

# THE VILLAGE *Voices*

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NEW ACQUISITIONS<sup>PG7</sup>

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Monday - Saturday: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Sunday: 11:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
July & August  
Monday - Saturday: 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Sunday: 11:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
\* October - April  
Monday - Friday: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
\* Village Centre only**ADMISSION RATES**

Adults	\$12.00
Seniors (65 & older)	\$10.00
Students (ages 13-22)	\$10.00
Children (ages 6-12)	\$6.00
Young Children (ages 5 & under)	FREE

**MEMBERSHIP**

\*\* Membership entitles you to vote at our annual general meeting and gives you FREE or reduced admission to other Signature Museums in Manitoba:

Annual Individual Membership** (Season-long admission)	\$30.00
Annual Family* Membership** (Season-long admission)	\$50.00
Lifetime Membership**	\$500.00

**Commonwealth Air Training Plan Museum**

Brandon, MB

**Manitoba Agricultural Museum**

Austin, MB

**New Iceland Heritage Museum**

Gimli, MB

**St. Boniface Museum**

Winnipeg, MB

**Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre**

Morden, MB

**Royal Aviation Museum of Western Canada**

Winnipeg, MB

**HOW TO REACH MHV**

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# MHV MEMBERSHIP

BY BARRY DYCK

Mennonite Heritage Village (MHV) is an incorporated charity owned by its members. There are several classes of membership. Honorary Members are appointed by the MHV Board of Directors to recognize significant contributions made to the museum. Life Members, as the name suggests, are members for life based on a one-time fee paid to MHV. Annual Members choose to renew their membership for a modest fee, one year at a time.

Each class of member enjoys the same attractive array of benefits:

- Free admission to the museum (except for special fundraising events.)
- 50% discount on admission for guests accompanying a member,
- 10% discount on the purchase of merchandise in Village Books and Gifts (does not include the General Store), facility rentals (such as a church building or meeting room) and program participation (such as Pioneer Day Camp fees),

- A free subscription to Village Voice, the MHV newsletter,
- Two complimentary day-passes,
- Free admission to other signature museums,
- Free guided tours (offered periodically by staff), and
- The right to vote at the AGM.

Membership fees have recently been adjusted by the Board of Directors:

- Life Members - \$500 per individual, including dependent children under the age of 18,
- Annual Members - \$50 for a family membership, including dependent children under that age of 18; \$30 for an individual membership.

Membership may be requested by calling 204-326-9661, emailing info@mhv.ca or through our membership page on our website at www.mhv.ca.



# 2018 - CHANGE OR STABILITY

BY BARRY DYCK

For those who like change 2018 will be a good year at Mennonite Heritage Village (MHV). Similarly, for those who like stability, this will be a good year to enjoy things that are not changing.

One of the things that is not changing is the makeup of our Board of Directors. The terms of Allan Kroeker, Carol Kroeker, Sid Reimer and Roland Sawatzky were up for renewal this year and all four decided to serve another term, for which we are grateful. The board has a full slate of members and all are familiar with what we are doing. The Executive Officers of the board will also remain the same: President - Willie Peters, Vice President - Doris Penner, and Secretary - Carol Kroeker. It's a pleasure working with these people.

Our staff team has seen some change over the winter months. Robert Goertzen has taken on the role of Program Manager and will be responsible for the Volunteer Program, the Education Program and the Festival Program. Stacey Sawatzky's portfolio has grown to include our Facility Rentals department as well as our Custodial func-

tion. Our new Bookkeeper, Laurie Wiebe has begun her training a few weeks ago and is enjoying a comfortable introduction to the work during a slower part of the year.

One of our underlying themes for planning has been to focus on our relevance in the constituency. We view our constituency as being broader than just historians. We want to be vitally involved in the life of the community through programs, festivals, education, and community and family events. One of our strategies in pursuing relevance is to become less seasonal. In other words, present more programming and activities year round. We started this year with a Guys 'N Dolls Gala for teens, a Winter Carnival for families, and an Author's Night for all book-lovers. These are all new winter events. We plan to repeat all of them and develop new events as well. In the meantime, Canada Day, Pioneer Days and Fall on the Farm will make their usual appearances.

So much is changing and so much is staying the same.

