



# THE VILLAGE *Voice*

VOLUME 8 NO. 1 • JULY 2020

## GRAND OPENING OF MCC 100 YEARS EXHIBIT

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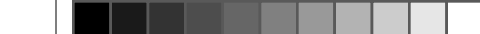
### 2019 DONOR LISTING



Agreement #40033605







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\* Outdoor buildings are closed

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Seniors (65 & Older)	\$10.00
Students (ages 13-22)	\$10.00
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MEMBERSHIP	
Annual Individual Membership** (Season-long admission)	\$30.00
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Lifetime	\$500.00

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Morden, MB

**Western Canada Aviation Museum**  
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#### HOW TO REACH MHV

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www.mhv.ca



2 The Village Voice



## TO THE REOPENED!

BY GARY DYCK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It takes centuries to build a museum like the Mennonite Heritage Village (MHV). Here we tell the story of the Mennonites who fled 'dark ages' oppression from Europe to Prussia, then from Prussia to Russia and finally from Russia to Canada with numerable other trails and detours along the way.

Each century they left us objects and stories that we lovingly picked up with soft white gloves. We cleaned these simple objects-turned-artefacts in order to see the finer details and preserve them for the next generations. We built galleries to tell their story; including a gallery that changes every year because of the many stories our forefathers have to share with us.

Like them we built a village so we could remember community and that we are never alone. Historic buildings were moved, auditoriums and a windmill built, a pond created from a stream, sheds erected to protect larger artefacts and finally a Village Centre to help a growing staff to welcome more and more visitors. A lot has been accomplished in the last 50 years so we could share what we have learned from the last 500.

When we suddenly closed March 19<sup>th</sup> due to Covid-19, it felt incongruent to MHV staff. To open and build up a museum is a complex, stimulating and life-affirming work. How could we pause the story? Could we really put our revived village back into a comatose state? We did, because we care about our community and the history it needs to fulfill. Eight weeks later we were able to reopen - one of the first museums in Canada to reopen.

Here's to the beauty of the reopened!  
To the lid off of old precious keepsakes.

Here's to the ones getting out of bed, parting the curtains and greeting the sky.  
To having many second chances.

Here's to overturning the thawed earth and smelling rich secrets.  
To new growth in familiar places.

Here's to the unlocked gate letting guests come in.  
To green pastures with far-flung fences.

Here's to the beauty of the reopened!  
To life's unceasing mercies,  
indomitable stances,  
and retold stories.  
For all the 'we've-been-here-befores'  
You are beautiful and you will not stay closed!

MHV is now safely open for your enjoyment and renewal. We have physical distancing protocols in place and a solid cleaning regimen. Welcome to the beauty that is reopening before you!



Gary Dyck



## AUXILIARY NEWS

BY EVELYN FRIESEN, AUXILIARY MEMBER (JUNE 2020)

No matter how deep the snow or how cold the temperatures, the MHV Auxiliary has been no less busy during the winter months. We have met regularly to review projects and make plans for new ones.



To keep up with the demand for Bib Aprons in the Village Gift Shop, this group of women met for a special workday. They are pictured bending over yards and yards of colourful fabric and patterns to be cut for the ever-popular Mennonite Girls Can Cook Aprons. Selected pattern pieces were later packaged to be sewn on their home sewing machines.

Others of our members continued to cook and bake and serve for regularly scheduled business luncheons and a host of Village events. The February Winterfest was such an occasion where tables in the Multi Purpose Room were filled with visitors who enjoyed the Soup Luncheon we served.

We are never short of reasons to continue our fundraising efforts. Over the winter months, the halls of the Village Centre received a fresh coat of paint that was funded by the Auxiliary. Among countless small projects, we have, once again, supported the School Education Program, we have allocated monies for past and upcoming exhibits in our Museum Galleries and have paid for expenses incurred by the Garden Club while they keep our Village grounds looking beautiful.

Though restricted by the current Covid-19 protocols, a large group of volunteers met recently for a pulling/cutting/bagging Rhubarb event. Tina, Annette, Margaret, Mary Anne, Diane, Sandi and Evelyn are pictured cutting the mounds of washed rhubarb stems—freezer-ready for the Restaurant's feature dessert. The white apron you see (with a rip on the bib) was once worn faithfully by our friend, the late Nellie Ginter—a long time member of our Auxiliary. We retrieved the apron and donned it on this occasion to remember Nellie and her many years of dedication to our organization.



Following an obvious epiphany on top of Haleakala—a 10,000 ft. Volcano in Hawaii—Linda Schroeder is poised to lead the MHV Auxiliary for another term! Linda's ambitions inspire all of us to renew our own individual commitments. Needless to say, we were very happy to hear of her illuminating moment on a recent vacation.

We invite you, our readers, to join our company and enjoy a friendly, purposeful experience with the MHV Auxiliary.



