

MANITOBA MENNONITE

HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Annual General Meeting

May 3, 2025

Mennonite Heritage Village, Steinbach

Advisory Council and Annual General Meeting

Saturday, May 3, 2025 @ the Mennonite Heritage Village

Advisory Council Meeting

- 1) Call to Order and Welcome**
- 2) Approval of the Agenda**
- 3) Adoption of the Minutes**
- 4) Reports from Affiliated Organizations**
 - a. Mennonite Heritage Village**
 - b. Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies**
 - c. Mennonite Heritage Archives**
 - d. Chair in Mennonite Studies**
 - e. D. F. Plett Historical Research Foundation**
- 5) Reports from Standing Committees**
 - a. Engagement and Media**
 - b. Genealogy**
 - c. EastMenn**
 - d. WestMenn**
- 6) Nominations to the Board**
 - a. Terms Expiring**
 - b. XXX**
- 7) Other Business**
- 8) Adjournment**

Annual General Meeting

- 1) Call to Order and Welcome**
- 2) Adoption of the Minutes**
- 3) President's Report**
- 4) Financial Report**
- 5) Adoption of Affiliated Organization and Standing Committee Reports**
- 6) Election of Directors**
 - a. Nominations from the Advisory Council**
 - b. Nominations from the Floor**
- 7) Recommendations from the Advisory Council**
- 8) Other Business**
- 9) Adjournment**

Mennonite Heritage Village report

Mennonite Heritage Village (MHV) continues to preserve and exhibit the stories and experiences of the Mennonites who migrated to Manitoba in the 1870's. After some significant changes in early 2024, the board of directors and staff put together a plan to carry out our annual programs, activities and events and to highlight two significant anniversaries.

The 60th anniversary of MHV was highlighted at our Spring Gala, with special guest speakers Edward Schreyer and Kevin Chief, recalling the vision of the early museum leaders and challenging us to continue to value our heritage and listen to the stories of our neighbours and friends. In December we held a celebration of the museum, featuring the stories of four volunteers who have spent several decades at MHV, supporting its windmill maintenance, growing the education program, and revealing new stories of new immigrants to be respected and added to the stories of our local community.

The other anniversary that we commemorated was the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the first Mennonites to Manitoba from South Russia (now Ukraine). The Gerhard Ens Gallery opened during Pioneer Days in August with the exhibit, 'Mennonite Reflections: Arriving in Manitoba 150 Years Ago'. The exhibit was created and installed by a committee of staff, volunteers and consultants. It will remain open to the public until the end of 2025. One aspect of the arrival in Manitoba that we were able to highlight during the Pioneer Days festival, was the role that Metis played in settling the first Mennonites. Ernie Braun, Kelly Jerome and Armand Jerome were integral to the planning of a Red River Cart Walk, which took place on the service road leading up to the museum and onto the grounds next to our Semlin. About 30 people accompanied a horse and cart for the walk culminating in a Thank You Ceremony led by Royden Loewen. The other important aspect of our 150th commemoration was the premiere showing of the MMHS sponsored film, 'Where The Cottonwoods Grow', retelling the story of the Mennonite experience of leaving their homes in Ukraine and making the difficult journey to Manitoba. We showed the 25-minute preview over four days to a full house each session.

Overall, we are thankful for the nearly 3000 students who visited us with their schools in May and June. We hosted 75 campers during our 4 weeks of Pioneer Day Camp in summer as well as 1 week of Winter Day Camp in December. Nearly 45,000 visitors came to MHV in 2024 for various purposes and occasions. We are very thankful for our dedicated staff team and the over 200 volunteers who support us with their enthusiasm, their skills and their experience.

On a personal note, after seven years of leading the Program department at MHV, I continue to learn from our volunteers, colleagues and staff and I appreciate their dedication to the mission of the museum. We have the privilege to participate in our community by providing a strong foundation through our heritage. We listen to stories of migration, of the establishment of new homes and of flourishing in a diverse society, as we share our own stories with new generations. Mennonite Heritage Village was established 61 years ago to preserve the stories of our early beginnings in Manitoba. We continue to value those first stories as we gather new stories. Thank you for your continued support.

Submitted by

Robert Goertzen
Executive Director MHV

CMBS Update

by Jon Isaak

Things are changing at CMBS. But what's not changing is CMBS's commitment to resourceing Mennonite Brethren Churches—their institutions and their people—for the mission of God that we share. This includes responding to queries from denominational leaders, pastors, church people, and the general public in reference to items they've seen while searching the CMBS webpage, <https://cmbs.mennonitebrethren.ca/>.