  
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# INTRODUCING ROBERT GOERTZEN

BY BARRY DYCK AND ROBERT GOERTZEN

We are pleased that Robert Goertzen has joined our team as our Program Manager. He will have responsibility for our Volunteer, Education and Festival programs. These roles will put him in frequent and regular contact with the community. So by way of introduction I have asked Robert to reflect on a few questions.



Robert Goertzen, Program Manager

Barry: You grew up in this community. What is one of your early memories of Mennonite Heritage Village (MHV)?

Robert: As a child, I grew up on a family farm. I am not sure if I ever came to the Mennonite Heritage Village in my younger years. However, as a young adult, I remember attending during the Pioneer Days weekend. The farming demonstrations were interesting since I had grown up on a dairy/mixed farm that was mechanizing in the 1960's and 1970's. Many of the demonstration activities were familiar to me. The harvesting of grain had changed from cutting/binding, stooking and threshing, to the condensed process of swathing and combining. Horse-drawn equipment had been replaced (or at least the hitch had been changed) by tractors hitched to pull-type equipment and even self-propelled equipment. In some ways, the museum was a reminder of the mechanization that had taken place on the typical North American farm.

Barry: You've chosen to make a significant career change. How did you come to that decision?

Robert: Some people grow up, knowing what they want to do as adults. The question is often asked, "What are you going to be when you grow up?". My educational and career paths were never that definitive. In university, I majored in history, with a significant number of Mennonite Studies courses in this concentration.

However, a Bachelor of Arts degree in history is not a clear path to a vocation, so I entered the business world, eventually owning a bakery, a retail specialty grocery store and a food distribution company, before becoming the manager at Main Bread and Butter Company in Steinbach.

Reading Mennonite history and Mennonite fiction and attending Mennonite studies conferences have always remained an enjoyable hobby for me. I have also participated on our church conference Archives committee for several years, grappling with the importance of preserving and storing significant historical documents and artifacts.

When I learned about the MHV Program Manger job posting, it occurred to me that joining the MHV team would give me the opportunity to be a part of an important community meeting place, entrusted with preserving the Russian Mennonite history of our community and enriching our community through educational programming, celebration festivals and serving opportunities for volunteers. It seemed like a good fit.

Barry: You have a strong personal interest in the work of MHV. What dreams and aspirations do you have for our programs?

Robert: I believe that knowing our history, personally and as a community, is important if we are going to understand who we are and how we got here. In this way, the Mennonite Heritage Village plays a significant role in telling the story of Steinbach and the surrounding area. We want to develop more connections with schools, community organizations and the general public, to enhance our community life.

We also have new opportunities to connect with people in many ways. The Mennonite immigration story helps us to be an inviting community for newcomers from other countries. Our agricultural demonstrations and farmyard provide us with connections to the farming community. Our milling and food preparation demonstrations create a link to the renewed interest in knowing where our food comes from and how farm products can become our table food. Because the MHV depends on thousands of hours of volunteer time, we have opportunities for many people to share their expertise, their experience and their generosity with the whole community.

As our communities grow, the Mennonite Heritage Village will seek to be a meeting place for everyone, which enhances the lives of individuals and families by encouraging volunteer giving, experiential learning and community-centred celebrations.



# THE ART OF MENNONITE CLOCKS

BY JENNA KLASSEN

This year, MHV's temporary exhibit The Art of Mennonite Clocks focuses on the beautiful, Mennonite-made wall clocks, many of which still hang in Mennonite households throughout the world. In partnership with the Kroeger Clock Heritage Foundation, MHV is exhibiting over 30 of these clocks in the Gerhard Ens Gallery, seventeen of which are in MHV's artefact collection. The remaining clocks are on loan from the KCHF, community members, and other historical institutions. The exhibit covers the history of Mennonite clock making from its early days in Prussia, Mennonite clock makers and decorators, the cultural significance of these clocks to Mennonites, how clock making was influenced by broader historical changes, and how these clocks have been preserved and restored over time.

It may seem odd that we have chosen to focus on just one object this year, since MHV's exhibits tend to feature many different types of objects to interpret a particular part of Mennonite history. However, sometimes a single object, in this case a clock, is so prominent in the history of a people that it can be used to interpret many different aspects of history. For example, the decorations on clock faces reflect changes in Mennonite society. Early on, religious leaders only allowed clocks to be decorated with biblical scenes to reflect Mennonites' faith and their belief in simplicity. As time passed and decoration became more acceptable, biblical scenes on wall clocks gave way to landscapes and

floral images.

