

St. Peter's Abbey Newsletter



Vol. 26 No. 1 Spring 2004

Abbey begins new century with faith renewed

By Werner Renneberg, OSB

On May 21, 1903, seven Benedictine monks arrived on the bank of Wolverine Creek in what was still the Canadian Northwest Territories. Most of the monks had filed for a quarter section of land. It was on this property that they would build the foundations of whatever providence would bring.

Hopes were high. The German Land Company and the Catholic Settlement Society, along with the monks, had the vision of a German Catholic settlement, large enough to ensure little opposition to the German language and Roman Catholic faith. From the start it was clear that the Colony was part of Canada and that English was the language of the country. All should learn English, but the "beautiful German language along with

its excellent culture" should be dominant in every home.

Within days after their arrival, the monks constructed the first monastery out of the plentiful trees found on the property. As time went on, changes came until what is seen at present.

It was thought that farming would remain much as it had been for the preceding thousands of years. Draft horses, oxen and manual work would be the engines driving farming operations. A quarter or half-section of land, together with mixed farming, would be adequate for a family to make a good living. Families would be big; cities and industries would sprout. The land was fertile, the climate good (much better than in the neighbouring states of the U.S., many correspondents wrote to *St. Peter's Bote*).

Nobody could foresee what the next

100 years would bring.

Presently the abbey is again at a crossroad. Times have changed excitingly. The complex consists of abbey, press, guest wing, college and farm. All are confidently looking to the future, not sure of what will happen. The *Prairie Messenger* has established itself as a leading American Catholic newspaper; the college is constantly widening its appeal to the needs of students; the main farm is still operated by the abbey; there has been a small beginning of LOP (Loehr Organic Project, celebrating the late Father Philip Loehr, OSB, who was a great advocate of organic farming and a simpler way of life). Guests are welcome.

As we now are in our second century, we confidently look to God for guidance and blessing.



Sts. Peter and Paul Abbey Church, college library, bell tower, guest wing and Michael Hall with college classrooms.

A message from Abbot Peter's desk

Last year our abbey celebrated its centenary. This year the community has another centenary to celebrate: 100 years of editing and publishing a Catholic weekly newspaper.

The *St. Peter's Bote* was started in February 1904 — only nine months after the monks arrived in Saskatchewan. That always amazes me. The English-language *St. Peter's Messenger*, later renamed the *Prairie Messenger* was begun in 1922 and continues to this day.

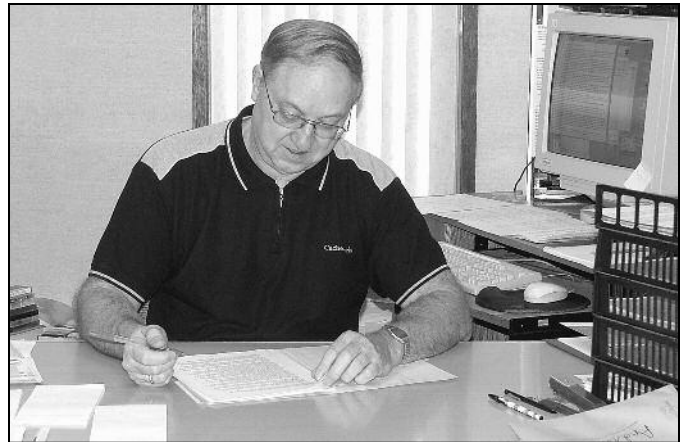
A change took place in the editorship of the *Prairie Messenger* in April. Fr. Andrew Britz retired after editing the paper for 21 years. He has suffered from Parkinson's disease for several years and it was time for a change. I will replace him in that position. The *Prairie Messenger* has about 7,500 weekly subscribers.

Spring is a time when changes take place. It's most dramatic in nature, as the snow melts and we await the growth of flowers and green grass. We were fortunate to have a good spring run-off this year, so our water reservoir is full again. That always creates a guessing game for

monks each winter: Will we have enough snow for a run-off this year?

Farmers and gardeners are ready to start scratching the soil and planting new seeds. Bro. Bernard, despite a couple of months in the hospital this winter, is looking forward to planting new crops on the farm this year. Bro. Basil will be looking after the vegetable garden again, as we continue our tradition of growing a lot of our own vegetables. The Loehr Organic Project will continue another year of operation as well.