People use the CMBS online finding aid when looking for church bulletins, obituaries, congregational meeting minutes, school yearbooks, historical books, research papers, conference meeting minutes, photographs, statistics, reports, newspapers/magazines, etc. Like any archives, CMBS is committed to preserving, describing, and making accessible church records and resources. It is a funded ministry of the Canadian Conference of MB Churches.

I have enjoyed these 13 ½ years working as the "keeper" of the CMBS archives, helping people make connections from the past to the present. The past always has something to say—and now more so than ever, since so much historical material is

available online for analysis and meaning making.

So, what is changing? Well, I'm retiring at the end of December 2024. In the photo below, you see me standing with Carina Gallardo. She is the new Records and Archives Technician, whom I am training to take on the archiving aspects of my role at CMBS. We have been working together since October, processing files, photos, documents, and website updates.

Carina graduated from the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg with an Advanced Bachelor of Arts. She has pursued work in the field of Library and Information Science through practicum placements and technical support roles. She is excited to bring her skills and knowledge to managing the CMBS archives—helping people find the archival materials they are looking for. If you have a CMBS archives question, you can email her at <carina.gallardo@mbchurches.ca>.

Looking back over my years at CMBS, I have found my work with authors especially satisfying. Editing their submissions for publication in the *Mennonite Historian*—the joint publishing project of CMBS and the Mennonite Heritage Archives—has been very rewarding. I have learned so much about Mennonite history from these gifted writers and researchers. Plus, the

Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies



"tinkering" and "puzzling" involved in making the photos and articles fit within the page constraints of the 12-page quarterly magazine is just a lot of fun!

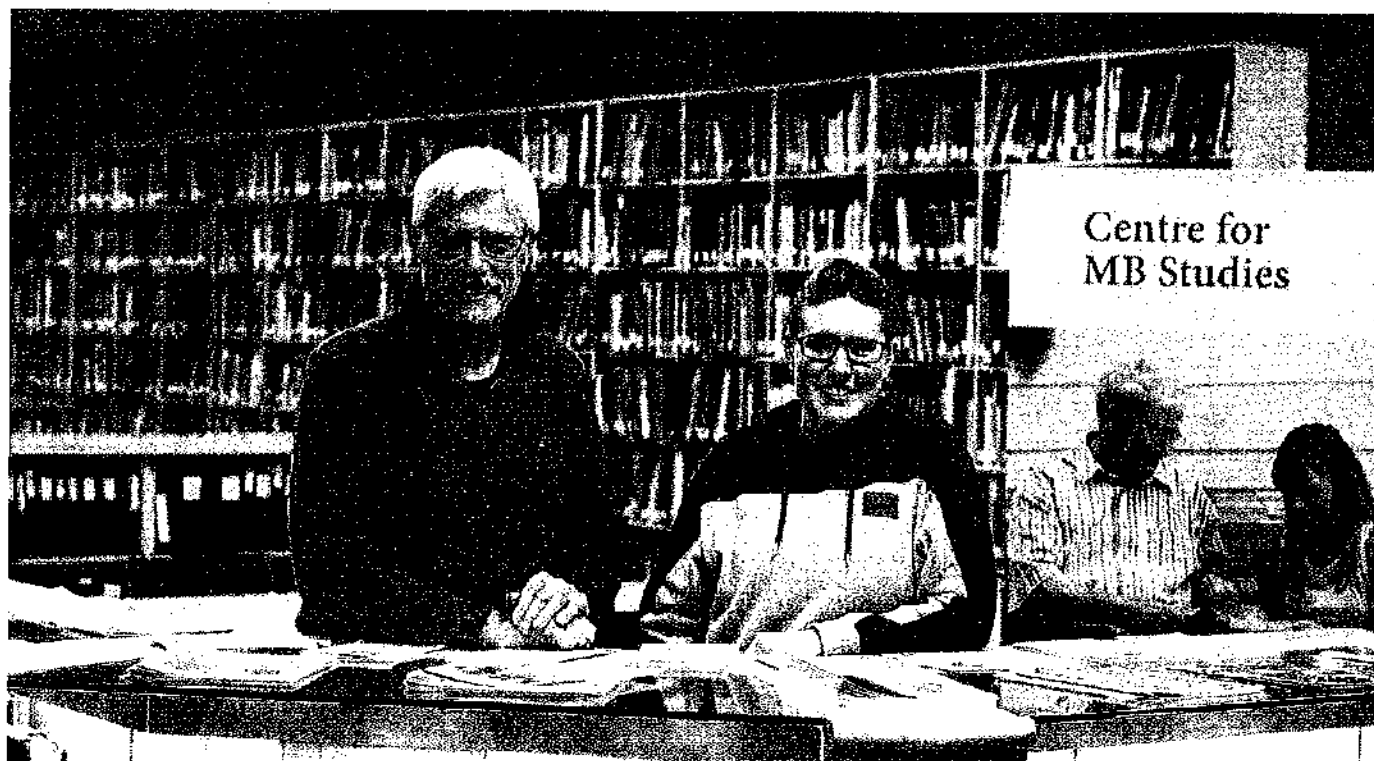
While the *Mennonite Historian* aspect of my CMBS role will not be picked up by Carina, the magazine will continue to be published by MHA. See the Conrad's report on opposite page.

