



**Mennonite Historical
Society of BC**

2023 Annual Report

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Mennonite Historical Society of BC
Agenda of the 2023 Annual General Meeting
Wednesday, 12 April 2024, 1:30 pm
Ricky's Country Restaurant
32080 Marshall Road, Abbotsford, BC

1. Welcome: Richard Thiessen, President
2. Motion to waive the notice of motion requirement, which is 14 calendar days.
3. Approval of agenda
4. Motion to waive the notice of motion requirement of fourteen calendar days.
5. Minutes of 2022 AGM – 5 April 2023
6. Financial Reports: Marvin Rempel, Treasurer
 - (a) Financial Statements - 2023
 - (b) Budget - 2024
7. Election of Directors

Current terms:

Ending in 2024: Helen Esau Ho, Linda Klassen, Robert Martens, and Elma Pauls

Ending in 2025: Maryann Jantzen and Richard Thiessen

Ending in 2026: Waltrude Gortzen, Cheryl Isaac, and Marvin Rempel

Helen Esau Ho and Elma Pauls are concluding their time on the Board, and we thank them for their service to the Society. We are glad to know that they will continue being involved with the Society.

The board is nominating Linda Klassen and Robert Martens for three-year terms, ending in 2027.

8. Presentation of Committee Reports
9. Questions / Further Business
10. Adjournment

Mennonite Historical Society of BC

2022 AGM Minutes

Wednesday, 5 April 2023, 13:30

Ricky's Country Restaurant

32080 Marshall Road, Abbotsford, BC

Present: Menno Bergen, Laura Unger, Elma Pauls, Helen Nickel, Marie Doerksen, Robert Martens, Evangeline Wiebe, Sandi Massie, Ernest Born, Leona Schmidt, Richard Thiessen, Jennifer Martens, Sally Dueck, Henry Wiens, Bill Glasgow, Maryann T. Jantzen, Helen Ho, Linda Klassen, Marvin Rempel, Cheryl Isaac, Waltrude Gortzen, Joan Enns.

1) Welcome & Approval of Agenda – Richard

First time attenders: Evangeline Wiebe, Ernest Born, Bill Glasgow

Acceptance of agenda as presented: Moved by Cheryl, Second: Robert. **CARRIED.**

2) Approval of Minutes of 2021 AGM – 3 Mar 2022 via zoom.

Moved by Ernest, Second: Elma. **CARRIED.**

3) Financial Reports:

a. Financial Statements 2022

Endowments have seen a loss r/t the market. At this time it is only a 'paper' loss.

Operational shows small losses the past 5 years. Deficit of \$6000.

Moved by Marvin, Second: Elma. **CARRIED.**

b. Budget 2023

Small surplus forecasted for 2023. Withdrawal on \$6000 from general endowment fund quarterly.

Moved by Marvin, Second: Helen.

Discussion: there are 2 endowment funds i) general ii) Mennonites in BC which will be used (funds withdrawn) by the project as needed.

The general endowment fund was generated by 3 significant contributors over the years.

Drop in staff salary on the budget is related to Maryann Quiring not currently working FT.

CARRIED.

4) Election of Directors

The constitution & bylaws allow up to 12 directors. Staggered terms are preferred.

Here are the current board member terms:

Ending in 2023: Elmer Wiens and Cheryl Isaac

Ending in 2024: Helen Esau Ho, Linda Klassen, Robert Martens, and Elma Pauls

Ending in 2025: Maryann Jantzen and Richard Thiessen

Thank you to Elmer and Rod for their service to the board.

The board is nominating Cheryl & Marvin for 3-year terms to 2026.

Nomination from the floor for Waltrude Gorzen to the board.

All nominations acclaimed. **Carried.**

Discussion: Are board members allowed to be employees and vice versa? In the Constitution & Bylaws MHSBC does not pay directors. According to the Societies act, employees can serve on the board if the total number of those employed are less than 50% of the board. A board member can be employed by Mennonite Heritage Museum.

