



Mennonite Historical Society
of British Columbia

2008
Annual Report

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Mennonite Historical Society of B.C.

Annual General Meeting

June 4, 2009 – Abbotsford, B.C.

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Report on “Friends of the Ukraine” by Ben Stobbe
3. Minutes of 2007 AGM – May 16, 2008
4. Financial Reports

- a. Financial Statements - 2008

“**Moved** by Ben Braun, **Seconded** by Edward Hildebrand that the financial transactions of the Society detailed in the Financial Statements contained in the Annual Report be accepted and approved.”

- b. Budget – 2009

“**Moved** by Ben Braun, **Seconded** by David Giesbrecht, that the Budget for 2009 as detailed in the Annual Report be approved.”

5. Election of Directors

“**Moved** by Helen Rose Pauls, **Seconded** by Peter Neudorf that the persons listed below be elected as Directors for the year terms ending on the date of the AGM in the year indicated.

John B Toews	2012
Robert Martens	2012
Connie Braun	2011

6. Questions and discussion by members.

7. Adjournment

Mennonite Historical Society of B.C.

Minutes of Annual General meeting – 2007

Date: May 16, 2008

Time: 3:00 PM

Place: Garden Park Tower, Abbotsford, B.C.

1.0 The meeting was opened by John Konrad, who welcomed the guests to the meeting.

2.0 The Minutes of the 2006 AGM held on May 6, 2007 and contained in the Annual Report were read.

Upon motion by John B. Toews, **Seconded** by Louise Price, these Minutes were accepted and approved

3.0 Financial Report

3.1 Financial Statements - 2007

Upon motion by Ben Braun, **Seconded** by Edward Hildebrand the financial transaction of the Society as detailed in the Financial Statements contained on the Annual Report were accepted and approved.

3.2 Budget - 2008

Upon motion by Ben Brown, **Seconded** by David Giesbrecht, the Budget for 2008 as detailed in the Annual Report was accepted and approved.

4.0 Election of Directors

Upon motion by Edward Hildebrand, **Seconded** by Ben Stobbe the persons listed below were elected as Directors for three terms years ending on the date of the AGM in the year indicated.

John Konrad	2011
Peter Neudorf	2011
Louise Price	2011
Lora Sawatsky	2011

5.0 Report on “Friends of the Ukraine”

Ben Stobbe gave a visual report, with appropriate accompanying music, on the work done by himself and others at the Mennonite Center in the Ukraine. This center is housed at the “Maedchen Schule” in the former village of Halbstadt, in the Molotschna Colony, Ukraine. It has become both a cultural and an educational resource for the present inhabitants of these lands formerly occupied by Mennonites and has become a “Living Monument” to our forbears who for more than a century nurtured this land and prospered here as a witness to God.

6.0 Questions and discussion by members

6.0 Ms. H. Dahl made several suggestions regarding sources of funds and projects for the Society. The Chair replied that these would be taken under advisement by the Board and acted on as the Board deemed appropriate and advisable.

6.1 Mr. E Wieler asked if more information was available on the makeup of the Endowment Fund. The Secretary assured Mr. Wieler that such information was available and regularly reported to the Board. The reason this was not shown on the annual report was that since the investments were constantly being reviewed and up-dated, a list for the year-end could be out of date by the time the Annual Report was printed. Any interested member was most welcome to view the most current information at the Archives office at any time during working hours. If he thought it would be useful we could include the year-end numbers in future, with the understanding of the limited value of such information.

7.0 Adjournment

Minutes by Edward Hildebrand, Secretary

Board of Directors

- Ben Braun - Retired Computer Programmer – Abbotsford
- Connie Braun - Author - Vancouver
- David Giesbrecht - Director of the Archives - Abbotsford
- Edward Hildebrand - Retired Executive - Vancouver
- John Konrad - Management Consultant - West Vancouver
- Peter Neudorf - Retired IBM Technician - North Vancouver
- Robert Martens - Poet, Writer & Editor - Abbotsford
- Helen Rose Pauls - Retired Teacher - Chilliwack
- Louise Price - Library Technician & Writer - Abbotsford
- Lora Sawatsky - Retired Teacher - Chilliwack
- Ben Stobbe - Retired Public Service Manager - Victoria
- Richard Thiessen - Librarian Columbia Bible College - Abbotsford
- Dr. John B. Toews - Professor Emeritus Regent College - Abbotsford

Officers

- President - John Konrad
- Vice-President - Peter Neudorf
- Secretary - Edward Hildebrand
- Treasurer - Ben Braun

President's Report

On behalf of the board of directors, I am pleased to report that 2008 has been another successful year in the life of our Society. We have sponsored several well-attended public events and our annual genealogy workshop, and have continued to add interesting content to our newsletter. To acknowledge our accountability to you our members, this report, including our financial statements, is accessible on line.