St. Peter's College has ended another academic year, with an excellent group of students. Exams are finished and students are off for their summer ventures. The college recruitment team has been work-



Abbot Peter Novocosky sits at the editor's desk at the Prairie Messenger office.

ing hard to increase our enrolment next year. This summer Michael Hall will see some major renovations, particularly with a fire protection sprinkler system.

I wish our readers — friends and benefactors — a restful and peace-filled summer. With the amount of violence and unrest in our world today, Saskatchewan seems like a pretty nice place to live after all.

People and events around the abbey

By Martin Brodner, OSB

With the major colony centennial celebrations completed, we can, with grateful hearts, list the main events:

The first major event, organized by Al Gerwing (Lake Lenore) was the **trek to Rosthern**, April 12, 1903. It so happened that 100 years ago Prior Alfred Mayer was on his third exploratory trip to St. Peter's Colony (April 1903) and was amazed to see so many people who were really "itching" to rush north into Saskatchewan.

So on April 18, 1903, Abbot Peter Engel, OSB, summoned all his Cluniac monks to assemble at St. John's Abbey at once for the first great migration from Cluny to Rosthern. They left Collegeville May 12, 1903, arriving at **Rosthern** May 14. They bought three wagons and loaded them with basic provisions. On May 16 they started their 85-mile journey from Rosthern over the trackless plains, arriving at their homestead May 21, 1903, the Feast of the Ascension.

The **first mass** was offered on their homestead. **Our** centennial celebrations went into full swing with the outdoor Mass of Thanksgiving on that site, May 21, 2003.

The centennial jubilee reached its climax on the celebrations of Aug. 1 - 3, which brought together 3,000 people on those perfect summer days. **This** major event set off further minor 100th anniversary celebrations in four of the 10 parishes/missions which were started in that first year:

- * July 26: Annaheim (St. Anne's)
- * Aug. 10: Marysburg: (Assumption)
- * Aug. 31: Englefeld: (Guardian Angels)
- * Nov. 15: Watson (Sacred Heart). (Note that this large eastern parish started, we might say, as a twin parish, which was divided into the separate parishes of Englefeld and Watson on Feb. 5, 1905).

November 2003 — Work continued indoors this fall to convert the students' old trunk room (east end of Severin Hall) into the new laundry area. The old laundry was

built in 1921, at the same time as the college, rendering service for over 80 years.

November — Abbot Peter and Bro. Gerald have been busy revising and simplifying the chant books of the Divine Office: for Special Seasons of the Year and for Solemn Feast Days.

Nov. 11 — Oblate Day. This day displayed, for the first time, what one can call the **Benedictine Gift Shop**. For it now displays material with a Benedictine content: books on Benedictine spirituality, rosaries with the Benedictine medal, books printed by our St. Peter's Press, etc. Many of them are books just recently off the press, such as the history of St. Peter's Colony, *Begin a Good Work*.

The following were welcomed as Oblate candidates: Kelly Foth, Linda Palibroda and John Kwok of Saskatoon, and Don Leonard of Cornerbrook, Nfld.

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A tribute to Fr. George Brodner, OSB

By Werner Renneberg, OSB

"I was born on April 4, 1914, in Dysart, Sask. There were 15 children in our family and I was number 11.

"I especially remember walking to school. It was much closer for us to walk across country. When we drove we had to take the long way. When I was a little older I had to do the driving. In winter there would be snow banks that the horses had to plow through. If we didn't hit the snow banks straight on, the cutter would lean over. On one occasion we tipped and all fell out. The horses stopped. I got the cutter upright again. There were three younger siblings beside myself in the snow. We piled into the cutter and took off again.

"In those years when we wrote our Grade 8 exams we couldn't do it in our own school. We had to go to Dysart to write.

"We bought a quarter section of land a mile and a half from home. On it was an old house and a barn. Mother and my brother Matt brought out food for us. At night we put the horses in the barn and put horse blankets on the floor in the house and slept there.

"Dad talked to our pastor, a diocesan priest, Father Charles Falk, about high school. He had gone to a Benedictine school in Switzerland. He told Dad there was a Benedictine monastery nearby in Saskatchewan. Fr. Falk, Dad and Matt drove to Muenster in order to inspect the place. When they came back they told me that Martin and I were going to Muenster (pronounced "Minster" in German). I looked on a map and all I could find was Lloydminster. I thought we were going there.

"At the time I had no thought of becoming a Benedictine monk or priest. I thought I would get a high school education and look for a job in Regina.