UPCOMING!

Despite having to change some of our plans, we are determined to carry on as best we can throughout the coming summer season. So, look for us in the Quilting Room, the Summer Kitchen, the gardens, the Waffle Booth and at countless other events—advertised on the MHV Website. We

will be helping to commemorate the work of Mennonite Central Committee's



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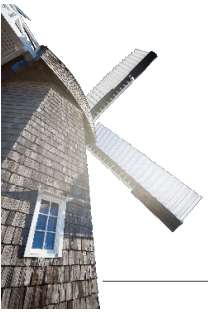
# MCC 100 YEARS

BY ANDREA KLASSEN, SENIOR CURATOR

The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is turning 100 in 2020 and Mennonite Heritage Village (MHV), together with MCC, is celebrating by looking back at the last century. The exhibit "MCC 100 Years" will open June 24, 2020 at MHV's Virtual Spring Gala Fundraiser. The exhibit begins all the way back at the beginning in 1920, when MCC was formed in response to the crisis experienced by Mennonites in the Soviet Union (today Ukraine), who were straining under the burden of revolution, drought, epidemics, waves of anarchist raids and arrests, and famine. Mennonites in North America combined their efforts in order to help and MCC was born. It sent relief in the form of \$13.5 million to assist through relief kitchens, material aid, food parcels, and medicine. It also sent 50 Fordson tractors to provide the means for Mennonites in Ukraine to become self-sufficient again. In 1925 the worst of the crisis had passed and MCC ended its first relief and development project. After World War Two, MCC again provided aid to Mennonites fleeing the terrors of war in Stalinist Russia. MCC helped to house, clothe, and feed Mennonite refugees, ran feeding kitchens for Mennonites and non-Mennonites alike, helped to fight Mennonite repatriation to the Soviet Union, and assisted Mennonites with finding new homes overseas. Perhaps its biggest legacy from this massive refugee assistance project is negotiating the migration of over 10,000 Mennonites to safety in North and South America. Their assistance in World War Two was given "in the name of Christ," a slogan that continues to be used by MCC today. Since World War Two, MCC has grown and has projects at home and all over the world. Their mandate is to provide relief, promote development and self-sufficiency, and to further the cause of peace. In Canada, MCC began initiatives like the MCC Food Bank in 1974 to help with food security. The Food Bank gave Canadian farmers the means to help alleviate hunger around the world by sharing their harvests with people hit by drought, famine, or other emergencies. The MCC Food Bank became the "Canadian Foodgrains Bank" in 1983, when other Christian denominations joined MCC in the project. In Canada, MCC's work at home and abroad is supported in large measure by the local MCC Thrift Shops. This initiative has local Manitoba roots as the first thrift shop was established in March 1972 by four women in Altona, followed the next month by the shop in Steinbach. The thrift shop movement was begun by women who took action when MCC decided to reduce its overseas shipments of used clothing in 1972. The women decided to sell these goods locally to generate income for MCC's work around the world. By the end of 1978, the idea had taken off and 30 MCC thrift stores had opened in Canada, with a further 26 in the United States. Although not exclusively operated by women, women led the movement, organizing thrift shop leadership, purchasing or renting facilities, managing the shops, and providing hundreds of volunteer hours staffing them. Last year alone, revenues from thrift shops contributed \$19 million to MCC's work.



Caption: In 2007, founders of MCC's network of thrift shops, Linie Friesen, Selma Loewen, Susan Giesbrecht, and Sara Stoesz gathered at a celebration in Winnipeg to recognize their contributions to MCC. Credit: MCC, 32562