It is not just the physical characteristics of Mennonite wall clocks that make them historically significant, but also the stories that are told by the owners of the clocks. Many of the clocks in the exhibit have stories attached to them that illustrate the events and experiences that Mennonites have faced in the past. For example, one clock bears the marks of swords from anarchist groups that invaded Mennonite homes in south Russia in the 1920s. Other stories describe families packing up their belongings before traveling to a new country, only taking the most necessary items. Often, the family's wall clock was considered a necessary item, and was packed carefully for the journey. Passed on from one generation to the next, Mennonite wall clocks were artefacts of family history and objects of continuity for a migrant community.

These are only some of the topics we will be discussing in the exhibit—there will be many more to discover! But it is clear that Mennonite wall clocks are a prominent object in Mennonite past and present. Not only are we exhibiting the artistic beauty of these artefacts, but by telling the story of these clocks we can also tell the story of Mennonite history. We look forward to sharing this history with you when The Art of Mennonite Clocks opens this May.



# THE GENERAL STORE

BY JO-ANN FRIESEN



The MHV General Store, located on Main Street in the outdoor village is open May 1 – September 30, and houses a plethora of artefacts and locally hand crafted souvenirs.

Once again in 2017 it was an extremely popular stop for visitors to the museum. The store is staffed daily by local artisans, crafters and volunteers who work tirelessly to provide excellent customer service in a friendly and knowledgeable environment.

In days gone by, the General Store was seen as THE community gathering place where the recipes of life were shared, items for the home and farm were purchased and neighbors caught up on the latest news.

Local Artisans rent a space for the season, move in and set up imaginative displays to promote their unique merchandise. MHV seeks to offer a wider selection of Manitoba made items to the public by partnering with local crafters, thereby giving guests an opportunity to purchase unique, eclectic local wares.

Visitors love to purchase merchandise made by local artisans

such as, upcycled silver, knitted products, jams, gems, hot pads, jewelry, decorations, rocking chairs, wood wall decorations, birdhouses, and so much more, as well as stock up on old fashioned candy.

The artefacts on display have brought many a hearty discussion about how the visitor lived when they were young, or how a general store, like the one here at MHV, currently functions in their own homeland.

Currently the General Store has two openings for a local Artisan to feature their creations for the 2018 Season. Please contact Jo-Ann Friesen joannf@mhv.ca for more information. You can check out the artisans on their facebook page.

Artists/crafters returning in 2018:

- Relax With Flax – Lorna Harms
- Night Owl Beading – Nancy Neufeld
- Through Glass Images – Gail Penner
- Bear Naked Wonders – Nancy Doerksen
- Birdhouses and More – Lorence Wiebe
- K & RP – Fun, Funky, Functional – Kim Polten
- A Switch In Time – Bettylou Toews
- Rabbit Trail Soaps – Wendy Martens
- Amish Hot Pads – Adelina Wiebe
- Infinity Scarves – Carroll Dyck
- Wood Wonders – Elmer Barkman
- Christmas Decorations – Eleanore Thiessen



# THE LIVERY BARN RESTAURANT

BY YULIYA ASRAF

Hello everyone! My name is Yuliya Asraf. Last year I had the pleasure of being the Food Services Manager at the Livery Barn Restaurant at MHV and am pleased to say that I am back for a second season.

This is a good opportunity to introduce myself a little bit better, I was born in Ukraine; I grew up with Ukrainian traditions, traditional food and the Ukrainian Language. My grandma taught me how to prepare and cook Vareniki (Perogies) and Borscht (soup), so I'm familiar with the Mennonite cuisine, and I actually can speak both Russian and Ukrainian languages.

When I was six years old, my family and I moved to Israel. I went to school, learned the Hebrew language, worked in a restaurant as a waitress, and then was promoted to the managers assistant position. I graduate from school, I did a military service for two years in the Israeli army, and was a municipal police officer. I met my husband, and while in the army my parents moved to Canada. Then my husband and I opened a business.

In 2013 we came to visit my family in Canada and we fell in love with this country and this peaceful city named Steinbach.