"It was in Grade 11 that I first thought of becoming a Benedictine monk and priest.

"After second year arts at St. Peter's College, Martin, Philip Loehr and I travelled by train to St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minn., for our novitiate, two years of philosophy and four years of theology. We never came home during those years. I pronounced my solemn vows as a

Benedictine monk at St. John's and was also given minor orders and ordained sub-deacon and deacon in the States.

"As we were travelling on the train to the States, we came to a place where the track had been washed out between Muenster and Winnipeg. It took some time before we could move on.

"There was another track washout south of Winnipeg, so we had some time to do sightseeing in the big Winnipeg city. We nearly missed the train because it was ready to move when we got back. We had no money. I don't know what we would have done if we had missed the train.

"At St. John's I got my B.A., majoring in philosophy and minoring in Latin. I had very little trouble in school and got mostly As. I enjoyed studying theology for the next four years.

"Vacations were spent at St. John's Abbey. One summer I was given the task to glue letters on the transoms above the doors in the old monastery.

"One of my special memories at St. John's was meeting Dorothy Day who had come there to give a talk. It was often my job to meet strangers when they came.

"I returned to Muenster for my ordination. I was ordained on May 30, 1942, by Bishop Guy of Gravelbourg.

"I had no special ambitions when I was ordained. I thought I would be stationed at the abbey and teach high school. However, one of my first assignments was to help Fr. Dominic in the Humboldt parish on weekends. I took the train to Humboldt on Saturdays. Fr. Dominic had his room downstairs and I was upstairs. Fr. Dominic was very worried about getting robbed. The doors were locked and he didn't give me a key to the house.

"One day Joe Hoffman came to the rectory and was talking to me upstairs. Fr. Dominic came to the stairs and hollered, "Joe, did you come to see me or Fr. George?"

"The bed I had upstairs was old and uncomfortable. I would have been more comfortable sleeping on a rug on the floor.

"Fr. Dominic was a sound sleeper. I was in charge of the Children of Mary and we had our meetings Sunday evening. It took a lot of pounding on the door to wake up Fr. Dominic. So, one cold Sunday evening in February I thought why bother, so I walked back to



Fr. George Brodner, OSB

the abbey at Muenster in the middle of the night. As I was going along the road past farm houses the dogs would bark, but they didn't come to where I was.

"Jim Daniels had the dry cleaning business in Humboldt. Two of his daughters were in the Children of Mary. They told me that if I ever needed a ride home, their dad would do it for me. And he did at different times.

"One night as I was driving home from Humboldt with someone, a cow jumped at the car from the ditch. The collision didn't seem to hurt the cow or do much damage to the car.

"I got no salary for helping in Humboldt. The salary went to the pastor. All I got were the mass stipends and they were a dollar for a mass at the time. I liked to smoke cigarettes. So did Fr. Dominic. But he didn't like it if I took any of his. Fr. Prior Peter Windschiegl was at the rectory one day and I told him my problem. He pulled out \$5 and told me to buy some cigarettes for myself.

"During the time I was assistant in the Humboldt parish I was also in charge of building St. Mary's Villa.

"I took over management of St. Peter's Press from Fr. Aloysius Herriges in 1942 when he enlisted as army chaplain in World War II. I was manager until 1948

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People and events around the abbey

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Nov. 23 — St. Peter's College Staff Appreciation Night. This was a special night in this Centennial Year of Thanks as the monks gathered with special thanks of appreciation to all the staff of our abbey-college: both present and during the past 100 years. These have helped us in our various apostolates during all these years.

* Awards were given for longer dedicated services: Grant McConnell (teacher of Arts for 10 years), Loretta Tameling (kitchen/pantry for 20 years), Ann Back (laundry for 25 years).

* A special plaque was presented to the Leo Weber family in recognition of his many volunteer years at the abbey reception desk. Leo died on July 18.

* Mementoes were also distributed to the many who helped in many ways in our centennial celebrations this summer.

Nov. 30 — The Humboldt Council of the K of C sent out the following invitation: "In conjunction with the 100th anniversary of St. Peter's Colony, the Humboldt Council is coordinating a **recognition dinner** for the clergy and religious of the area. . . .

"Over the past 100 years the Benedictine priests and brothers, the Sisters of St. Elizabeth (1911) and the Ursuline Sisters (1913), and our parish



Ann Back in the new laundry.

priests — have tended to the needs of the people of the colony. You are invited to attend the dinner on Sunday, Nov. 30, 2003, 5:00 p.m., Humboldt Uniplax."