# NEW ACQUISITIONS

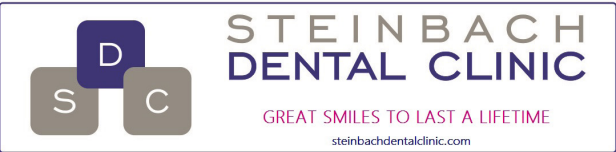
BY ANDREA KLASSEN, SENIOR CURATOR

While most of the artefacts in the collection at Mennonite Heritage Village (MHV) are from past eras, there are a few that are from our contemporary history as Mennonites in Canada. One of our newest acquisitions was one such artefact: a protest sign from the General Strike for Climate Action, held in Winnipeg on September 27, 2019. The protest sign plays on the well-known image of Mennonite martyr Dirk Willems saving his pursuer from icy waters. In the version printed on the sign, the famous etching from the Martyrs Mirror has been digitally altered to show Dirk Willems saving a polar bear that has fallen through the ice and is flailing in the water. The message of the sign is clear: as the polar bear (signifying the environment), bears the burden of climate change and suffers, Mennonites (embodied by Dirk Willems) are called to care and to help. The other side of the sign is even more decisive, stating in bold, colourful letters, "Mennonites on Climate Strike." The sign was created by Kyle Penner of Steinbach, Manitoba for the protest rally in Winnipeg, which saw 10,000-12,000 people participate. The march was held in response to Greta Thunberg's student-initiated movement call "Fridays for Future," in which she and her fellow students in Sweden went on strike every Friday to call upon their government to take action on climate change. The student-led initiative became a global movement and the march in Winnipeg was held in conjunction with a visit from Thunberg to Canada last September. Wherever one falls on the spectrum of beliefs about climate change, the protest sign is unique in that it, and the conversations it engendered, revolved around what it means to be a Mennonite in Manitoba in 2019. The protest sign uses a centuries-old etching to tell us something about political life and current debates in Canada in 2019 and how Mennonites have engaged with that world. When I asked Penner if he had received any criticism for the sign, he noted that some of the comments he received were less about the sign and more about what it pointed to. Some detractors, he commented, criticized how much Mennonites should be involved in political action. This critique takes the Mennonite history of being "in the world and not of the world" and invokes it for today. This history of being "the quiet in the land" meant that many Mennonites in past saw their role in society as "subjects," meek and respectful of the governing authorities who they saw as ordained by God to rule over them. While they petitioned governments,

they never demanded action. In the minds of many Mennonites in the past, this belief prohibited them from participating in politics or public life more generally. Conversely, most Mennonites in Canada today see themselves less as "subjects" and more as "citizens" who have rights and who exercise responsibilities in society. Mennonites today are more likely to vote in elections, hold public office, and otherwise engage the world in public ways than those of past generations. This protest sign, and the critiques it received, places it in this centuries-long conversation of what Mennonites' roles are in society, what their attitudes toward governing authorities ought to be, and whether they are to humbly submit as subjects or exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens. History is sometimes hard to see when it looks like the present. MHV's mission involves collecting artefacts that shed light on what it means to be Mennonite. Sometimes it is easier to know what those objects are when they are from the 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, but our mandate also includes collecting artefacts that speak to Mennonite life in Canada in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Those contemporary artefacts are often harder to find as our debates about what it means to be Mennonite today often take a more subtle shape than they did in the past. We are grateful for donors like Kyle Penner who donate objects, like this protest sign, that reflect an aspect of Mennonite life in Canada today.



Caption: Kyle Penner holds protest sign at the General Strike for Climate Action, on the grounds of the Manitoba Legislature on September 27, 2019.



# GENERAL STORE

BY JO-ANN FRIESEN, GIFT SHOP, RECEPTION & OFFICE MANAGER

The General Store, located on Main Street in the Outdoor Village, opened a little later this year for the season on May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Vendors were very busy creating amazing designs throughout the off season. We are looking forward to the many new items to grace the store shelves this coming year. Travelers view the General Store as a highlight of their museum visit. Artisans remark how pleased they are to interact with guests from who share their own "General Store" stories. The General Store houses a great collection of artefacts that reveal the ingenious ways how

progressive our pioneers were. This season, there will be eleven local artisans providing quality handmade items for your every need, check out [www.mhv.ca](http://www.mhv.ca) to find out more. The variety of goods ready for purchase include old fashioned candy, MHV's own stone milled flour (made onsite in our Windmill), and horseshoe nail rings made in the Blacksmith Shop. As Manitobans head out to rediscover their own province this summer, we are excited to welcome each guest. Do stop by this season and get that perfect item for yourself or for your special someone.

Amber Knit's Co
A Switch In Time...
Embroidery Cards & Eggery
Sweet Designs by Evy 18" Doll Clothes Through Glass Images
Hilda's Closet - Crochet Doll Clothes (For small dolls)
Ellie's Treasures
Tea at Grannys
Relax with Flax
Night Owl Beading
Grampa Epp's Ointment



# ADMISSIONS, VILLAGE BOOKS & GIFTS

BY JO-ANN FRIESEN, GIFT SHOP, RECEPTION & OFFICE MANAGER

Village Books & Gifts continues to be the place for Author reading events. February 2020 was our largest event to date. In celebration of "I love to Read" month, MHV invited Steinbach's Mayor, Earl Funk, to read a children's story, local renowned photographer Dennis Fast read from his book titled "Princess", a Grade 2 & 3 Choir presented a melodious feast as well as authors, Dr. Arden Thiessen, and Mr. Ralph Friesen read from their latest publications. Our Main Gallery & the temporary Gerhard Ens Gallery continue to be extremely popular destinations. MHV is the highlight of their Canadian tour. This season MHV is presenting "MCC's Centennial". Our Curator works very hard to bring each story to life in a way you will not soon forget. A must see, the exhibit will be on display June 24 - April 30, 2021. MHV Receptionists offer a welcoming smile; a few kind gestures as well as pertinent information which help travelers enjoy their visit to the museum. On a regular basis this impeccable team takes on a role of concierge, guiding our guests to their next destination, whether onsite or elsewhere in Manitoba. MHV is rated the number one tourist stop in Steinbach and Blue Planet's #1 stop in Manitoba.