We are pleased to note that this year again public participation has increased both in terms of attendance at our public events and the number of people visiting our centre. We continue to enjoyed strong volunteer support which has allowed us to collect, process and preserve a growing volume of historical information which would eventually be lost. Thanks to the generosity and loyalty of our constituency, we have again received the necessary financial support to maintain our programs.

John Konrad

Major Events

Special events serve to connect and educate the Mennonite community, and they provide an avenue for fund raising for the archives. With many others, we explore stories from the past, celebrate our rich heritage, and enjoy being together as an extended Mennonite family. We held five special events this year:

Feb. 23 2008...Documentary and book launch: "Through the Red Gate" and "Remember Us" Letters from Stalin's Gulag (1930-37) Volume One: *The Regehr Family* with Dr. Ruth Derksen Siemens at Bakerview MB Church.

With two encore presentations:

Apr. 20, 2008 at South Abbotsford MB Church & **Apr. 27, 2008** at Peace Mennonite Church in Richmond. We had full houses at all three venues.

May 10, 2008 "Celebrating the Contributions of *Der Bote* and *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*" with Helen Franz and Dr. David Ewert.

Oct. 18 & 19, 2008... "Sixty years of Peace and Plenty: Mennonite Refugees Remember" Visiting, displays; "Great Trek" film, annual fundraising banquet with Dr. Harry Loewen and celebration service, all at Emmanuel Mennonite Church. This proved to be a significant event for those who came to Canada after the war.

For **2009**, we have planned:

March 13, 2009 "Mennonite Entrepreneurs Tell their Stories" with John Redekop, Arthur Block and the film: PETE: Moving Man Made Mountains".

June 14, 2009 "Blessed Assurance—a summer evening of Gospel Music" at King Road MB Church with Evan Kreider, a double trio "Heritage Singers" and "A Few Good Men" quartet

Oct. 17, 2009 Annual Fundraising Banquet with Dr. Jacob Warkentin. Theme: Paraguay, at Ebenezer Mennonite Church.

Events Committee: Ben Stobbe, Richard Thiessen, David Giesbrecht, John B. Toews,
Helen Rose Pauls (Chair)

The Archives

Personnel

Our Center is indebted to the volunteers who serve here. It is very gratifying to see the consistent dedication of more than 30 individuals who give part of each week to assist in the numerous tasks that want attention in our Center. We especially appreciate the work of Mary Ann Quiring, our hard working permanent staff member.

Visitors:

The location of our office in the Garden Park Tower in Abbotsford offers convenient access, encouraging a steady flow of visitors. This year some 1,400 signed our guest book.

People come to our Center for a variety of reasons. Genealogical research and the writing of family histories continues to excite much interest. Other visitors come to pursue research or borrow books from our lending library.

Genealogy Workshop:

Public interest is growing in the annual genealogy workshop hosted by MHSBC. I wish to acknowledge the contribution of Dr. Tim Janzen of Oregon as well as that of Henry Schapansky and Richard Thiessen for impressive expertise being developed with respect to genealogical research. We also support DNA research and welcome anyone contributing DNA samples, as means of searching for their own family roots.

Sales:

Our Center is pleased to market a core selection of Mennonite books and CDs. Several titles continue to be good sellers. Owing to interest spawned by the Dnieper River historical cruises, sales of the Mennonite Historical Atlas and Rudy Friesen's Building on the Past continue briskly.

This year the recently published Yarrow books have also been popular items, so much so that the entire printing has been sold out.

Projects:

A very generous supply of volunteers has made it possible to continue with several significant projects, including digitization of the *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, *The Canadian Mennonite* indexing of *EWZ* (Einwanderungszentralstelle Documents), indexing of obituaries as published in the *MB Herald* and *Der Bote*, and our continued work on the Inmagic Program.

Mennonite Historical Society of Canada and GAMEO Meetings:

The networking of MHSBC with other Mennonite historical societies across the country symbolizes a common vision in the task we have undertaken in preserving a Mennonite memory. John Konrad and Richard Thiessen represented MHSBC at the January 2008 annual meetings of the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada and the Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online, in Winnipeg.