Over 400 people along with the religious attended. Thank you, gracious Knights!

Dec. 17 — *Colony Post*, # 7 printed an eight-page newsletter with coloured photos of the major centennial events.

Mid-December — Work began in the main entrance of the abbey: to install a ramp for easier wheelchair access from the main entrance to the college. Main work is done by Bros. Basil and Wolfgang and Allan Vedress.

Jan. 24 — At the Face to Face Retreat in Watson church, Fr. Richard accidentally fell and tore a ligament on his right knee. Surgery in Royal University Hospital. He returned to the abbey Jan. 30, and is mending well.

Jan. 28 - Feb. 7 — Very cold weather (hitting -42 degrees C) hit a high point with the first major blizzard Jan. 30-31, leaving about half a foot of most welcome snow!

Feb. 11 — A special issue to honour the *Prairie Messenger's* 100th anniversary was published by the PM staff of St. Peter's Press. It presented a mixture of the old and new. The PM is the offshoot of the former *St. Peter's Bote* which began publication only nine months after the Benedictines arrived. For a time it was edited in Rosthern and printed in Winnipeg because the railroad had not been built through Muenster and there was no other facility available to do the printing and mailing.

Feb. 8 — Both Bro. Gregory and Bro. Bernard needed hospital care this month. Bro. Gregory returned March 2 and Bro. Bernard March 9.

Feb. 23 — Ann Back, in charge of our laundry, had the first run of laundry in its new location at the south end of Severin Hall (old trunk room). The old laundry had served us well for over 80 years in its first location above the boiler room.

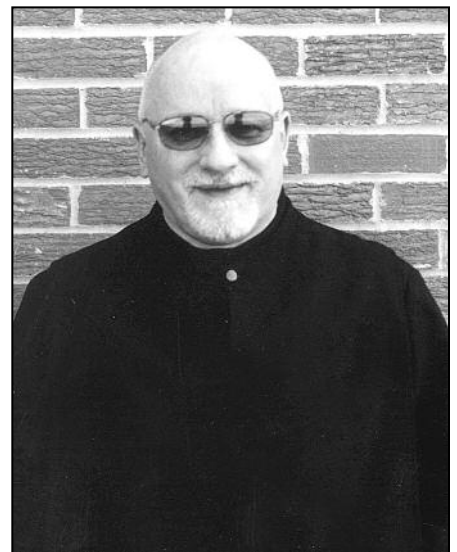
March 7 — This second Sunday of Lent marked the completion of silent work that had been unfolding weekly for the past year for our monastic choir. Abbot Peter and Bro. Gerald, our long-time organist, have been updating and simplifying the prayers and chants of our Vespers and Lauds for the Solemnities of the Year and the seasons of Advent-Christmas, Lent/Easter. This makes it easier for visitors to join the monks in these morning and evening prayers of the church.

*During Lent Abbot Peter gave the community weekly conferences on the liturgy. The year also marked the 40th anniversary of the Vatican II Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy and its implementation thus far.

March 12-13 — We rejoiced in a second recent six-inch snowfall. A previous snowfall had also given us a gentle, wet six inches of snow. Both seem to guarantee another good spring run-off to fill our reservoirs.

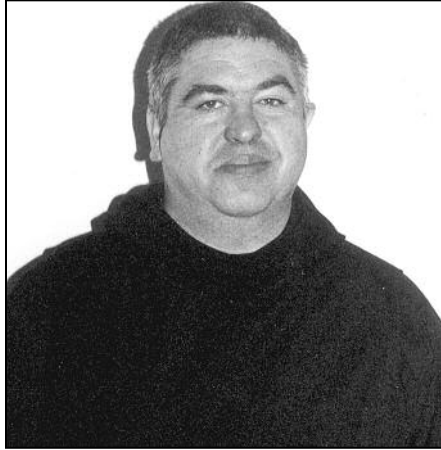
March 20 — Oblate Day. A sudden blinding blizzard the day before cut the attendance drastically. Phyllis Tullus, Saskatoon, was received as an Oblate candidate.

March 21 — Bro. Novice Bob Monk, Winnipeg, made his promises as a cloistered Oblate for a term of three years.



