernest and Elsie 1956-1973
- Geddert, Jacob and Mary 1967-1970
- Godard, Trever and Joanne 1985-2001
- Goertz, John P. and Janice 1966-1971
- Harder, Doris 1953-1957
- Klassen, Ruth 1967-1970
- Kroeker, Martha 1955-1963
- Lentzner, Kathryn 1947-1957
- Leonard, Fred and Ester 1988-1991
- Loewen, Jake and Anne 1948-1958
- Loewen Peter and Eva 1967-1997

Box 2 (Continued)

Series 2: Individual files (Continued)

Loewen, Ruth 1953-1958
Loewen, Ruth 1988-1993
Peters, G.L.O. 1944-1953
Quiring, Wilmer and Eugenie 1952-1967
Reimer, Hedy 1969-1971

Box 3

Series 2: Individual files

Reimer, Vernon and JoElla 1966-1975
Rink, Scott and Julie 1987-1994
Sarvoia, John and Lola 1986-1988
Schafer, Lillian 1946-1971
Schroeder, Mary 1946-1951
Siebert, Harold and Dorothy 1986-1996
Sukkau, Robert and Erika 1975-1986
Tieszen, Elizabeth 1958-1998
Voth, Alvin and Vera 1964-1986
Voth, Herta 1953-1959
Wiebe, Herb and Linda 1988-1993
Wiens, Ester 1956-1970
Wiest, Galen and Linda 1982-1994
Wirsche, Daniel and Elsie 1945-1957
Woelk, Gertrude 1963-1969
Zorrilla, Hugo 1971-1974

Box 4

Series 2: Individual files

Bartel, Harry and Martha 1949-1959
Dirks, Howard and Kathy
Dirks, Sylvester and Mattie
Dyck, Annie 1949-1973
Dyck, John A. and Mary 1946-1957
Enns, Albert and Anna 1985-1990
Espinoza, Orlando 1974-1980
Fadenrecht, Ben J. 1950-1956
Friesen, Ebner 1960-1961
Friesen, Ernest 1957-1969
Geddert, Jacob 1966-1970
Goertz, John and Jancie 1964-1967
Haase, Martin and Jane 1975-1979
Klassen, Ruth 1966-1967
Lentzner, Kathryn 1947-1956
Loewen, Jake and Anne 1948-1957
Loewen, Ruth 1951-1959
Plett, Emmi 1968-1969
Quiring, Wilmer A. 1955-1976
Reimer, Hedy 1968-1968
Reimer, Vernon 1956-1977
Schafer, Lillian 1948-1967
Schroeder, Mary 1951
Savoid, John and Daphyn 1962-1990

Box 5

Series 2: Individual files

Torres, Jesus 1980-1983
Voth, Alvin 1964-1979
Voth, Herta
Walter, Joe and Janette 1967-1979
Wiens, Ester
Willems, Reg and Ivy 1974-1980
Wirsche, Daniel A. 1945-1955
Wirsche, David 1946-1954
Woelk, Gertrude

Series 3: Subject files

Articles
CEDEC 1950-1979
Del Valle Regional Comm.
Administrative Comm.
Biblical Education Comm. 1972-1978
Choco Regional Comm.
Constitutions
Evangelismo a fonda en Columbia: Executive Comm. 1961-1979
Finance Comm.
Joint National Committee 1961-1968
Leaders Meetings
Columbia National Conference 1953-1979
Pastors Conference 1960-1966
Death of John and Mary Dyck 1957
Istmina
"The Fellowship" 1965-1975
Istmina Dispensary 1955-1965
Maps
Noanama
Open Forum Meetings
Panama 1959-1969
Persecution 1951-1957
Seminario Biblico Unido 1967-1970
Field Reports

Box 6

Series 1: Minutes and reports

Correspondence 1943-1972
CIDA Correspondence 1981
CRISIS Correspondence
Association Correspondence
Misc. Correspondence
Finances 1946-1989 (5 folders)
Budget
Field Trips (4 folders)
Annual Worker Progress Reports
Columbia Evaluation 1997
Columbia- Peru Evaluation
Long Range Plans

Box 6 (Continued)

Series 2: Individual files

Arce, William
Acevedo, Aida
Beltran, Alfredo and Sandra
Braun, Jose
Ens, Harold
Espinoza, Orlando
Martinez, Nelson and Lilliana
Torres, Mario J.
Voth, Alvin and Vera
Wall, John

Box 7

Series 3: Subject files

Biblical Institute/ Seminary (3 folders)
Education (3 folders)
Cali School Project
Cali Vocational School
Choco
Choco Health 1988-1990
Choco Public Health Project
El Camino Academy
Core Plus Projects
Columbia Documents
China Trip
Indian Community
Columbia National Conference 1967-1980
Construction Projects

Box 8

Series 3: Subject files

"History Report of our Mission to CEDEC"
Historical Accounts
Missionary Children's School
National Scholarships 1974-1982
New Columbia Plan of Work 1957
News Release
Prayer Letters
Pamphlets
Persecution
Policy Statements
North American Office Files 1946-1950
"Self-Study of Missions Activities in Columbia" 1968
"A Sort History of the Evangelical Mission Work in Columbia" Annie E. Woot 1929-1935
United Biblical Seminary
Ministries 1980
Project Development
National Convention 1973-1977
Columbia United Comm.
Church Planting
Columbia 1971-1973
CIDA Ministries

Box 9**Series 3: Subject files**

- Columbia Association of Mennonite Brethren 1982-1992
- Bundle I-XVI
- Columbia 2001
- Columbia (5 folders)
- Columbia 1987-1993
- Columbia Misc. (4 folders)
- General

Box 10**Series 4: Photographs**

- Baptism
- Book Burning
- Buildings
- Church Leaders (15 folders)
- Life on the River
- Missionaries
- Churches (17 folders)
- Episcopal Standard Center
- Evangelism
- Fire
- Medical
- MIJUCO
- Missionaries (12 folders)
- Missionary Residences
- Music
- National Conventions
- Pastors Retreat
- People
- Schools (9 folders)
- Sunday School
- Transportation
- Village Life
- Youth
- Scrapbook Sheets
- Negatives
- Slides