We decided to immigrate. After we got all the documents, we moved at the end of 2015, took English classes, and I applied for a position in the LBR. Dora Penner hired me as a cook in summer 2016. She was the food services manager at that time. It was my first job in Canada, and I'm so thankful to her for that. I used all my skills and my knowledge from my experiences, I worked hard, struggled with my language but it was worth it because when Dora Penner retired, the MHV hired me as a food services manager.

My first year as a food services manager was a bit difficult because my language is still not perfect, but I did my best.

I am hoping this year will be better than last year and my staff and I will serve you well with all the best Local Mennonite cuisine and all LBR's favourite specials.

Now, that you know me little bit better, I would like to talk more about the restaurant.

services to celebrate your events, with Mennonite cuisines or other kinds of food. So if you are planning to have a wedding or celebrate a birthday or to have a family gathering, you can contact us for more information and prices by phone 204-326-9661.

The specials that I mention below are the daily specials:

Mondays, we serve all you can eat salad bar with desserts and farmer sausage.

Tuesday is fish day. We serve one slice of fried fish with a side of potatoes, coleslaw and a piece of lemon or chocolate pie.

Wednesday is a surprise day, we will do a new special dish every week. Come be surprised by tasty special dishes.

Thursday is our famous soup day. We serve three kinds of soup and three kinds of bread, all fresh baked in the restaurant, and the soups are yummy made from scratch.

Friday's daily special is a light lunch that consists of a bowl of soup of the day, wrapped sandwich, a light salad or fresh vegetables with small dessert to sweeten your day before the weekends begins.

Saturday's daily special is our huge all you can eat brunch buffet. We serve breakfast sausages, hash-browns, scrambled eggs, deliciously cooked beans (it's what the customers always say), veggie platter, fruit platter, cinnamon buns and waffles with homemade white sauce.

And finally the star of the specials, on Sunday we have all you can eat buffet with a huge variety of food, chicken, meatballs and farmer sausages, mashed potatoes, cooked veggies, at least five salads, homemade buns, desserts, and the famous delicious unlimited cottage cheese perogies with Schmauntfatt (sauce cream gravy).

The LBR is also operating the Short Order Booth on events days, such as Canada Day and Pioneer Days, We serve Hamburgers, chicken burgers, Hot dogs, Farmer sausages burgers, Fries and Ice cream.

Be aware that the Livery Barn Restaurant is only open from May 1st and will be closed again for winter break on September 30th.



The LBR creates local Mennonite cuisine for our visitors to taste and smell; we also offer catering



# VILLAGE BOOKS & GIFTS

BY JO-ANN FRIESEN

Mennonite Heritage Village hosted tens of thousands of visitors during the 2017 season. While most came to experience the Village, there were also guests who came for weddings, meetings, and a plethora of other events. Over 50 different countries, states and provinces made their way to our facility, and it is amazing how a smile and a few kind gestures extended to our visitors helped to make their visit a memorable experience!

MHV was very excited to learn that Travel Manitoba has included the Mennonite Heritage Village as one of the top ten "Must-sees" in Manitoba. Trip Advisor stated that we are #1 of 17 stops in Steinbach.

We have so much to be thankful for. MHV's reception team endeavors to make every visitor feel inclusive, warm and welcome and also take on the role as concierge, guiding our guests to their next destination where ever it may be.

Village Books and Gifts (VBG) endeavors to provide readers with historically sound information, personal stories and works of fiction that reflect the stories of the Russian Mennonites journey from inception. We house a variety of authors including novelists, genealogists, historians, biographers, poets as well as local photography enthusiasts.

The gift shop also carries a wide selection of cookbooks, children's books, and coffee table books. Fresh on the shelf are two such publications. We have just received Ray Dirks "Along the Road to Freedom; Mennonite Women of Courage and Faith" coffee table book. This beautiful publication features Ray's paintings and the stories behind them. Ray stated "Along the Road to Freedom came to be because people cared about their family journeys. It is an exhibition and book of paintings and stories about specific women widely known as Russian Mennonites."