Bro. Novice Bob Monk

March 31 — Abbot Peter motored to Assumption Abbey (Bismarck, ND) to help Bro. Pierre Rouillard, OSB, relocate to St. Peter's Abbey. Born in Winnipeg, Pierre had requested to continue his monastic life in our Canadian community. This is not too unusual. The archives show that for the first 20 years most of



Bro. Pierre Rouillard, OSB

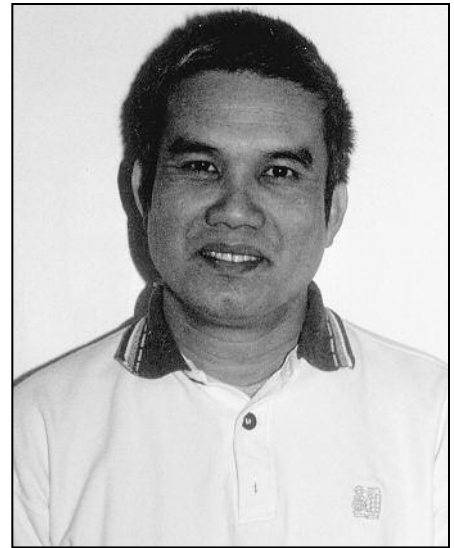
the members of St. Peter's Abbey came from the States, most of the from St. John's Abbey.

April 1 — The spring thaw is on! The first robins arrived March 30. Within two days (April 4 - 5) the abundant spring run-off filled both our dugouts. The overflow is now heading to Stoney Lake via our Wolverine Creek! How abundant God's blessings!

April 4 — Fr. George Brodner, OSB, celebrated his 90th birthday with a surprise visit from several of his parishioners from his most recent parish, Naicam.

*On April 6, his older brother, Bro. Gregory Brodner, OSB, celebrated his 99th birthday. He arrived from his hometown, Dysart, to join the Benedictine community in 1930, and never looked back!

April 16 — Three gatherings concluded our April weekends: Engaged Encounter April 16-18, Vita Nova



Peter Tien La

Retreat from P.A., April 13-25 and Marriage Encounter April 30-May 2.

April 20 — Peter Tien La (Toronto), arrived to spend time here as a "live-in."

Oblate director's message

By Richard Meidl, OSB

Some, who have seen the oblate director's message in the Abbey Newsletter, may have been wondering, "Who are these people called Oblates of St. Benedict?"

Oblates of St. Benedict are Christian women and men who yearn for a spiritu-

al life deeply rooted in God, and who choose to attach themselves to a specific Benedictine community and strive to live the spirit of St. Benedict's Rule in response to this yearning.

The word "oblate" comes from the Latin *oblatus* — an offering, someone or something that is given. In Benedict's day young children were offered to monasteries where they were educated and introduced to Benedictine life.

Often these "oblates" became full members of that monastic community as adults. Well-known examples are St. Bede (673-735), Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), and Gertrude the Great of Helfta (1256-1302).

Over time, other adults (men and women) asked to be associated with a particular monastic community; they were also called oblates even though they continued to live their lives outside monastic walls. So oblates have a long history.

St. Frances of Rome (1384-1440) and Roman Emperor St. Henry II (973-1034) were oblates and are now honoured as the universal patrons of all oblates.

Some other well-known individuals who became oblates are St. Thomas More in the 16th century and, in the 20th century, philosopher Jacques Maritain,

social activist Dorothy Day, novelist Rumer Godden, actor Alex Guinness, politician Eugene McCarthy, spiritual writer Kathleen Norris, Rose Kennedy and many more.

Because Benedictine spirituality predates any major divisions in the church, members of many Christian denominations feel comfortable adopting the oblate way of life.

If you have questions or are interested about the Oblates of St. Benedict and in particular the Oblates of St. Peter's Abbey, please feel free to contact me. I can be reached by mail at Oblate Director, St. Peter's Abbey, Box 10, Muenster SK S0K 2Y0. You can call me at 306-682-1765 or fax me at 306-682-1750. If you are on the net, I can be reached at <frichard@stpeters.sk.ca>. If you wish you can join the Oblates as we meet for our regular meeting at St. Peter's Abbey to be held on Saturday, June 26, 2004. The day starts with Eucharist at 10:45 a.m. and ends with Evening Prayer at 4:00 p.m., along with the St. Peter's Abbey community.

P.S. If this is familiar to some of you, it can be seen on our Web site at <www.stpetersabbey.ca> or in a brochure on the "Oblates of St. Benedict."