5) **Committee Reports:**

- a) Presidents Report, Richard:
Moved by Richard, Second: Menno, **CARRIED**
- b) Office & Volunteer Manager Report, Jennifer
Moved by Jennifer, Second: Maryann Jantzen, **Carried.**
- c) Archives Report, Linda
Moved by Linda, second: Laura
Discussion: Committee is working on best practices including for eg. photo donations.
Carried.
- d) Communications Report (Roots & Branches), Maryann:
Moved by Maryann, second: Cheryl. **Carried.**
- e) Library Committee, Robert
ResourceMate software updated and added to several computer stations.
Moved by Robert, second Menno. **Carried.**
- f) Website & Computer technical Committee:
Moved by Marvin, second: Menno. **Carried.**
- g) Membership committee: Cheryl:
Correction to submitted report: total of 217 paid memberships.
Moved by Cheryl, second Ernest. **Carried.**
Membership committee brought nomination to the floor for an Honorary Lifetime MHSBC membership to be awarded to Maryann Quiring.
Moved by Cheryl, second Maryann J. **Carried.**

6) **Questions/Further Business**

No further comments.

7. **Adjournment:** 14:12

Moved by Robert, **Carried.**

Board of Directors for 2023

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Waltrude Gortzen | - Retired Church Secretary, Abbotsford |
| Helen Esau Ho | - Registered Nurse, Abbotsford |
| Cheryl Isaac | - Retired Director, Continuing Education, UFV – Abbotsford |
| Maryann Jantzen | - Assistant Professor; Writing Centre Co-Director Trinity Western University – Abbotsford |
| Linda Klassen | - Former Business Owner - Abbotsford |
| Robert Martens | - Poet, Writer & Editor – Abbotsford |
| Elma Pauls | - Retired Health Care Administrator - Chilliwack |
| Marvin Rempel | - Bookkeeper - Langley |
| Richard Thiessen | - Executive Director Mennonite Museum– Abbotsford |
| Elmer G. Wiens | - Economist/Webmaster – Vancouver |

Officers for 2023

| | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| President | - Richard Thiessen |
| Vice President | - Elma Pauls |
| Secretary | - Helen Esau Ho |
| Treasurer | - Marvin Rempel |

President's Report

Staffing and Personnel

Together, the Society and the Museum employed three people in 2023: Jennifer Martens was employed full-time as Office and Volunteer Manager, and Mary Ann Quiring and Marvin Rempel were employed part-time, covering several roles. All three were paid by both MHSBC and the Museum.

In 2023 the Society had approximately 60 volunteers that provided staffing for the Society and worked on a variety of indexing, filing, translation, and scanning projects. Our volunteer structure includes several volunteer coordinators who work alongside our Office and Volunteer Manager. These coordinators maintain weekly contact with our volunteers and provide direct supervision and resourcing. This allows our Office and Volunteer Manager to focus more attention on volunteer policies and procedures and in-take procedures for new volunteers.

Communications

Roots and Branches, our periodical, is our primary means of communication with our members. In 2023 we again published three 32-page issues and a smaller Christmas issue for the year. We send out approximately 400 copies of the newsletter to members, churches, and sister organizations. We also rely on our website [<http://www.mhsbc.com>] and our Facebook page to communicate with our members as well as the public.

Public Events

The Society held the following events in 2023:

- Perogy Dinner: 25 May
- Attic Treasures Market: 23-24 June
- Memories of Mennonite Migration Concert: 23 July
- Perogy Dinner: 27 September
- Holodomar Day of Memory: 25 November

The Memories of Mennonite Migration tour stop in Abbotsford on 23-25 July 2023 was a significant event for MHSBC and the Mennonite Heritage Museum. The concert on Sunday evening featured music from both the “old country” as well as countries in the Americas where Russlaender Mennonites settled. We anticipated a maximum attendance of 600 and ended up with 900 people in attendance, with more turned away, so other than breaking all sorts of fire code bylaws, the concert was a success! On Monday we took the tour participants on a tour of the Sumas Prairie and visited Arnold, Greendale, and Yarrow – three Mennonite settlements established by Russlaender Mennonites beginning in 1928. The day ended with a gathering in the longhouse of the Semá:th (Sumas) Band, where tour participants and others from the Mennonite community were hosted by band leadership for a meal and an evening of story-telling and public statements by both MHSBC and MCC BC.