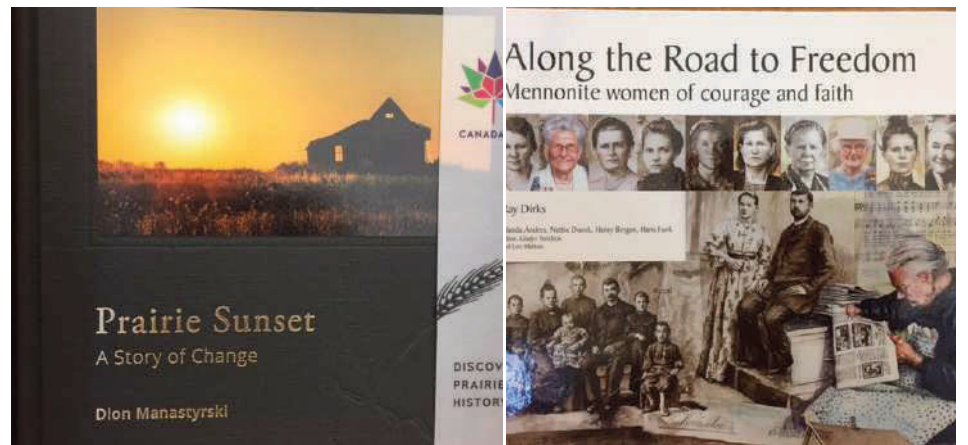
Ray Dirks founded the Mennonite Heritage Centre and Gallery in Winnipeg, Manitoba and after working for more than a decade as

a Winnipeg based freelance artist and designer, Ray became the Curator of the Centre in 1998.

Don Manastryski's "Prairie Sunset: A Story of Change" is masterfully put together, showcasing beautiful photography and stories of the of long forgotten prairie farmsteads. Incredible quality and reasonably priced publications perfect for your coffee table.

We are excited to carry titles that embrace our history, tell our story and sometimes bring a little controversy.

VBG is intentional with what graces our shelves and we continue to expand the selection of the gifts and souvenirs we sell. You will find a wide selection of old fashioned toys, games, puzzles as well as quality locally handcrafted items. Our mandate to provide visitors with merchandise that's a little bit "Steinbach" or a little bit "Mennonite" continues to grow. Folks love to stock up on our very own wind-milled flour as well as old fashioned candy. We work hard to provide quality, unique, hard-to-find items. In addition to souvenirs for our guests, our exclusive line of Menno Apparel continues to be a brisk seller! We strive to find a balance by carrying quality, heritage driven items, along with travel friendly souvenirs.



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

BY PATRICIA WEST

## MAY

December 1, 2017 - November 30, 2018

### Choose Your Own Adventure Raffle

Tickets are \$5 for one or \$10 for Three

The winner will be able to choose one of the following trips:

A Trip for 4 to Disney World valued at \$15,794

A Trip for 4 to Tuscany valued at \$9,360

A Cruise for 2 to Alaska valued at \$8,605

A Trip for 2 to Paris valued at \$15,460

or a Trip for 2 to Ireland valued at \$12,570

Tickets are available for purchase December 1, 2017 at Mennonite Heritage Village or on our website at [www.mhv.ca](http://www.mhv.ca)

Tuesday, May 1, 2018

**Outdoor Village and Livery Barn Restaurant open for the season.**

Saturday, May 12, 2018

**Manitoba Day**

**Manitoba Day Ceremony.**

Check our website for more details.

Sunday, May 13, 2018

**Mother's Day Lunch Buffet**

Take mom out for a Mennonite feast at the Livery Barn Restaurant.

## JUNE

Saturday, June 9, 2018

**Tractor Trek**

Grab your tractor and join the trek!

Visit [www.mhv.ca](http://www.mhv.ca) for more information

Friday, June 15 - Sunday, June 17, 2018

Come down and visit our waffle booth at Summer in the City. We will be there serving delicious waffles.

## JUNE

Sunday, June 17, 2018

**Father's Day Lunch Buffet**

Take dad out for a Mennonite feast at the Livery Barn Restaurant.

## JULY

Sunday, July 1, 2018

**Canada Day**

Canada Day opening ceremony and birthday cake.

Saturday, July 7, 2018

**Southeast Implement Collectors Tractor Show**

July 9-13, 2018

**Pioneer Day Camp**

10 am - 4:00 pm

For children ages 5-7

Learn what life was like for children your age back in 1874 while practicing your pioneer skills, meeting new people and having a lot of fun

July 14, 2018

**Heritage Classic Car Show**

9 am - 6 pm

Join us for our annual car show. You won't want to miss the excitement. Car Show, A Shopper's Paradise Market, Food Truck Alley, Pedal Car Derby, Swap Meet, Live Bands, and Muffler Rapping

July 25, 2018

**Heritage Classic Golf Tournament**

10 am - 5 pm

Quarry Oaks Golf Course

Enjoy a round of golf with friends all while supporting Mennonite Heritage Village

## AUGUST

August 3 - 6, 2018

**Pioneer Days**

9 am - 6 pm

Relive our Mennonite past through pioneer activities, steam powered threshing, music and lots of good food!