NOW AVAILABLE

Begin a Good Work

— A History of St. Peter's Abbey, 1903-2003

In 160 pages the author relates the early trials of the Benedictines and how they adapted as times changed.

by

St. Peter's College President
Colleen Fitzgerald
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Fr. Albert Ruetz: 60 years a Benedictine

By Werner Renneberg, OSB

Father Albert (alias “the Bear,” named so by students who generally admit there was no math teacher in Saskatchewan with the patience Fr. Albert had, and who say that if you can’t pass math exams with him teaching it, you can’t pass math exams) was born on a farm in the Aldag district southwest of Gull Lake, Sask.

Albert was the youngest son in a family of four boys and a girl, the youngest of all. Theirs was a mixed farm with the usual collection of cattle, horses, hogs, chickens and turkeys. Their father died of a stroke in 1936 when Albert was 10. His older brother, now 16, and his mother, a hard-working woman with a green thumb, kept the farm and family going.

Water was a problem in that part of the Prairies. Several wells on the farm produced some water, but it was only after a deep well was drilled that the family had a generous supply of good water.

The year 1937 is remembered as one of the worst years of drought. Virtually nothing grew, but Albert’s mother had a wonderful garden irrigated by precious water hauled by stone boat from the deep well. The family was able to sell cabbages, potatoes, tomatoes, etc. The money it brought was not much. But in those days you didn’t need much money.

Living about 15 miles from town, the neighbours (and in those days families lived fairly close together) pooled their energies and resources. During the winter months whoever went to town would bring back needed supplies and mail.

St. Anthony’s Church too was some 10 miles away. There would be mass once every two weeks and less often in winter. The family had a car and an old truck which served them well except in winter when the snow blocked the roads. Before the days of the caboose they had a large sleigh box that fit on the front part of the bob sleigh. In cold weather they would put a binder canvas over the top and close off the back, with the front open. Heated stones would keep their feet more or less warm.

In this area where there were few large trees, soft coal was used to keep the house warm. Soft coal mining was done 20 miles to the south. Because there was too much toxic gas in soft coal for the kitchen stove,



Fr. Albert Ruetz at recreation.

hard coal had to be bought and used.

Except for one year when Albert and one of his brothers attended school at St. Joan of Arc Academy in Swift Current, his grade school took place in a local one-room school. He took grades 9 and 10 by correspondence with help, which wasn’t a lot, from the teacher who herself did not have higher learning.

A few young men from the area had attended St. Peter’s College at Muenster. Albert had never heard of Benedictines until he came here in the fall of 1940. His mother told him that, because they had no money, he would not be able to come home for Christmas or Easter. However, one year when his brother was in the Canadian armed forces, she asked him to come home for Christmas. That was the last time the family was together for Christmas.

To earn a little money and pay for part of his board and tuition, Albert waited on tables and worked for Fr. Xavier, OSB, Tuesdays and Thursdays, doing whatever was needed on the large campus. This kept him from participating in many sports. However he does recall playing minor hockey and being on the winning team for the Wildfire Cup, in which hockey squad members chose their teams, involving everyone who could lace up a pair of skates. He had a pair of skates that cost him all of \$3.98 and Fr. Augustine gave him a hockey stick that had as much tin as wood on the blade.

Albert remained at the abbey the summer between Grade 12 and first-year university, working, earning part of his tuition. At the completion of his first year arts he decided to join the Benedictine community. At this time George Hinz

(later Fr. Leo) and Leander Dosch had completed Grade 12. Because of the war and the draft for servicemen in the Canadian army, it was decided that all three enter the novitiate together. Being members of a religious order, and having continuous classes, they were exempted from the draft. Hinz and Dosch remained at the abbey for first-year university while Albert went to St. John’s, Collegeville, Minn., for philosophy.

Because of the war and the difficulty getting an American visa, Brother Albert arrived late at St. John’s and had to struggle to catch up to the rest of the class. Since Bro. Albert knew how to work, he was made work boss in St. John’s Abbey clericate, with the responsibility of organizing work crews during the summer months which were spent at St. John’s.

The seminary years went by quickly in the beautiful Lake Sagatagan area. Because the Canadian bishops were in Rome for their periodic visit to the pope, it was decided that Albert would be ordained on June 5, 1949, along with his class, rather than wait until fall.