David Giesbrecht

Website

The MHSBC website provides information about the Society and some of the resources available at the Archives. Some of the material listed is available for purchase, some for lending and some for reference on site at the Archives.

The largest volume of material available on the website itself consists of Genealogical Resources. There are Census Lists, Migration Lists, Obituary Indexes and Cemetery Lists. To use the Obituary and Death Notice Indexes, you find the name you are researching and tell an MHSBC volunteer which periodical, issue and page number it is and they will provide you with a photocopy of that notice.

Ben Braun

Special Projects

InMagic Program

Numerous volunteers, under the capable and knowledgeable direction of Erica Suderman, have been working hard at arranging and describing archival textual files for the past number of years. In addition, David Giesbrecht, Erica Suderman and Robert Martens are continually appraising and accessioning documents.

Once accessioned, the documents are arranged into series such as constitutions, minutes, correspondence, financial records, reports and additional categories as needed. This process of arranging and describing will make it possible to access the information once it has been entered into our InMagic software. The process of entering the information into the data base is well underway. We had originally set a goal of five years to complete this task and we are well on our way towards completion. To date, we have completed our institutional records such as church, schools and provincial conference files. In our societal records we have completed the executive files and the remainder of the MCC files is in process. We have mostly completed the Historical Society files. Many of the manuscript or people files have been sorted, organized, described and entered into the InMagic software. At this time we have begun the process of sorting, organizing and describing photographs and maps. Eventually we will enter our photographs and maps into the data base as well

We sincerely regret that our leader of the InMagic project, Erica Suderman, is currently seriously ill. However, her team of workers is committed to carry on in her absence and see this project through to completion.

Lora Sawatsky with Bob Martens

Friends of the Mennonite Center in Ukraine

During the past several years the Mennonite Historical Society of BC and Friends of the Mennonite Centre in Ukraine (FOMCU) have embraced a supportive working relationship. Many members of the Historical Society trace their family roots to Southern Ukraine and have a keen interest in the work of the Mennonite Centre in Molochansk (formerly Halbstadt). During the past year, Historical Society Board Member Ben Stobbe continued to serve as a North American Director at the Mennonite Centre; many of Ben and Linda's blog reports were published in "Roots and Branches".

Local village museums continue to sprout in the Molotschna area. Two schools, Dolina, (formerly Schoenau), and Udarnik (formerly Neukirch), have developed Mennonite museums and incorporate Mennonite/Ukrainian history in their curriculum. The school in Udarnik also has completed a memorial to Mennonites who suffered in the years of repression. A private museum is being built in a restored Mennonite home in Bogdanovka (formerly Gnadenfeld). Museums in Tokmak, Melitopol and Zaporozhye continue to display Mennonite artifacts. The Mennonite Centre in Molochansk also has a room showing Mennonite artifacts. Tombstones, threshing stones and property markers can also be found at the Mennonite Centre.

It is hoped that this supportive working relationship will continue to flourish for years to come.

Ben Stobbe

Peter Bergen Project

In 1930 Franz Bergen and his family escaped Russia in one of the last trains to leave Moscow. They eventually reached Carlyle, Saskatchewan and a life of peace, if not plenty. Bergen then set about contacting friends and relatives who had stayed behind, and surprisingly, received replies, even though correspondence was illegal and punishable by prison sentence or worse.

Almost by a miracle these letters, some written on tiny scraps of paper, survived for more than sixty years and were about to be discarded when Peter Bergen, a younger son of Franz Bergen, recognized the historical value of this material and together with his wife Anne, set about translating and editing these letters.

Ruth Derksen Siemens wrote a book called "Remember Us" and together with her associates at "Out to See Productions" produced an introductory video called "Through the Red Gate," based on this body of correspondence. She was able to combine this documentary with a personal commentary by Peter Bergen.

These events were sponsored by your Society at Bakerview MB Church in Abbotsford. The event was so popular that two follow-ups were scheduled for South Abbotsford MB Church and Peace Mennonite Church in Richmond. Both of these events drew another 300 attendees.

These events were not intended to be huge fund raisers for the Society since most of the revenue from book sales and special donations for the film went direct to the producers. However, they did substantially enhance our Book and DVD sales and did engender more than enough revenue to cover all costs.

The Mennonite Historical Society of B.C. has been pleased and honored to support Dr. Ruth Derksen Siemens in this most worthwhile work.

E. Hildebrand

Newsletter

Putting together our newsletter, Roots and Branches, is time-consuming work, yet it is also extremely rewarding. Thank you to our readers for the many kind words of encouragement. We appreciate this very much.