Projects

1. Digitization Projects

Volunteers from the society have been digitizing issues of *Der Bote* have been scanned: 1924-1934, 1935 (partial), 1936, 1961 (partial), 1962, 1963-1964 (partial), 1966 (partial), 1969-1970,

1971 (partial). 1972-1978, 1979 (partial), 1980-1990, 1991-1992 (partial), 1993-2003, 2004 (partial), 2005-2008. These numbers remain unchanged from 2017.

Volunteers are also digitizing microfilms from the Central State Archives of the Russian Federation (St. Petersburg) collection and from the EWZ-58 series (scanning of the EWZ-50 series was completed several years ago).

2. Archival Holdings

Linda Klassen heads up our volunteer group that works with processing our archival holdings and uploading images and archival description records to MAID. Linda has written the following section of this report.

Our year in the archive room has been a year of growth, both in volunteers and in productivity. We welcomed a new volunteer to our record sorting area in January and one of our photo volunteers has also moved into this area, bringing our total to four regular volunteers working with text records. This leaves only two people working with photos, one to sort and catalogue and another to work with MAID, plus we have occasional help with scanning photos. We also have a very dedicated volunteer working exclusively with our John B Toews collection. It has been good to begin addressing more of our waiting projects and turn them into permanent additions to our vault.

As our department grows, so does the need for better organization and this became apparent during the year. Some areas of weakness came to light, and we have spent some time and energy to address and strengthen both our organization and procedures. This will be an ongoing effort.

A highlight this year was a visit from the *Russlaender 100 Memories of Migration Tour* in July. It was a privilege to welcome the group to our building and our archive space and to share what we do here. We brought out a few of our special treasures, those things that make archive work so meaningful and, yes, fun! The displays sparked some interesting conversations, and it was a joy to watch people discover and interact with the items. We even got a mention in one of Erin Unger's *Mennonota* articles!

We would love to recruit more volunteers in the coming year, particularly in the area of audio-visual media. Someone who enjoys working with older technology who could assist with cataloguing and storing our growing media collection would be ideal. We want to continue working toward greater efficiency within our department so that we can serve our constituency in the best way possible.

In 2023 MHSBC received several donations. The most significant are records from the BC Mennonite Brethren Conference office of several MB congregations that have recently closed, records from First Mennonite Church, Kelowna, and some personal papers of Dr. John H. Redekop.

3. EWZ Records

We receive numerous requests from individuals, especially in Germany, for digital copies of EWZ files.

4. Genealogy

Most of the visitors to our Archives have an interest in genealogy. Our volunteers assist visitors in compiling their family histories and they also respond to emails and letters.

Volunteers have also been quite busy scanning unpublished family histories and newspaper obituaries. Several of our volunteers are copying and pasting obituaries from the digital scans of the *Mennonite Brethren Herald* into the Biographical Wiki database (https://mla.bethelks.edu/mediawiki/index.php/Main_Page) maintained by John Thiesen at the Mennonite Library & Archives at Bethel College. This database includes the full text of obituaries from several Mennonite periodicals, including *Mennonite Weekly Review*, *The Mennonite*, and a number of local newspapers. Our volunteers have entered 3,344 obituaries from the *Mennonite Brethren Herald* as of December 2023.

For many years our volunteers have maintained an obituary collection, including newspaper clippings and funeral bulletins. Over the past several years we have noticed that more and more people are choosing to publish obituaries of their loved ones on funeral home websites. These are often the only published obituary, or they are an expanded version of the obituary published in a newspaper. A project that we began in 2021 was to begin collecting digital obituaries from online newspapers and funeral home websites. At year end we had collected 8,820 online obituaries.