August 13 - 17, 2018

**Pioneer Day Camp**

10 am - 4:00 pm

For children ages 8 - 10

Learn what life was like for children your age back in 1874 while practicing your pioneer skills, meeting new people and having a lot of fun

## SEPTEMBER

Monday, September 3, 2018

**Fall on the Farm**

Experience harvest work, hearty food, corn on the cob, music, hog butchering and pioneer demonstrations.

Thursday, September 27, 2018

**Volunteer Appreciation**

If you have volunteered at MHV this year, you are invited to attend. No formal invitations will be mailed or emailed.

## OCTOBER

Monday, October 1, 2018

**Outdoor Village and Livery Barn Restaurant closed for the season.**

Monday, October 8, 2018

**Closed for Thanksgiving**



Mennonite Heritage Village *Travel Back In Time With Us*



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204-326-9661

Events and dates subject to change without notice. Visit [www.mhv.ca](http://www.mhv.ca) for current event information.



# AUXILIARY NEWS

BY EVELYN FRIESEN

Amidst vintage doilies and colorful, hand stitched quilts, members of the MHV Auxiliary pose for a photo op—surrounded by the lovely decor of the Quilt Room. Following a morning meeting, this group has once again committed itself to sewing more aprons, to continued quilting and to catering at various business luncheons. As well, plans are underway for an annual Faspa, a Garden Tea, and, of course, we'll be making those ever-popular, heart-shaped waffles for those who enjoy this special treat under the Patio umbrellas at the Waffle Booth.

When not pursuing our Auxiliary goals, many of us lend our skills at various interpretive stations throughout the Village. Some are expert at baking schnetki, others tend the gardens or volunteer regularly at the Admission Desk and the Livery Barn restaurant.

Besides our common passion for all that the Museum represents, we find pleasure in each other's company and enjoy a great sense of camaraderie as we meet and as we work together.

Linda Schroeder is our Auxiliary President and as such a member of the MHV Board of Directors. She proudly presented the Auxiliary's annual report at the March General Meeting. It was a long list of our latest accomplishments. Our annual financial statement was evidence of the funding we provide for our ongoing support to the Education Program at MHV, to the needs of the Curatorial Department as well as those of the Garden Club and to endless large and small projects that need attention throughout the Village. Needless to say, our successes keep us encouraged!

## FASPA with the Auxiliary!

Our Spring Faspa is slated for Sunday, May 6th. Along with special music and Zwiebach and cakes in the company of friends, we are pleased to announce that Margrute Krahn who is host to visitors in a herdsman house in Neubergthal will speak to us about Men-

nonite painted floor patterns—many of which she has uncovered as she searches for old art forms and stories of yesteryear in local heritage buildings.

Be sure to save the date!



## IN MEMORY

We are saddened by the recent passing of a friend and fellow Auxiliary member. We honour the memory of Ev Wiebe and her contributions to the work of our Auxiliary. We will miss her cheerfulness, her ready ideas and her willingness to make anything work.

The Auxiliary ..... working for MHV!



# THE MANITOBA FOOD HISTORY PROJECT: COMING TO MHV

BY JENNA KLASSEN

There will be something different on the parking lot at the Mennonite Heritage Village this summer: a "food history truck" belonging to the Manitoba Food History Project.

Combining the strengths of the Philadelphia Public History Truck, the StoryCorps MobileBooth, and the contemporary food truck phenomenon, the Manitoba Food History Truck will travel the province, recording Manitobans cooking local, historical, traditional recipes in the truck while University of Winnipeg researchers conduct oral history interviews with them.

The goal of the project, led by Janis Thiessen, Kimberley Moore, Kent Davies, and Sarah Story, is to produce a comprehensive history of food manufacturing, production, retailing, and consumption in the province of Manitoba from its creation in 1870 to the present day. The two driving questions behind the research are "How has food been produced, sold, and consumed in Manitoba?" and "How has this changed over time?"