Thank you to contributing editors Helen Rose Pauls and Robert Martens, without whose work this newsletter would not be possible; to numerous other writers; and to the staff and volunteers at the archives office who stuff envelopes, sort, stamp and mail.

Our policy is to try to provide a broad range of articles ranging from the scholarly to the "folksy," so that everyone will find something of interest. We welcome receiving any of the following: letters and photos from the past; stories; book reviews; memoirs; biographies; articles of historical interest.

Please direct any letters, comments or questions to the Newsletter committee c/o the Mennonite Historical Society of BC, or email archives@mhsbc.com.

Louise Bergen Price, Editor

Financial Support

This past year our true and faithful members have again supported our work most generously, and we thank them. We believe our work honors God, as well as our ancestors who served His community most faithfully. Therefore your gifts will be doubly rewarded.

Although most of the work for the Society and at the Archives is done by our loyal crew of volunteers, there are inevitable cash costs that must be paid. Our annual cost for premises, supplies, part time staff, and other operating costs are approximately \$50,000. Our investment income from our Endowment Fund provided its normal \$12,000. Book and DVD sales have more than doubled last year, providing us a corresponding net revenue. Your donations and support were at record levels. (The Endowment Fund has declined in value due to market conditions. However it still yields in excess of \$12,000, the amount taken into current income.)

Again, we must depend for the bulk of our funds on you, our loyal members and friends. This year you have responded most generously at the banquet and the multiple showings of "Remember Us" and the "60 Years of Peace & Plenty Celebration" This has resulted in donations that were 30% over budget. We do appreciate the support we have received in the past from all our members and friends and hope this will continue in future.

Edward Hildebrand

Financial



Statements

2008



Treasurer's comments

Financial Statements for 2008 (with comparative statements for 2007) and a Budget for 2009 are included in this Annual Report for your consideration.

1. Income from operations was \$27,365.00 for the year. This was reduced by \$30,000.00 to reflect the adjustment to the portfolio market value as at December 31, 2008. This caused a small year-end deficit of \$2,635.00.
2. Long term Endowment is shown at cost (\$194,773). Original cost was \$224,773.
3. Our thanks to Henry Martens for performing the Society's financial review for the 2008 year.

Ben Braun

Financial Review

To the Directors
MHS of BC
Abbotsford, B.C.

I have reviewed the balance sheet of the Mennonite Historical Society of British Columbia as at December 31, 2008 and the Statement of Receipts and Expenditures for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the management and Directors of the Society.

I conducted a review to determine if the financial statements are free of material misstatement. I reviewed, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The financial statements have been prepared on a cash basis.

The financial statements present fairly the financial position of the Mennonite Historical Society of British Columbia as at December 31, 2008 and the results of operations for the year ended, in accordance with principles of cash accounting.

Original signed by

Henry Martens

Abbotsford, B.C.
February 3, 2009

Mennonite Historical Society of B.C.

Balance Sheet

As at December 31, 2008
(With comparative for 2007)

	Year 2008	Year 2007
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
CASH -PETTY	\$200.00	\$200.00
CHECKING ACCT.-ENVISION	43,109.95	47,270.53
US - ENVISION	1,678.47	480.39
STEWARDSHIP ACCT-MB CONFERENCE	25,934.02	0
INVESTMENTS		
ENDOWMENT - CLOSED	174,873.75	174,873.75
ENDOWMENT - OPEN	19,900.00	49,900.00
SUBTOTAL INVESTMENTS	194,773.75	224,773.75
SUBTOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	<u>265,696.19</u>	<u>272,724.67</u>
FIXED ASSETS		
SHARES	788.17	760.05
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$266,484.36</u>	<u>\$273,484.72</u>
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
BARGEN PROJECT	0	\$5,686.50
UKRAINE MEMORIAL	1,320.86	0
SUBTOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	<u>\$1320.86</u>	<u>\$5,686.50</u>
LONG TERM LIABILITIES		
MEMBER EQUITY - ENDOWMENT	224,773.75	224,773.75
MEMBER EQUITY - GENERAL	<u>40,389.75</u>	<u>43,024.47</u>
SUBTOTAL LONG TERM LIABILITIES	<u>265,163.50</u>	<u>267,798.22</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>266,484.36</u>	<u>273,484.72</u>
TOTAL FUND BALANCE	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE	<u>\$266,484.36</u>	<u>\$273,484.72</u>

Mennonite Historical Society of B. C.