In 2023 we completed our goal of digitizing all the print obituaries in our collection and eliminating the newspaper clippings. We will only keep hard copies of funeral bulletins. We now have 17,850 digitized print obituaries. This gives us a total of 26,670 online and digitized print obituaries.

Several of our volunteers also do a significant amount of work with the GRANDMA database, managed by the California Mennonite Historical Society. Members of the public submit corrections and additions to their family information that is in GRANDMA, and our volunteers can log into the database in California and make the necessary changes. Several volunteers are also working at creating a Legacy database of individuals in the EWZ records. Once completed, this database will be merged with GRANDMA.

We completed a thorough index of the Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization records for the 1920s. Recent indexing has been carried out by Lorna Goertz, one of our volunteers who has been able to work remotely on this project.

5. Translation Projects

Volunteers are involved with several other projects, including the translation letters and diaries from German to English. Many of these projects begin as requests from individuals who make a donation to have something translated. Once the project is completed, a copy of the translation is made available to MHSBC.

6. History of Mennonites in British Columbia Project

In 2022 the Society began work on the publication of a written history of Mennonites in British Columbia. The general editor of the project is Dr. Bruce Guenther. Work will continue over the next several years, with the goal of publishing by 2028, which marks the centennial of the establishment of the village of Yarrow, the first permanent settlement of Mennonites in the province.

*Submitted by Richard D. Thiessen, President
27 March 2024*

Office & Volunteer Manager Report

Hello, my name is Jennifer Martens and as Office and Volunteer Manager, I am pleased to present the report for the office.

In 2023, we continued with research by appointment and continued helping people at individual work stations; the dual monitor station is still available for those who feel more comfortable with that arrangement and we used it on occasion.

Over the course of 2023, new volunteers were oriented and trained on our One Note tool which Patron Assistants use as a research guide when helping people with their family history. The tool provides a “home-base” for links, records, data and excellent search guides according to time, geography and topic. It saves so much time for everyone as the resources have been specially curated for the kind of research help we provide. We now have someone available for research help Monday to Friday and we are looking for more volunteers, especially for our busy days and days we have tours visiting.

Communication from the office continued via email (16 news & notes plus related correspondence), memos about the AGM, mail outs, social media and phone calls. 36 reference questions came across my desk plus countless more that were fielded by Mary Ann, Sandi, Linda and more of our volunteer team both on and off-site. We receive much of our communication support from Elmer via our website and social media posts, and Robert, who writes and sends out our press releases. Our facebook page was expanded to include posts for photo identification (thank you, Dave Loewen).

We hosted our Annual Staff and Volunteer Luncheon in April. The work our volunteers do means so much to so many and it is a privilege to recognize all the hours and care that goes into the work that they all do for those who need us now and for future generations. For significant long term service awards, we gave gift cards which were donated to our society for this purpose. It is important for our volunteers to be able to enjoy these tokens of appreciation fully because they know that it does not cost our society in order to acknowledge their contribution in this way. We would love to have more sponsors who would be willing to donate gift cards for this purpose.

Since we are co-located with the Museum, our staff and volunteers met for Morning Coffee Time in the café once a week (a different day each week) as a way of connecting with others in the building. This is a time to share information, make announcements and celebrate birthdays. We also have a number of volunteers in their 80's and 90's and we like to celebrate these amazing people. The Morning Coffee Times have been so well received, we plan to continue those into the future.

One significant change for our office was the shift to google workspace in June and this transition will continue into 2024, with a cost saving goal in mind. Another enormous project has been building and adding data to our volunteer management software and Elma Pauls has been doing the bulk of this work, including the training of volunteers on how to log hours online using Better Impact. The plan is to gradually have our schedules and roles managed by the software. We had a handful of training sessions with our representative who lives locally so she came on-site to answer our questions and demonstrate the operations of the software.