Oral history interviews, together with archival research, will be used to create a number of free, publicly-accessible resources that will broaden knowledge and understanding of the agri-food system in Manitoba, and of Manitoba history more generally. These resources include a website, a podcast series, pop-up exhibits, and a cookbook. The open access, interactive website will include digital maps, archival documents, and oral history interviews excerpts. Oral history interviews will be archived at the Oral History Centre, with excerpts published on the project website and in the cookbook.

Steinbach is a key site for this research, as it includes the histories of six different ethnic groups with strong food traditions: Indigenous peoples, Mennonites, Ukrainians, Germans, French, and British. Farmers, hog producers, cheesemakers, chicken hatcheries, perogy makers, restaurant operators, and others form part of the interesting diversity of food producers in this region.



Were you one of the original contributors to the "Steinbach cookbook" – The Mennonite Treasury of Recipes?

Did you work for years producing glums koki in the kitchen at MJ's Kafé?

Did you make the borscht at the Livery Barn Restaurant?

Has Uncle Jake's Restaurant been your traditional meeting place with friends for decades?

Are you the founder of Lee's Village Restaurant?

Did you butcher hogs at the Mennonite Heritage Village?

Are you a former cook at Pete's Inn?

Did you provide the recipe for the waffle sauce during Pioneer Days?

Did you own Not Pete's Inn?

Was happy hour at the Frantz Inn a Friday ritual for your coworkers?

Did you retire from a long career at the Steinbach Hatchery?

Then we want to interview you!

Or maybe you have a recipe to share? If there's a long-standing food tradition in your family, we invite you to come cook with us! Hop aboard the Manitoba Food History Truck with your bag of groceries. We'll interview you about your life while you cook a recipe that is meaningful to you.

If you're interested in being interviewed in Steinbach sometime between 17 June and 7 July, please complete the online form at <https://www.manitobafoodhistory.ca/contact/>.



# NEW ACQUISITIONS

BY JENNA KLASSEN

*"Anyone who is a genuine Mennonite must be able to hold his drinks." 1*

It may surprise some to know that the supposed connection between Mennonite culture and sobriety is a relatively recent one. Even Steinbach, which had a reputation for being a "dry" town until just a few years ago, was never as "dry" as many have assumed. Recently, Mennonite Heritage Village (MHV) accepted a donation of two glass beer steins. The steins, discussed recently by Erin Unger in a blog entitled "Interesting Items I've Found at the Steinbach MCC" on Mennotoba.com, are souvenir items sold by MHV in 1974 to celebrate the centenary of the first Mennonite migration from Russia to Manitoba. The two steins have different designs, featuring images of the Museum's Auditorium (which in 1974 was referred to as the Artefact Building) and its Windmill. The steins were sold alongside highball glasses, windmill charms for charm bracelets, the traditional hard candy sticks, and plates featuring images of various village buildings. The steins in particular sold like hot cakes. Inspired by the beer steins, I decided to see what information I could find on the relationship between Mennonites and alcohol to determine if Mennonites truly do have a "dry" history.



Hog butchering in Chortitza Colony. Note the man in the upper right corner posing for the photo while pouring a fortifying beverage. (Photo courtesy of Vost, *Mennonite Foods & Folkways from South Russia*, p.224)

Historically, Mennonites are not a "sober" people. In fact, the consumption and creation of alcoholic beverages by Mennonites stretches far back to their time in the Vistula Delta (or Northeast Germany) in the eighteenth century, particularly in and around the city of Danzig (now Gdańsk, Poland). One of the earliest known Mennonite distilleries in Danzig was Ambrosius Vermeulen's Zum Lachs, which produced "Goldwasser" liqueur, a brandy with floating flecks of gold. The brandy became famous, and the business was run by Mennonites for two centuries.

However, Mennonites did not distill and sell liquor because of a particular interest in the business. Rather, it was one of the few vocations available to Mennonite trades and craftsmen due to the increasingly rigid rules of trade guilds in Danzig. Nevertheless, the responsible consumption of liquor was accepted by the Mennonite community and the church — consuming alcohol and smoking tobacco were acceptable practices at the West Prussian and Danzig church board meetings, and ministers and elders of Mennonite congregations even participated in family

distillery businesses.