I'll end my 2024 update with a brief accounting of this year's numbers:

- \$466 of used Mennonite history books sold—for the list of books currently for sale, see <https://cmbs.mennonitebrethren.ca/used-books/>;

- 1,476 images uploaded to the online photo database, Mennonite Archival Information Database or MAID—now 15,555 of CMBS's 32,575 photographs are viewable online, <https://archives.mhsc.ca/>;

- 11 Mennonite Brethren books uploaded to the Internet Archive—there are now 131 books viewable online, <https://archive.org/details/@jonisaak/>.



Jon Isaak (left) and Carina Gallardo, pictured in the reading room at the CMBS archives. Carina began her work as Records and Archives Technician in October. She will be managing the archival collection when Jon retires at the end of the year. Photo credit: Michelle Madunatu.

Annual report to MMHS April 2025

The Mennonite Heritage Archives (MHA) collects, preserves, and helps tell the Mennonite story. The MHA is owned by Mennonite Church Canada, Centre for Transnational Mennonite Studies (CTMS), and Canadian Mennonite University (CMU). The MHA is the official archive for the Evangelical Mennonite Conference, Mennonite Central Committee Canada, Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba, Mennonite Church Canada and the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference. The MHA also has material relevant to denominations such as Sommerfeld, Old Colony, Reinlaender, and other groups.

As 2024 marked the 150th anniversary of the establishment of Mennonite communities in Manitoba, MHA personnel aided in the production of a documentary, spoke at community events, guided tours, and created season 3 of the radio program "Still Speaking" on this theme. "Still Speaking" is now being translated into Low German! It is being aired on De Brigj, as part of the program Waut Passiert. De Brigj is operated by the Mennonite Community Services of Southern Ontario. Soon you can listen via our website at www.mharchives.ca/features/still-speaking/

The MHA benefits from a dedicated team of staff consisting of Conrad Stoesz and Graeme Unrau, project workers Sara Dyck and Isaiah Letkeman, and a group of 15 volunteers. In the past two years we have benefitted from several new volunteers, some in their 20s and 30s, contributing up to 15 hours a week.

The MHA continues to play an important role in the community, providing expertise and resources for a variety of projects. Over the past twelve months the Mennonite Heritage Archives had 680 in-person visitors, or an average of 57 people per month. We also continue to respond to over 100 requests a month for information that come via phone, email, and social media channels. On Facebook we have 6,022 followers and in the month of December 2024 we made 9 posts and had 99,104 views of this content. In December 2024, we had 7 posts, 3,200 views, and 778 followers on Instagram. We have had a number of university and high school classes visit the MHA including from CMU, University of Manitoba, and a consortium of Hutterite schools. MHA staff have also spoken at a number of events and provided tours of historic sites this year. We continue to cooperate with CMU's library in the development of the Mennonite Historical Library. Another estimated 500 books have been added to the library through the MHA this year.

At MHA we continue to work hard at collecting, describing, and making historical materials accessible. We have made good progress in the scanning of photos and additions of records in MAID, adding 5,150 images and 5,614 descriptions. This year we also digitized 245 audio cassettes.

We have also been very active in digitizing materials for our digital collections platform <https://collections.mharchives.ca/> which now has over 96,000 pages. The *Mennonite Reporter* is now fully accessible, and we are working on *Der Bote* and *Odessar Zeitung*. This material is accessible with a free account. This year we facilitated a software upgrade which also meant ferreting out bugs in the system.