Our volunteers and friends of the society donated hand crafted items for our table at the museum's Christmas Market in November and we were thrilled with the over \$1000.00 raised for the society. Our annual event, the volunteer/staff Christmas Social hosted by the museum is

a highly anticipated event as it is the only time of year both societies have the opportunity to meet together all at once. Another perk for our volunteers was to be invited to u-pick the museum blueberries. Volunteers could pick and pay at the front desk.

Another big transition came at the end of the year when Mary Ann Quiring retired from over 20 years of service. Together with her volunteering years, she contributed 25 years to the society and words cannot express the gratitude for all her years of service. She served these years with passion and pride in her work and we will all miss her dearly. A luncheon will be held in her honour in early 2024.

While we had 56 volunteers in 2023 (a powerful team!), we are still looking for volunteers. We need more help in our Library, IT, digitizing, scanning and more. Those who can translate from handwritten Gothic script to english are in demand. We are expanding our teams in the project room who are working with documents and photos. Shifts are 2-3 or more hours per week and some projects for the society lend themselves to off-site work. We are looking for volunteers who are available for our reference/reception desk Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Contact me to find out more!

Jennifer Martens

Archives Report

Our year in the archive room has been a year of growth, both in volunteers and in productivity. We have two main activities in the archive department. One is working with photos and posting them to MAID (Mennonite Archival Information Database) and the second is sorting and organizing textual records for storage in our cold room. Helen Nickel, Dolores Harder and Joan Enns work diligently in the photo area. Julia Toews, Hildegard Baerg & Linda Klassen work in the document sorting area and they were joined in Janaury by Bernie Martens and Pat Hood. They are also supported by Dolores as needed. Laura Unger continues to work exclusively with our John B. Toews collection. We have had more requests for information this past year than in previous years and we are pleased to be able to provide answers and resources to researchers.

A highlight of 2023 was a visit from the *Russlaender 100, Memories of Migration Tour* in July. It was a privilege to welcome the group to our building and to our archive space to share what we do here. We brought out a few of our special treasures, those things that make archive work so meaningful and – yes - fun! The displays sparked some interesting conversations, and it was a joy to watch people discover and interact with the items. An added bonus was Erin Unger (wife of Andrew Unger) writing about the visit for *Mennotoba*.

As our department grows, so does the need for better organization and this became apparent during the year. Some areas of weakness came to light and we have spent time and energy to address and strengthen both our organization and our procedures. This will be an ongoing effort.

Looking ahead, we are happy to welcome more volunteers to our area. There are a number of projects waiting for the right person and there is room for more volunteers in our existing projects. We want to continue working toward greater efficiency within our department so that we can serve our constituency in the best way possible.

Submitted by Linda Klassen, MHSBC Archives

Roots and Branches Report

During 2023, our periodical committee once again generated four issues of *Roots and Branches*. Our first issue of the year in February featured several articles on two of the Russian Mennonite daughter colonies, Orenburg and Terek, while the June issue focused on Mennonite/Indigenous relationships. And our final full-length issue, published in September, reported on the Memories of Migration: Russlaender Tour 100 and also featured articles on the experiences of the 1920s Mennonite immigrants as they left Russia and arrived in refugee camps in Germany to wait their final destinations.

Each issue also included additional articles on diverse historical topics, book reviews, a genealogy column and artwork by BC artists, as well as relevant news releases and announcements of upcoming events. And once again, Julia Toews and Louise Bergen Price put together an excellent shorter December issue focused on historical Mennonite experiences of Christmas.

Robert Martens, Maryann Tjart Jantzen, Julia Toews and Louise Bergen Price continue to share editorial responsibilities as well as contributing articles. Each new issue gives us an excuse to gather together over coffee for a planning session, a time enjoyed by all. Our layout designer Bill Glasgow continues to do an excellent job of turning our final drafts into polished products. And the office staff and volunteers work hard to see that each issue is printed and mailed in a timely fashion. The contributions of all these individuals are essential; without them, *Roots and Branches* would not exist.