Receipts & Expenditures

As at December 31, 2008

	Year 2008 Budget	Year 2008 Actual	Year 2009 Budget
INCOME			
CONTRIBUTIONS - DONATIONS			
GENERAL FUND	\$47,000	\$67,804.27	\$52,250
BARGEN PROJECT	0	2,330.00	0
UKRAINE MEMORIAL PROJECT	0	2,200.00	0
MEMORIAL WALL	<u>2,000</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>2,000</u>
SUBTOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS/DONATIONS	<u>49,000</u>	<u>72,334.27</u>	<u>54,250</u>
INVESTMENT INCOME			
ACCOUNT INTEREST	100	997.34	100
CREDIT CARD REBATE	0	192.14	0
INVESTMENT INTEREST	<u>12,000</u>	<u>12,000.00</u>	<u>12,000</u>
SUBTOTAL INVESTMENT INCOME	<u>12,100</u>	<u>13,189.48</u>	<u>12,100</u>
OTHER INCOME			
BOOK SALES, etc.	10,000	21,398.60	10,000
DVD/CD/TAPE SALES	4,000	9,435.00	4,000
INSTITUTIONAL INCOME	1,000	0	1,000
MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	1,000	457.96	1,000
PHOTOCOPY - INCOME	300	339.55	300
POSTAGE RECOVERY - INCOME	200	123.75	200
GST RECOVERY	1,200	1,524.16	1,200
TICKET SALES	8,000	6,905.00	8,000
SUBTOTAL OTHER INCOME	<u>25,700</u>	<u>40,184.02</u>	<u>25,700</u>
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$86,800</u>	<u>\$125,707.77</u>	<u>\$92,050</u>

Mennonite Historical Society of B.C.

Receipts & Expenditures

As at December 31, 2008

	Year 2008 Budget	Year 2008 Actual	Year 2009 Budget
EXPENSES			
GENERAL EXPENSES			
CREDIT CARD FEES	\$1,000	\$1,422.45	\$1,000
ARCHIVAL SUPPLIES	1,000	0	1,000
BANK CHARGE	100	57.60	100
BOOKS PURCHASES	8,000	17,474.73	8,000
DVD/CD/TAPE PURCHASES	2,000	5,033.74	2,000
COMPUTER/INTERNET	3,000	2,159.65	8,000
CONTRACT / WAGES	19,000	19,529.77	21,000
FIXTURES	300	624.18	300
CURRENCY EXCHANGE EX.	100	0.00	100
INSURANCE	2,000	1,895.00	2,000
ARCHIVES/LIBRARY EXPENSE	500	780.68	500
INMAGIC PROJECT/SUPPLIES	1,000	946.71	1,000
INMAGIC MAINTENANCE	300	336.00	300
INMAGIC TRAINING	300	0	300
LEGAL	250	231.85	250
PHOTOCOPY EXPENSE	1,000	519.12	1,000
LECTURES & EVENTS	1,000	2,850.96	1,000
OFFICE EXPENSE	2,000	2,963.56	2,000
UTILITIES	4,000	1,475.67	3,000
MEMBERSHIP DUES	850	850.00	850
MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSE	1,000	670.67	1,000
NEWSLETTER	4,000	5,399.95	4,000
TELEPHONES	1,500	1,304.85	1,500
POSTAGE	700	904.86	700
PUBLICITY	500	56.00	500
RENT	14,000	13,503.16	16,000
WAGES - HRDC	3,000	0	0
TAXES	2,200	2,049.06	2,200
TRAVEL	350	415.00	350
FUNDRAISING			
BANQUET COSTS	<u>10,000</u>	<u>10,357.27</u>	<u>10,000</u>
	<u>83,250</u>	<u>93,812.49</u>	<u>89,950</u>
PROJECTS			
MEMORIAL WALL	100	0	100
BARGEN PROJECT	1	2,330.00	0
UKRAINE MEMORIAL	0	2,200.00	0
POTENTIAL PROJECT	<u>2,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2,000</u>
SUBTOTAL PROJECTS	<u>2,100</u>	<u>4,530.00</u>	<u>2,100</u>
TOTAL RECEIPTS/ EXPENDITURES	<u>\$87,051</u>	<u>\$98,342.49</u>	<u>\$92,050</u>
SURPLUS FROM OPERATIONS	<u>-\$251</u>	<u>\$27,365.28</u>	<u>0</u>
DEPRECIATION OF INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO		<u>-30,000.00</u>	
EXCESS/EXPENSES/INCOME		<u>-\$2,634.72</u>	