

# 25th Anniversary of the Mennonite Studies Chair

Twenty-five years ago, the Chair in Mennonite Studies was founded at The University of Winnipeg, established to advance scholarship on Mennonites, and their contribution to society. The program was interdisciplinary, including history, religion, culture, and literature as they related to the Mennonites in the past and present. The Chair would not have been possible, were it not for the generous gifts of Dr. David Friesen, Q.C., his family, and the federal Department of the Secretary of State.



## Harry Loewen

The Chair in Mennonite Studies University of Winnipeg (1978-1995)

Born in the former Soviet Union, Harry Loewen lost his father and grandfather during the Stalin terror in the 1930s, and fled with his family to Poland and Germany during the Second World War. In 1948, he immigrated at 17 to Canada, and officially became a Canadian citizen in 1953.

Loewen holds degrees from the University of Western Ontario (BA), the University of Manitoba (MA), and the University of Waterloo (Ph.D.), specializing in Reformation history and German literature. He wrote his Master's thesis on Luther and the Anabaptists of the 16th century, and wrote his Ph.D. dissertation on Johann Wolfgang Goethe's Protestantism.

Loewen taught history and German in a Mennonite high school and college in Winnipeg, before becoming a faculty member and eventual chair of the Department of German at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario, a position he held for ten years. In 1978, Loewen was invited to occupy

the newly created Chair of Mennonite Studies at The University of Winnipeg. Loewen created and taught the program until his retirement in 1995.

Among Loewen's numerous published articles and books are: *Luther and the Radicals*; *Goethe's Response to Protestantism*; *Mennonite Images: Historical, Cultural, and Literary Essays Dealing with Mennonite Issues*; *Why I am a Mennonite: Essays on Mennonite Identity*; *No Permanent City: Stories from Mennonite History and Life*; *Through Fire and Water: An Overview of Mennonite History*; *Road to Freedom: Mennonites Escape the Land of Suffering*; and, *Shepherds, Servants and Prophets: Leadership among the Russian Mennonites (1880-1960)*. He is also the founding editor of the *Journal of Mennonite Studies*, now in its 20th year of publication.

Harry Loewen is now Professor Emeritus of History and Mennonite Studies at The University of Winnipeg.

*The University of Winnipeg congratulates Harry Loewen, Dr. David Friesen, Q.C. and family, the federal Department of the Secretary of State, and the Mennonite Studies department on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Chair in Mennonite Studies.*