In 2024 MHA produced season three of the 5-minute radio program "Still Speaking" <https://www.mharchives.ca/features/still-speaking/>. Through a partnership with Elmer Hildebrand and Golden West Radio we have embarked on a new radio program called "Tales from the Mennonite

Worth Remembering

The Mennonite Heritage Archives is a project of: Canadian Mennonite University,
Centre for Transnational Mennonite Studies, and Mennonite Church Canada

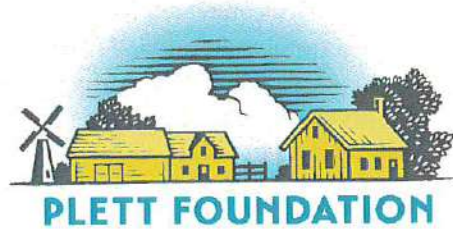
Heritage Archives.” With supplied funds we have contracted Dan Dyck as producer and host and Caley Dyck as researcher and writer. The program features stories and interviews highlighting the MHA. The 15-minute program is aired weekly at 9:15 on Sundays on CFAM 950/AM1250/CJRB 1220 and began on November 3 this year. You can find the program on our website <https://www.mharchives.ca/tales-from-the-archives/> or as a podcast on Spotify or Apple Podcasts.

We continue to post transcriptions and translations of materials on our website, visit Publications: <https://www.mharchives.ca/publications/mha-publications/> and Research: <https://www.mharchives.ca/resources/>.

This year we published volume 50 of the *Mennonite Historian* magazine, which began in 1975 and in 1986 became a joint publication with the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies. With the retirement of Jon Isaak at the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies at the end of 2024, in 2025 the paper will return to being solely produced by the Mennonite Heritage Archives.

Resources available in our digital platform as of January 8, 2025

<i>Der Bote</i>	1961-1970	4,256 pages	Ongoing
<i>Intotemak</i>	1972-2018	2,810	Complete
<i>Mennonite Reporter</i>	1971-1981	11,894	Complete
<i>Odessa Zeitung</i>	1863-1887	26,321	Ongoing
<i>Steinbach Post</i>	1913-1972	27,089	Complete
<i>Conference of Mennonites in Canada Yearbooks</i>	1928-1995	10,760	Complete
<i>Christian Week</i>	1987-2006	7,993	Complete
Bergen letter collection	1930-1977	2,501	Complete
<i>Canadian Mennonite Bible College Alumni Bulletin</i>	1961-1997	1,580	Complete
Anniversaries collection	1970-2000	345	Ongoing
<i>Unser Blatt</i>	1925-1928	885	Complete
Total pages		96,434	



D.F. Plett Historical Research Foundation
515 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, MB, Canada R3B 2E9

2025 Report to the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society

The D. F. Plett Historical Research Foundation, Inc., supports and promotes history research projects related to the cultural background, the migration and settlement, and descendant communities of the conservative Mennonites who came to Manitoba from imperial Russia in the 1870s. Its areas of activity in the past year include:

Grants and Fellowships: The foundation evaluates applications to its grants program twice a year. In last two grant intakes, it awarded over \$109,000 in support of projects including research, book publications, museum and gallery exhibits, a historical conference, and websites. It also awarded one graduate fellowship to an incoming student in the Joint Master's Program of the University of Winnipeg and the University of Manitoba.

Plett Library Access Network (PLAN): PLAN supports literacy and historical knowledge among Mennonite communities; since 2020 it has supported newly established libraries in El Temporal and Nuevo Durango, Mexico. In the past year PLAN committed to supporting two more libraries in Mexico, in Nuevo Progreso Colony and in El Bajio Colony.

Mennonite History for Young People (MHFYP): Translation into German of the four-volume *Mennonite History for Young People* educational series is being completed and a group in Mexico plans to print 1,500–2,000 copies of the first volume this summer. Schools operated by the Ontario Old Colony Mennonite recently ordered copies of the series for classroom use.

Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online (GAMEO): The foundation is a partner in GAMEO and since 2023 has employed an editorial assistant to work at updating and creating articles related to the foundation's mandate. In the last year, 20 new articles were created and approximately the same number were updated.

Centre for Transnational Mennonite Studies (CTMS): This research centre is a partnership between the Plett Foundation and the Chair in Mennonite Studies at the University of Winnipeg. In the last year it held the conference "Subjects, Settlers, Citizens: The 1870s Mennonites in Historical Context" (October 4–5), webinar events, and the annual CTMS lecture, presented by Dr. Karl Koop; it also started a series of CTMS Film Nights.

Mennonite Heritage Archives (MHA): MHA operates through a partnership between Canadian Mennonite University, the Centre for Transnational Mennonite Studies, and Mennonite Church Canada. In the last year, MHA's activities included processing new archival collections, large-scale digitization projects, and production of a weekly radio program.