Village Books & Gifts houses a unique array of merchandise that draws a variety of consumers looking for something historical, unique, and a little bit of Steinbach. We continue to have an excellent selection of local novelists, genealogists, historians, biographers, photography, cookbooks, giftware, and souvenirs. We receive new & interesting items on a regular basis. MHV has introduced our very own brand of historically driven gifts and toys including wood pens, bonnets, magnet kits, quilting kits, peg doll kits and so much more. Our "Menno Cards" and "Menno Apparel" continue to be our hottest sellers. We strive to find a balance by carrying heritage driven merchandise, as well as travel friendly souvenirs. The mandate of the Gift Shop is to provide souvenirs and reading material that reflect the Russian Mennonite story. As the Gift Shop, Reception, & Office Manager, I look forward to a new season with knowledgeable, seasoned staff & volunteers sprinkled with a lot of fun. Experience the difference today. Interested in upcoming Village Books & Gifts events and in-store deals? Go to our website [www.mhv.ca](http://www.mhv.ca).



Pasta  
Smart eggs  
Granola

Naturally good!





# WINTERFEST CARNIVAL 2020

BY ROBERT GOERTZEN, PROGRAM MANAGER

Manitoba winters are long and generations of Manitobans have found ways to embrace the snow, the ice and the indoor warmth. The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Winterfest Carnival at MHV on Saturday, February 15, celebrated our community coming together to share in these experiences. Downhill sledding, skating, tug of war games, snow sculpting, and a circle game area on the ice were some of the fun activities that families enjoyed outside. People huddled around the bonfire to roast marshmallows or visited the Semlin to warm up and hear the story of Sush, a pioneer girl living in a sod home with her family and some farm animals. Horse drawn sleigh rides; both open air and covered sleigh were filled to capacity most of the day. The MHV Auxiliary served up a wonderful warmup lunch of home-made soup, hotdogs, Schmetje, hot chocolate, and puffed wheat cake. Later in the afternoon, there was a Fasma of cheese, pickles and Schmetje with homemade rhubarb jam. There was something deli-



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

BY ROBERT GOERTZEN, PROGRAM MANAGER

**\*Due to the COVID 19 pandemic health restrictions, all planned events are subject to being postponed or cancelled\* (please check mhv.ca for updates)**

## JUNE

**June 24, 2020 – April 1, 2021**  
**MCC 100 Years – Exhibit**

**July 4 – August 29**  
**Demonstration Days**

**July 4 – August 29**  
**MHV Auxiliary Rollkuchen Fund-raiser**

## JULY

**July 13 – 17**  
**Pioneer Day Camp** for children ages 5-7

**July 20 – 24**  
**Pioneer Day Camp** for children ages 5-12

## AUGUST

**August 3**  
**Auxiliary Quilt Raffle**

**August 10-14, 2020**  
**Pioneer Day Camp** for children ages 8-10

## SEPTEMBER

**Sunday, September 6**  
**Canada Day Celebration:** tentatively planned in conjunction with city of Steinbach Fire Works. Free Admission

**Monday, September 7, 2020**  
**Fall on the Farm:** Experience harvest work, hearty food, corn on the cob, music, hog butchering, and pi-

cious for everyone! Indoors, the activities continued, with a crokinole tournament in the Auditorium and a variety of puzzles, books and games for all ages. A highlight of the afternoon was the performance of Tibert le Voyageur, a Metis storyteller who shared some of the wintertime experiences of the neighbours who lived in the communities surrounding the early Mennonite settlers. The whole audience was singing, paddling and laughing with Tibert.

February 15 was a great day to come together with friends and family to enjoy our Manitoba winter, and learn about life on the prairies in the 1800's. We hosted over 500 visitors and are planning more wonderful winter activities in the future.

ioneer demonstrations.

**Sunday, September 20, 2020**  
**Open Farm Day** Free Admission

**Friday, September 25 – Sunday, September 27, 2020**  
**Culture Days:** a celebration of cultural diversity in southeastern Manitoba

## OCTOBER

**Thursday, October 1, 2020**  
**Volunteer Appreciation:** If you have volunteered at MHV this year, you are invited to attend. No formal invitations will be mailed or emailed.

**Thursday, October 1, 2020**  
Village grounds and Livery Barn

Restaurant closed for season.

**Saturday, October 3, 2020**  
**East Menn Committee:** annual lecture series

## NOVEMBER

**Saturday, November 14, 2020**  
**Christmas at the Village:** Christmas market, wagon rides, hot chocolate

## DECEMBER

**December 20, 2020 – January 4, 2021**  
Closed for Christmas/New Year



# 2019 DONOR LISTING

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