

GAMEO Management Board  
Virtual Meeting  
2021 May 22 – 9:30 (Central); 10:30 (Eastern)

Present: Jon Isaak (Chair; Mennonite Brethren Historical Commission), John D. Roth (General Editor; Mennonite World Conference; Institute for the Study of Global Anabaptism), Ken Sensenig (Mennonite Central Committee), Jason Kauffman (Mennonite Church USA), Laureen Harder-Gissing (Mennonite Historical Society of Canada). Alf Redekopp (Associate Editor), Bert Friesen (Associate Editor), Sam Steiner (Associate Editor).

- 1) Opening and introductions: Jon Isaak welcomed us to the Zoom meeting. We had hoped to meet in Ontario in person but COVID-19 extended longer than expected. This is our 2<sup>nd</sup> virtual AGM. Jon read a part of Psalm 24, as a centering psalm, an orientation or re-orientation for our work. “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it, and all who live in it. Jon invited us to see this psalm as a “therefore” that propels us forward, to build something.  
Jon introduced and welcomed Laureen Harder-Gissing, Archivist-Librarian, Mennonite Archives of Ontario/Milton Good Library, Conrad Grebel University College and GAMEO partner, Mennonite Historical Society of Canada.  
Jon Isaak invited each member present to introduce themselves and tells us what they see when they look out their window.  
Jon: rain in Manitoba; Bert Friesen-rain; Ken Sensenig - sweet corn a foot tall; Sam Steiner - King Street and a warm overcast day; Laureen Harding Gissing – dry garden in need of rain; John Roth- over cast with a slight chance of rain; Jason Kaufman – overcast day.
- 2) Review of Agenda: Jon Isaak summarized the Agenda as having three foci: technology, content and expansion.  
  
CONSENSUS 1: To accept the agenda as circulated.
- 3) Review of minutes: Sam Steiner highlighted a few actions.  
CONSENSUS 2: To accept the minutes of June 22, 2020 (Zoom meeting) as circulated and reviewed.
- 4) Reports circulated prior to meeting
  - a) General Editor (John Roth): Regarding theological articles, Alf clarified that he had in consultation with Jon Isaak, withdrawn his offer to translate a MennLex article when he realized that the German was at the edge of his comprehension. John Roth added that John Rempel has agreed to translate some MennLex articles for GAMEO. Bert Friesen affirmed John Rempel as an excellent choice because of his years in Germany and his theological expertise.
  - b) Statistical report (Sam Steiner): In addition to the written report, Sam noted that there have been more visitors from Global South. Some African countries are in the top ten both in terms of

visitors to the site and content viewed on the site. He also noted that he has recently received a steady stream of articles about Kansas, both congregational entries and biographies, largely from John Thiesen. A question was asked about the reason for the high number of site visits from China. It has not been investigated but it was interesting to note.

CONSENSUS 3: to accept reports prepared by John Roth and Sam Steiner.

#### 5) Technical issues

Bert Friesen reported that the transition to dedicated server had gone smoothly; also adding Anabaptistwiki.org to this server managed by Peaceworks, also went smoothly. The Wikimedia software used by GAMEO was also upgraded smoothly. The total cost was less than what Bert had expected.

Sam Steiner spoke about editorial features that were new with the software upgrade. One particular feature allows editing without going into the code. He also reported that initial search engine issues: have also been resolved recently.

Footnotes: Another new feature in the software upgrade was the ability to include footnotes. Traditionally encyclopedia have not used footnotes but rather a bibliography. Wikipedia has really changed that practise and uses footnotes extensively. John Roth shared that he had had one major complaint when someone could not track down a quote in an article that originated with the original ME.

CONSENSUS 4: that the editors experiment with the use of footnotes during this next year (i.e. use the feature when articles comes with footnotes, or where a quote can be footnoted.)

Jon Isaak asked a question about why GAMEO URLs don't work when copied into MAID (Mennonite Archival Information Database). Alf reported that this is an issue related to how the MAID software handles hyperlinks, and that the process has changed with a recent MAID upgrade. Lauren agreed to update the MAID manual.

#### 6) GAMEO Priorities –

Jason: Having a focus on a particular section of the encyclopedia would help him in having a priority.

Lauren: When students encounter articles that use language and terms that today make us cringe, she wishes those could addressed (terminology at one time used to refer to indigenous people or those outside the group as “heathen”)

Ken: The Mennonite-Anabaptist label has many groups that are not always thought of traditionally.

Sam: When an updated article is added, the original historical article is put to the bottom as additional information.

CONSENSUS 4: the following list will be our priority for this next year

Theological articles: Jon, John and Alf

Investigate use of “heathen” in GAMEO: Jon

Investigate Indigenous terms in GAMEO: Lauren

Indonesia (find a volunteer to write using recent publications): John R.  
Getting sub-articles for new conservative groups: Ken S.  
Mennonite Church people in Indiana / Michigan: Jason  
Forming a Schmiedeleut Hutterite GAMEO sub-group Bert F.  
Updating 2020 congregational membership number – Sam, Jon

- 7) GAMEO – What should GAMEO look like in 10 years?  
More groups will be part of it. Generating content will continue to be a challenge. Technology will do much more than we can currently imagine. Information / data will be linked across many platforms.
- 8) Promotion – John create a news release based on our meeting and the acceptance of a new partner.
- 9) Finances – Bert distributed the reports and said our finances are stable. He will continue to function as the finance liaison with MWC, while Jon Isaak will focus on the fundraising by sending invoices to institutions. (Most institutions are paying by cheque, and this method seems to be quite successful. Len Rempel, Chief Financial Officer at MWC has accepted another ministry role and been replaced by Jeanette Bissoon.

CONSENSUS 5: to accept the financial statements

CONSENSUS 6: to accept the budget as presented.

- 10) Board development  
Based on last year's consensus to draw up a list of potential partners in Canada and the United States, Jon Isaak sent out invitations to 6 groups to consider becoming a partner. One of the six responded.  
MOVED /SECONDED/CARRIED (Jon Isaak/Bert Friesen): that the Delbert F. Plett Historical Research Foundation be approved as a GAMEO partner."

- 11) Other business: none

- 12) Date of next meeting: CONSENSUS 7: that we meet on Sunday, May 15, 2022 for a noon meal and meeting in Waterloo, Ontario. This will be immediately following the "Indigenous-Mennonite Encounters" Conference scheduled for May 13-14. (See <https://uwaterloo.ca/indigenous-mennonite-encounters/> for more details.  
There was affirmation from several members that the GAMEO Management Board Meetings could alternate between in-person meetings and virtual meetings.

- 13) Adjournment: Jon adjourned the meeting at 11:21 a.m. (CST)

Recorded by Alf Redekopp