Preservings: *Preservings* is the foundation's biannual publication. In connection with the sesquicentenary of Mennonite settlement in Manitoba, both issues of *Preservings* focused on aspects of the 1870s migration from imperial Russia to Manitoba. The Spring 2025 issue will be number 50; its theme is "Faith and Confessions."

Submitted by Aileen Friesen, Executive Director.
May 1, 2025

Engagement and Media Committee Report

Members: Conrad Stoesz, Graham Schellenberg, Ed. G. Krahn, Sean Goerzen

The Engagement and Media Committee of the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society (MMHS) works to promote awareness of Mennonite history while fostering engagement among members and the broader community.

In 2024 and 2025, its efforts have centred on commemorating the 150th anniversary of Mennonite settlement in Manitoba, integrating the work of the former *Heritage Posting*, Media, and Membership and Publicity committees. This period has seen a significant increase in public outreach through historical tours, community events, and committee partnerships.

Events

The MMHS hosted two well-attended [historical tours](#) of the former East Reserve and West Reserve in Manitoba. Led by archivist Conrad Stoesz and Ernest N. Braun, over 90 people visited sites including Fort Dufferin, the Mennonite Memorial Landing Site, Neubergthal, and the Niverville Cultural Centre. These tours offered insights into early settler experiences and the broader implications of migration and colonization. Additional tours are planned for 2025.

In partnership with the EastMenn Historical Committee, the MMHS supported The Objects We Hold Dear. Participants gathered at the Mennonite Heritage Village (MHV) to share cherished family heirlooms—documents, textiles, and tools—that embody the values and stories of Kanadier Mennonites in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A keynote lecture by Dr. Roland Sawatzky and tours of MHV's vault by assistant curator Garth Doerksen complemented the event.

Heritage Posting

The MMHS's biannual newsletter, [Heritage Posting](#), edited by Graham Schellenberg, continues to be distributed to members. Recent issues have highlighted the 150th anniversary, featuring research and updates from across the province. An upcoming issue will commemorate the 500th anniversary of Anabaptism in 2025, followed by a return to the 150th anniversary with a feature on the Fuerstenland Colony.

Publications

In collaboration with filmmaker Dale Hildebrand, the MMHS supported the production and promotion of [*Where the Cottonwoods Grow*](#), a documentary tracing the migration of Kanadier Mennonites from South Russia to Manitoba in the 1870s. The film portrays the trials faced by the settlers, their resilience in the face of natural challenges, and considers the complexities of colonization. A free screening is planned for the MMHS' annual general meeting in May 2025.

The MMHS facilitated the fifth reprint of the [*Historical Atlas of the East Reserve*](#) by historians Ernest N. Braun and Glen Klassen, encouraging donations to distribute copies to schools, libraries, and hospitals. The society also published historian Ralph Friesen's latest book, [*Prosperity Ever—Depression Never: Steinbach in the 1930s*](#), which documents Steinbach's transformation from a small village into a modern prairie town during the Great Depression. Copies are available through the Mennonite Heritage Archives, Mennonite Heritage Village, and McNally Robinson.

Several projects are ongoing, as the MMHS has partnered with historian Arnold Neufeldt-Fast, who is finalizing a book on the Fuerstenland Colony. Meanwhile, the WestMenn Historical Committee is developing a revised atlas of the West Reserve, which promises to be a significant addition to the MMHS' growing collection of historical resources.

Social Media, Website, and News Coverage

MMHS expanded its digital reach by launching an Instagram account to complement its Facebook presence, with a combined following of approximately 1,100 people. Since refreshing its website and implementing website analytics in July 2024, mmhs.org has recorded 9,100 unique users and 17,600 page views—44% of which are tied to interest in *Where the Cottonwoods Grow*.

Media coverage has broadened the MMHS' visibility through outlets such as *CBC Radio*, *The Carillon*, *The Niverville Citizen*, *PembinaValleyOnline*, and *SteinbachOnline*. Notable features include:

CBC Radio: [150 years of Mennonites in Manitoba](#)

SteinbachOnline: [Mennonite Historian Excited About Updated East Reserve Book](#)

The Carillon: [Steinbach Author Pens Story About Depression Era Mennonites](#)

The Carillon: [Walking Back 150 years Into Mennonite History](#)

The Niverville Citizen: [EastMenn Historical Society Explores Early Mennonite Culture](#)

EastMenn Historical Committee Annual Report 2024

Ernest N. Braun Secretary

In 2024 EastMenn Historical Committee began with the effective resignation of Harold Dyck as chair in favour of Glen Klassen, Jacob Peters as treasurer, in favour of Harold Dyck, and Orlando Hiebert in favour of new member Garth Doerksen of MHV. This year the Committee focussed primarily on two items, the Historical Atlas and the Peace Trail.