We want to feature a broad range of material so that all readers will find something of interest and attempt to feature a variety of writers in each issue, from diverse segments of our constituency. We welcome receiving any of the following: letters and photos from the past; “mystery” pictures that need identification; short personal narratives; book reviews; biographical sketches; articles of historical interest. Contributions can be in English or German (we will translate). All contributions are subject to editorial approval and revision, as needed.

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

Maryann Tjart Jantzen
MHSBC director and Roots and Branches co-editor

Library Committee Report

The library committee has been quiet over the last year, but hopefully we can reform and meet again soon. A backlog of books donated to the MHSBC library has accumulated. With the help of practicum students and volunteers, we anticipate some progress in cataloguing and filing. Thanks to everyone involved.

Before the pandemic, there had been discussion of merging the MHSBC library with the Columbia Bible College library, and becoming part of Evergreen, an open-source library program. This has not been recently discussed. Perhaps the issue will again be raised in the future.

Submitted by Robert Martens

Website and Computer Technical Committee

Elmer Wiens works with Jennifer Martens and other members of the MHSBC Board and Staff to handle changes, updates, revisions, and trouble shooting on the www.MHSBC.com website as events unfold. These changes, etc. occur frequently throughout the year requiring hands-on attention by the webmaster.

The following list itemizes some features that available on the www.MHSBC.com website with no changes since 2022, except for item 4.

1. The website displays events taking place at the Mennonite Heritage Museum on the webpage https://www.mhsbc.com/futureevents/mhm_events.php and on the entry webpage <https://www.mhsbc.com/>.
2. In cooperation with *the Centre for Transnational Mennonite Studies at The University of Winnipeg*, their events such as lectures by scholars from around the world are now being displayed along with a link for further information.
3. We now have a website security certificate that increases the security of the www.MHSBC.com website. The URL of the website now starts with <https://> instead of <http://>, although both ways work the same way. An https connection is protected in that data sent between you and the website is encrypted and keeps the information private. It also tells a user's browser that we actually are who we claim to be.
4. The Genealogies and Family Histories webpage has the list of family histories available at MHSBC. Thanks to Robert Martens it was updated in November, 2023 with a PDF down loadable document. Users can also locate a reference to their family history on the web page indexed by title and cross-referenced by name. This web page is popular. Perhaps we should advertise its availability in R&B and request families to submit their information if they have not already done so (and welcome a donation). (<https://www.mhsbc.com/famhistories.php>)
5. Members of the Society can pay their membership dues online with PayPal. (<https://www.mhsbc.com/memberships.php>)
6. Donations to MHSBC can be made by way of PayPal (<https://www.mhsbc.com/donations.php>) Sponsors can view and print a .PDF document with sponsorship details (https://www.mhsbc.com/pdfs/mhsbc_sponsor_event.pdf).
7. Potential volunteers can complete and submit our online membership and volunteer form. <https://www.mhsbc.com/volunteers.php>)
8. Tickets to events like writers' workshops can be purchased online through PayPal on the https://www.mhsbc.com/futureevents/purchase_event.php) webpage.

9. MHSBC events and meetings are posted on the website entry page and the Future Events web page
https://www.mhsbc.com/futureevents/mhsbc_events.php
10. Once the event is over, the event details are transferred to the Past Events web page.
(<https://www.mhsbc.com/pastevents.php>) This web page provides a list of past events, accessible by year, going back over a decade to November 2004.
11. Editions of Roots and Branches are available on line one year after publication, archived back to 1995. The URL for this webpage has been changed to
<https://www.mhsbc.com/periodical.php>.

It has been my pleasure to continue working on these tasks this year.

Respectfully submitted by Elmer G. Wiens, Webmaster

Membership Committee

As of December 2023, we had a total of 186 paid members for the year plus 5 lifetime members (\$750 each) plus 16 honorary members.