Fr. Albert’s first assignment at St. Peter’s, along with being prefect of discipline, together with Fr. Jerome, was to

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*“ . . . that in all things
God may be glorified. ”*

— Benedictine Motto

Interview with Wendy Toye

By Werner Renneberg, OSB

"I am one of the organizers for the sewing workshops. I own the Haus of Stitches in Humboldt that sponsors the workshops here at St. Peter's.

"Our main sessions are in summertime. The present workshop is for teachers and owners of business shops to experiment, learn from one another, and try different things. Some create their own patterns. Others work with patterns on hand. We are all equal here. There is no instructor.

"There are 17 of us here in this workshop this winter. We brought our own machines and material for work. Two of us are from Humboldt. Most of the others are from all over Saskatchewan. At present there are only three of us here. One of those here, Candace Enns, is from Stoney Plains, Alta.

"In our summer sessions we have about 70 participants. They bring their own machines. We teach garment making, quilting, knitting needle craft. In other words, we teach a little of everything.

"I began sewing as a child with 4-H in LeRoy, and I have been interested and active in this kind of work ever since.

"The biggest challenge for us here is to create samples, to show customers what we can do.

"Another challenge is to be able to

read directions carefully. This leads to needless "unsewing." We don't like to use the word "ripping." We like to encourage our students to use their own imagination and creative abilities to create new things. These don't always work out. But you never know until you try it. Patterns are only meant to be a guide.

"We encourage clients to be patient and have self-confidence.

"Another important thing is to know what your machine can do and to be able to use it to advantage. Patterns allow for many and interesting variations. We like to teach students how to use their imagination and create.

"Those who come to our teaching session in summertime do not necessarily want to go into the business of dress making, etc. All we do is help them do different things easier. What they do with their learning later is strictly up to them."

When the three were asked if they have anything else to say, in almost a chorus,



Wendy Toye at work.

they said, "This is a fabulous place for our workshops. The hospitality is great. The big bell in the tower outside announces when it is time for lunch. As soon as we are finished eating, or whenever we choose, we can come back here to our work. We are away from the city, in a quiet place, where we have all the facilities we need. St. Peter's is one of the best-kept secrets."

Wendy Toye added, "At the sessions here last summer we got a very positive response from all who attended. One of the instructors was a lady from Ontario. She also was impressed with St. Peter's as a place for these workshops."

Fr. George, pastor, builder, retires to abbey

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when Fr. William Gehlen was given the press job.

"I was sent to Watson as pastor in 1948. I had LeRoy, Romance and Watson parishes to care for. I was in charge of building the present church at Watson in 1953. It had been a basement church and we built the top. Tony Staddelmeyer from Humboldt was the contractor.

In your last will and testament
please remember St. Peter's Abbey.

Our legal title is:

ORDER OF ST. BENEDICT
Muenster, SK S0K 2Y0

"Next I was transferred to Marysburg and Pilger. I built the Pilger rectory.

"When the building program started at the Muenster abbey I was asked to come home and be in charge of the finances. I was again also given management of St. Peter's Press with Fr. Werner Renneberg as my helper.

"I served a term as CWL Diocesan and later provincial director, now called spiritual advisers. I went to various parts of Canada with the CWL.

"Then I was transferred to the Naicam parish where I also built a new rectory and enlarged the church, adding meeting rooms for teaching catechism, etc. I had good cooperation from the people in the parishes wherever I was and whenever I needed.

"Through most of my years in parishes,

Miss Martha Bergermann was my faithful housekeeper. During the last years at Naicam, my own sister, Sister Walburga Brodner, OSE, who had retired from active work, lived with me in the rectory and did the cooking.

"When I was asked to retire to the abbey at Muenster because of old age and sickness, I packed it in. I took it for granted that the abbey was my home. It didn't bother me to move.

"I enjoy praying and singing with the community. I belong here and so far have been able to be regularly at all the prayers and morning masses.

"My advice to young and old is: 'Put your heart and soul into all that you do. Don't be half-hearted. Put your full effort into what you do.'"

Fr. Albert retires as pastor and teacher

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teach Grade 9 Latin and English and Grade 10 algebra and geometry.

Three summers were taken up with summer classes at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon. Because graduate teachers were needed, Fr. Albert was given the choice of taking higher courses either in English or mathematics. He chose mathematics and enrolled in Notre Dame University, Indiana, from 1957-59, taking one full year, two summer sessions and a full semester.