The Atlas

The last copy of the *Historical Atlas of the East Reserve* was sold in January, 2024. As a result, consensus was reached in May that we order a fifth printing by Friesens of Altona, with Glen coordinating minor corrections to update the content. On June 28, 342 copies arrived at a cost of \$12,085.39 (average cost \$35.34 per book = a loss of 34 cents per book if MHA sells them to retailers). Immediate demand saw the sale of 128 books for recovery of \$4480, a Plett Grant of \$4500, and Ed Krahn's donation of \$1,000 for his *Atlas in Schools* initiative, so that draw on our reserve was only \$2105.39. The remainder of the copies are at MHA. The *Atlas in Schools* is underway with Atlases to be personalized for each school and signed by the editors. A further development is the creation of a database identifying every name on the homesteader maps of the Atlas, and connecting the name to a GRANDMA number. This homesteader index will be placed on our website when complete. One township has been done to date.

The Peace Trail

Change of Plans

The second main emphasis was the work on the *Peace Trail*. At the beginning of 2024 the vision was to create a cycling trail of about 55 KMs from the Mennonite Landing Site to the Dirk Willms sculpture at the Mennonite Heritage Village in Steinbach, with about 10 waystations including the two end-points. The focus for 2024 was to be the development of the Shantz Cairn into a pocket park. To that end a Trails Manitoba Grant application was completed. The plan for the Shantz pocket park was abandoned when it became clear that such a development there would interfere with a neighbouring business, and be subject to damage by large trucks involved in that business. The TM grant was not successful.

The Hespeler Park Waystation

An alternative plan was developed for the south parking lot of Hespeler Park, where with the approval of the Town of Niverville a pergola was constructed with a Barkman block floor, four EastMenn panels mounted on the south side, and a Crow Wing panel to be mounted on the west side and a Town of Niverville panel on the east side. A small acknowledgements plaque will be mounted as well. Due to the fact that only 4 signs were needed for this project, there is still about \$3500 left in the Plett Grant. Ed Krahn has advised the Plett Foundation about the holdover and asked for an extension to 2025 when we will use the money for the Rosenthal Park plaques, where consultation will take place with Metis Nation before anything is planned. A suitable bench (value \$1,000) donated by Mennonite Private Schools in Winnipeg in recognition of guided tours provided by EastMenn in fall of 2024 will be installed in 2025 once a final design is chosen.

The Memorandum of Understanding - Liability Issues

Then, another factor impacted the vision for the Trail itself, as an MOU was negotiated with the RM of Hanover to serve as a template for the other jurisdictions involved. It became clear that liability insurance would need to be expanded by the Committee. It also became clear that not only would the Committee incur serious costs for that, but in the event of any accident every individual member of the Committee as well as MMHS, and the RM of Hanover would be sued for damages. This issue is also facing other Trails in the province.

Problems with the Route

A third factor affecting the vision for the Trail developed from issues with the physical Trail itself: 1. Fontaine field road is impassable much of the year; 2. The berm along Hwy 52 is very rough and maintenance would be onerous; 3. The berm is part of a long-term plan to twin Hwy 52, and may not be available at all in few years; 4. Even if the berm were passable, we would need a very expensive bridge to cross the canal at Tourond Creek Discovery Centre; 5. Blind Creek will have a commercially developed trail west of Langill Farms, but that still leaves a very expensive half a mile along the creek west to Keating road to be financed by the Committee; 6. Hwy 52 crossing and RR crossing on Crown Valley Rd will also be a problem.

As a result, the original vision for the Peace Trail changed substantially. The conclusion at the last Committee meeting in November 2024 was that for the foreseeable future, the Peace Trail will consist only of waystations, with each tourist responsible for finding their own way from one to the other on public roads, whether walking, cycling or driving.

Drive the Peace Trail Inauguration

The initiative will now be known as *Drive the Peace Trail*, to which end Glen designed and had a new brochure printed. Perhaps in 2025 a separate MOU needs to be concluded with each jurisdiction just for liability for the Waystations. The *Drive the Peace Trail* inauguration took place on June 1st, 2024 at the Mennonite Landing Site with dignitaries from all jurisdictions and historical reps invited to the event, where Glen Klassen served as speaker. On August 17, MHV conducted its annual Peace Trek fundraiser along the Trail.