Paid Members Included:

| | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Fraser Valley & Vancouver | 138 |
| BC | 18 |
| Alberta | 7 |
| Sask | 2 |
| Manitoba | 4 |
| Ontario | 5 |
| Lithuania | 1 |
| US | 10 |
| Netherlands | 1 |

Our Honorary Members Include:

1. Fehr, Don (*passed away*)
2. Friesen, Hugo & Jean (*passed away*)
3. Giesbrecht, David & Betty (*Betty passed away*)
4. Harder, Dolores
5. Hildebrand, Edward & Agnes (*passed away*)
6. Janzen, Tim & Rachael
7. Konrad, John
8. Neudorf, Peter & Helga (*Helga passed away*)
9. Pauls, Ernie & Helen
10. Penner, Jack
11. Price, Victor & Louise
12. Redekop, Peter
13. Sawatsky, Roland & Lora (*Roland passed away*)
14. Suderman, Peter (*passed away*)
15. Toews, John B & Lillian
16. Quiring, MaryAnn (2023)

Mandate of the Membership Committee: (as set out by board decision of May 20, 2015)

The Goals of a Membership Committee is to:

- increase membership,
- recruit new members,
- communicate with members,
- remind members of renewals, and
- address membership related issues

Benefits of MHSBC Membership:

- Support the preservation of MHSBC
- Receive the MHSBC Roots & Branches magazine 3 times a year
- Receive invitations to MHSBC events
- Entitled to 10% off purchase of MHSBC Archive books, CD's, DVD's
- Voting privileges at AGM (April of each year)
- Become familiar with and preserve the history of Mennonites

The membership year is January to December.

Persons joining mid-year receive all back issues for that year, at time of payment.

Events Committee Report

| Event Day: 2023 | | Location | Attendance |
|---------------------------------|---|--|-------------------|
| May 24 Wednesday | Perogy Dinner 5:00 FUNDRAISER | MHM | 39 |
| June 23, 24 Friday, Saturday | Attic Treasures Market | MHM | 18 vendors 229 |
| July 23 | RCC (Russlaender 100 Tour): Tour of MHM Concert | MHM South Abbotsford MB Church | |
| July 24 | RCC – Bus Tour Churches Evening meal / story-telling / apology at Sema:th Longhouse | Arnold, Greendale (2) Yarrow (2) Semá:th Longhouse | 60 |
| Sept 27 Wednesday | Perogy Dinner 5:00 FUNDRAISER | MHM | 41 |
| Nov 25 Saturday | Holodomar Film & Faspa “Day of Memory” | MHM | 43 |

Special Highlight of Events at MHSBC – 2023

July 23/24, 2023

To mark the centenary of the beginning of the 1920's migration, events were planned across the country for the month of July. The Russlaender Centenary Committee (RCC) of MHSC (of which MHSBC was part of) organized a cross-country train tour, **Memories of Migration: Russlaender 100**, which re-enacted the initial journey taken by the Russlaender immigrants from Quebec to British Columbia. In the provinces along the way, public events were organized to celebrate the faith of the Mennonites, to remember the loss of their former communities, to memorialize the challenges of resettlement, and to acknowledge race and displacement in Canadian history.

For MHSBC's part – we hosted a grand concert on the evening of Sunday, July 23rd under the direction of Calvin Dyck and on Monday (July 24th) we hosted a tour of the original 5 Mennonite churches - Arnold, Greendale (2) and Yarrow (2).

In the evening of the 24th, the group was invited to the Semá:th Longhouse for a fabulous meal. Chris Silver told 3 Indigneous stories, after which Richard Thiessen read an Apology on behalf of MHSBC to representatives of the Semá:th First Nation (also known as the Sumas First Nation) for how the arrival of Mennonites in the 1920s coincided with the draining of Sumas Lake in order to create fertile farmland for new settlers. That lake had provided the Semá:th First Nation sustenance for living and the draining of the lake had a devastating impact of the First Nations people. Chief Dalton Silver graciously accepted our apology and acknowledgment. This was followed by five witnesses (Peter Wolf, Andrew Victor, Ingrid Schultz, Harry Heidebrecht and Brian Jones) who spoke on what they had heard. The evening concluded with the singing of the Doxology in four-part harmony led by Henry Engbrecht – it was a very moving evening.