This was hard slugging. Evenings were spent in studies until midnight when he would say the obligated prayers of the Divine Office and get some needed sleep. However, he had been advised to register for attending football games, which were on Saturdays. Notre Dame had no great winning team at the time, but Fr. Albert's love for the game and the Alma Mater began to grow, an interest that is still his today.

Returning from Notre Dame with a degree in math, Fr. Albert could teach university mathematics as well as any high school math classes. Along with this he was periodically dean of arts and school principal, as well as the prior of the monastery and in charge of the Benedictine Oblates. His much appreciated and lauded work of trimming hedges began at this time.

Now too his pastoral work began, first with a short weekend assignment in the Marysburg-Pilger parishes, which turned into a seven-year stint. After St. Peter's High School closed in 1972, Fr. Albert was asked to be chaplain and to teach math at the Bruno Ursuline Convent, which he did until that school closed. This was together with weekend assistance at

Bruno, Peterson and Carmel parishes.

In all those years Fr. Albert was allowed one sabbatical. He went to Rome for classes there, but found that the class had been cancelled because of low enrolment. So he took other courses at the Angelicum in Rome because they were taught in English. The highlight of the year was the time spent in the Holy Land on a five-month tour, which had been part

of the course he had anticipated.

Coming back to the abbey at Muenster, the old routine again began until Fr. Albert retired from teaching in the year 2000, having taught for 51 years. At this time he was pastor of the Peterson and Carmel parishes. In 2001 he became pastor of St. Peter's Parish at Muenster, a task that is still his until his retirement on June 30, 2004. Then . . . "Whatever shall be, shall be."

Deaths: remember the faithful departed

Since the last newsletter the following have passed into eternity:

Oct. 26 — Fr. Lawrence Willis, OSB, Belmont Abbey, N.C.

Oct. 30 — Fr. Allen Mattingly, OSB, St. Bede's Abbey, Peru, Ill.

Nov. 11 — John Weber, Watson, Sask., brother of former Fr. Maurice Weber, OSB.

Dec. 4 — Fr. Augustine Horn, OSB, St. Gregory's Abbey, Shawnee, Okl.

Dec. 11 — Abbot Thomas Havlik, OSB, St. Procopius Abbey, Lisle, Ill.

Dec. 18 — Elizabeth Saretsky, Oblate, Humboldt, Sask.

Dec. 30 — Fr. Virgil O'Neill, OSB, St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minn.

Jan. 1 — Fr. Godfrey Burkhardt, OSB, St. Vincent Archabbey, Latrobe, Penn.

Jan. 3 — Fr. Philip Engele, OMI, brother of former Fr. Alfred Engele, OSB.

Jan. 8 — Fr. Christian LeFrois, OSB, St.

Vincent Archabbey, Latrobe, Penn.

Jan. 24 — Margaret Christiansen, Oblate, Saskatoon, Sask.

Feb. 16 — Fr. Claude Pollak, OSB, St. Vincent Archabbey, Latrobe, Penn.

Feb. 19 — Katherine (Mrs. Peter Brodner), sister-in-law of Bro. Gregory, Frs. George and Martin.

Feb. 20 — Fr. Eugene Hornstein, OSB, Assumption Abbey, Richardson, ND.

Feb. 21 — Fr. Cosmas Dahlheimer, OSB, St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minn.

Feb. 22 — Bro. Frank Kacmarcik, OblSB, St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minn.

Feb. 28 — Fr. Alto Butkowski, OSB, St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minn.

March 21 — Bro. Mark Carmer, OSB, Assumption Abbey, Richardson, N.D.

St. Peter's Bote

Vols. 1-5 now available

Our Roots! Captured in St. Peter's Colony News, Letters to the Editor and sprinkled with names of those who made the news — all in five volumes of *St. Peter's Bote*. The German newspaper with that name began publishing in February 1904, nine months after the first monks arrived. Translated by Werner Renneberg, OSB, one volume per year, the hopes, dreams, suffering, frustrations and successes from 1904 to 1909 can be appreciated. Within a few short years, to the astonishment of visitors, the unsettled wilderness had been transformed into a vibrant closely-knit German community by hardy pioneers and equally hardy Benedictines. Vol. 6, 1909 - 10 is nearing completion. Each volume, wire binding, 8 1/2 X 11 inches. Price \$20 per volume. If ordered by mail, add \$5 shipping & handling.

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