Panels Funded by Southeast Rotary

As a consequence of the change in vision, the emphasis of the Peace Trail is now on waystations, and beyond that on Points of Interest plaques, to which end Glen Klassen has designed four new plaques high-lighting interesting environmental, historical and infrastructure features at the waystations. These will be funded by a Southeast Rotary Club grant, provided we also install a Peace Pole at one site.

The Peace Trail Website

The Peace Trail has a website designed by Brent Manke with access via a computer or QR codes at waystations: peacetrail.com. Material has been forwarded to be uploaded on waystations. Points of Interest will also be added to the website.

The Carillon Image Archive

Carillon Image Archive digitization stalled on ownership uncertainty for most of the year but in the end, agreement was reached which will enable a small pilot project to be planned for 2025 in cooperation with the Free Press and Mennonite Heritage Archive.

QR codes at the Dirk Willems Site at MHV

MHV will initiate a formal meeting with EastMenn/Peace Trail for the specific purpose of formulating a plan to implement QR code capability to the Dirk Willms site.

Annual Lecture

Annual lecture was postponed from October to 2025, and will be held at MHV on January 25, 2025 with Dr. Roland Sawatzky of Manitoba Museum as speaker in the evening. During the day the public will be invited to display family artifacts in the main auditorium. Special recognition will be given to Orlando Hiebert as retiring founding member of EastMenn Historical Committee in 2006.

East Reserve Tour Guides

Fourth – EastMenn was asked to provide guides for several tours of the East Reserve since this was the 150th anniversary of the arrival of Mennonites in Manitoba.

New Members Needed for EastMenn

A final matter concerns the future of EastMenn as both Glen Klassen (chair) and Ernest Braun (secretary) gave notice that they will relinquish their roles in EastMenn at next AGM on February 22, 2025 at 9:30 am at MHV. In view of that, recruitment of new members was encouraged for all committee members, with new member Sidney Reimer already welcomed to the committee, and other potential members suggested.

The Current EastMenn Committee and Peace Trail Subgroup

EastMenn Committee as a whole met twice, the EastMenn/Peace Trail executive met formally six times and several times informally. As of December 31, 2024, the Committee consists of Glen Klassen (chair), Harold Dyck (treasurer), Ernest Braun (secretary), with members-at-large Ed G. Krahn, Ben D. Funk, Garth Doerksen, Sidney Reimer, and with additional Peace Trail subgroup members Lorne Peters, John Peters, Brent Manke, Darron Rempel, Ken Giesbrecht and various volunteers.

WestMenn Historical Committee Report

The WestMenn Historical Committee has had another exciting year, receiving a lot of funding and support, which we have put toward our committee's many projects.

Supported by the D. F. Plett Historical Research Foundation, the WestMenn committee installed new and updated interpretive signage along the Post Road Trail. The committee also unveiled a commemorative sign for the former Blumenhof school, which is now located at the Mennonite Heritage Village in Steinbach. This project was made possible with funding from the Altona Community Foundation.

We continue our work on the Historical Atlas of the West Reserve, which has also received considerable support from the Plett Foundation. In the coming year, we hope to put more time and energy into this project, which will serve as a companion to the Historical Atlas of the East Reserve that the EastMenn committee published in 2015.

WestMenn seeks to forge partnerships with interested people and groups, and to facilitate connections between them when possible. For more information about the committee, its projects, and to contact, please check out the WestMenn page on the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society website: <https://mmhs.org/about/committees/>

Andrew Klassen Brown
Chair of the WestMenn Historical Committee

MMHS President's report.

Honouring the Past, Shaping the Future

Publicly marking significant dates offers organizations a powerful opportunity to raise awareness of their mission and programs. It creates a platform to share why their work matters—and why the public should care. These commemorations help build a shared sense of identity, uniting people around common experiences, histories, and values. Even for those who did not live through the events being remembered, these moments offer a chance to reflect, connect, and integrate those stories into their own lives. It can create space for conversations - inviting multiple perspectives, fostering empathy, and opening paths for dialogue and growth.

Commemorating historical events, people, or ideals does not require full agreement with all their values. Rather, these moments invite thoughtful reflection—encouraging us to learn from the past and build a better future grounded in understanding. Commemoration matters because memory matters. It is how we learn, connect, heal and grow as individuals and communities.