The liquor business among Mennonites migrated with them to Russia in the nineteenth century. By 1819 there were several Mennonite brewers in the Chortitza Colony and many Mennonite villages had "drinking houses." Brandy was passed around at funerals, and schnapps was served at Faspa. In the mid-nineteenth century, the Kleine Gemeinde congregation took a firm stand against tobacco and drinks with high alcohol content, but didn't outright forbid wine and beer. Upon settling in North America, many members of the Kleine Gemeinde were influenced by the temperance movement and formed even stricter attitudes against alcohol.

How strict these attitudes were is up for debate. Some historical sources say no alcohol was to be found in entire villages, others say wine was served at particular occasions. One such occasion was the annual hog butchering bee, a community event enjoyed by Mennonites in Russia and later North America. During the butchering process, the host brought out a bottle of wine (or, on occasion, liquor), and passed it around. Every man took a swig, the size of which depended on the thickness of the pig's bacon. This was called "Spakj mäte", or "measuring the bacon."<sup>2</sup> According to Arnold Dycks' *Lost in the Steppe*, "this...went on all day, not very frequently, but frequently enough to keep everybody strong and in [a] good mood."<sup>3</sup>

In Steinbach, another example of a Mennonite community, this "good mood" is not a new sensation. The city's first public, "men's only" beer parlor opened in the early 1930s in the Tourist Hotel, on Main Street in the very center of town. Despite a petition to have it closed down in 1950 to "take away the temptation from the younger generation," the parlour remained open.<sup>4</sup> Today, a liquor vendor can be found next to the Superstore, and many of the city's restaurants openly serve a variety of alcohol.

Beer and other alcoholic beverages, were enjoyed by Mennonites in celebrations for centuries, and this continued with the celebration of the 1874 migration to Canada in 1974. If we've tended to forget about this long history, or maybe swept it under the rug, perhaps we should rather raise an MHV beer stein to celebrate our long and fascinating shared history.

Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup> A saying attributed to Dutch Mennonites of Northeast Germany. GAMEO, "Alcohol among the Mennonites of Northeast Germany." [http://gameo.org/index.php?title=Alcohol\\_Among\\_the\\_Mennonites\\_of\\_Northeast\\_Germany](http://gameo.org/index.php?title=Alcohol_Among_the_Mennonites_of_Northeast_Germany). Site accessed March 26, 2018.

<sup>2</sup> Norma Jean Vost, *Mennonite Foods & Folkways from South Russia, Volume 2 (Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 1991), 207.*

<sup>3</sup> Vost, *Mennonite Foods & Folkways*, 204

<sup>4</sup> Abe Warkentin, *Reflections on Our Heritage: A History of Steinbach and the R.M. of Hanover from 1874 (Steinbach: Derksen Printers, 1971), 154.*



# OUTREACH

BY JENNA KLASSEN

This year the curatorial department was presented with a couple of opportunities to speak with students at the university level about artefacts and curating. Andrea Dyck, Curator, spoke to one of the Mennonite Studies classes at the University of Winnipeg about how we can use artefacts as sources for interpreting and writing history. The most common sources for researching and writing history are written sources, that is, documentary evidence such as official papers, diaries, letters, etc. Only in the last few decades have historians looked to different source materials like oral histories, or artefacts. Historians can examine a physical object in the same way as a diary, determining who made it, for what reason, how it was used (and why), and who owned it, which can help us understand and interpret a part of history. As artefacts become more regularly used by historians, the artefacts at MHV can play a role in interpreting Russian Mennonite history.

The curatorial department had another opportunity to speak to a class at the University of Winnipeg. I spent a morning speaking to the students of a Curatorial Practices course. The topic was the items that the Rüsslaender Mennonites brought to Canada when they immigrated in the 1920s. I am currently writing my Master's thesis on this subject, which will be the topic for MHV's temporary exhibit in 2019. Using these artifacts and other sources, I am exploring why Rüsslaender immigrants brought the items they did, and why they were important to them and later to their descendants. I was asked to discuss my research and the process of photographing and organizing over 500 artefacts that we have here at MHV, and to discuss how we might convert my thesis subject into a successful exhibit. The students presented their exhibit ideas to their professor, Dr. Serena Keshavjee, and me. Their ideas were great, and the assignment was a wonderful way for us curators to begin preparations for next year's exhibit!



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