The years 2024 and 2025 mark a major milestone for Mennonite communities in Manitoba: 150 years of community building in the province. Our member organizations—**Mennonite Heritage Village, the Plett Foundation, the Chair in Mennonite Studies, the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, and the Mennonite Heritage Archives**—have launched a series of meaningful projects to commemorate this occasion. From history conferences and radio programs to museum displays and funding community initiatives, each one contributes to a richer understanding of our shared journey. Read more in their reports!

At MMHS, we've also embraced this moment elevating awareness and appreciation of this anniversary

- Through special features in our magazine, *Heritage Posting*,
- Collaboration with filmmaker Dale Hildebrandt on the documentary *Where the Cottonwoods Grow*,
- Printing Ralph Friesen bring his book *Prosperity Ever – Depression Never, Steinbach in the 1930s*,
- Hosting two bus tours through the historic East and West Mennonite Reserves.

This work is made possible by our volunteers—people who give generously of their time, talents, and often their own resources. Their dedication is the heartbeat of MMHS. But we can't do it alone. Your support is essential.

Become a member. Donate. Join a committee.

Each act of support helps preserve and share the vibrant legacy of Mennonite history in Manitoba—for generations to come.

Thank you to the MMHS Board of directors for their work this part year. Andrea Klassen, Andrew Klassen Brown, Ed Krahn, Garth Doerksen, Sean Goerzen, Graham Schellenberg.

Conrad Stoesz, President

April 24, 2025.

MANITOBA MENNONITE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Balance Sheet

December 31, 2024

Assets

Current assets:

Cash	\$	7,565
EastMenn Investment account		19,116
General Investment account		8,439
Book sales receivable		5,173

	\$	40,293
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Liabilities and Equity

Current liabilities:

Accounts payable	\$	500
Unearned membership dues		1,620
Fürstenland Book funds		3,248
		5,368

Equity		34,925
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	\$	40,293
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MANITOBA MENNONITE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Statement of Earnings and Equity

Year ended December 31, 2024

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General Revenue:		
Donations	\$	823
Memberships		442
Interest		1,322
Total General Revenue		2,587
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General Expenses:		
Heritage posting		1,643
AGM costs		296
Miscellaneous		22
Fees and donation		1,357
Total General Expenses		3,318
Net loss		(731)
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Bus Tours Income		11,250
Bus Tours costs		(3,895)
Remainder for future tours		7,355
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EastMenn Historical Committee:		
Community events		(126)
Chortitz Church donation		(500)
East Reserve Atlas sales		3,250
East Reserve Atlas Reprint		(6,585)
Peace Trail costs		(4,980)
Peace Trail grants & donations		13,500
Net		4,559
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WestMenn Historical Committee		
Projects		(3,705)
Grant income		4,000
Net		295
<hr/>		
Genealogy:		
Book sales		179
Expenses		(300)
Net loss		(121)
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150 Film:		
Revenue		52,424
Costs		52,389
Net profit		35

Steinbach Book

Revenue		1,834
Costs		(7,440)
Net		(5,606)
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Net income for the year		5,786
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Equity, beginning of year		29,139
Equity, end of year	\$	34,925

	General	Memberships & Publishing	Roadside	Bus Tours	150 Film	Webbath HC	Genealogy	Eastman HC	Peace Trail	Steinbach Book	Fürstentum Book	Total
Closing Balance, December 31, 2023	179	-1,285	5,535			15,218	569	6,633	0	0	0	20,159
Transfer balance to General	4,270	1,265	-6029									0
Reconcilable balance to 2024 balance sheet												0
Opening balance, January 1, 2024	4,446	0		0	0	15,218	569	9,439	0	0	0	20,159
Income												
Donations	923											
Membership dues (Note 2)		442			52,424							53,247
Interest	1,322											462
Other income				11,250		4,000			13,500			1,322
Book sales							178	3,250		1,834		28,750
												5,263
Total Income	2,145	442		11,250	52,424	4,000	178	3,250	13,500	1,834		89,024
Expenses												
Dues & Subscriptions	1,357											1,357
AGM costs	298											298
Donation								500				500
Other printing and shipping		1,643						5,585		2,440		10,668
Social Projects				3,602	52,359	3,705	300		4,950			65,258
Event								129				129
Office, Storage & Misc.	22											22
Total Expenses	1,675	1,643	0	3,602	52,359	3,705	300	7,211	4,950	7,440	0	81,218
Surplus <Deficit>	470	-1,201		7,358	35	236	-121	-3,961	8,550	-4,606	0	8,756
Ending balance - 2024 December 31	4,916	-1,201	0	7,358	35	15,513	445	4,976	9,520	-9,606	0	24,965