

*Celebrate with Us...*

*MHV 61st Anniversary  
151 years of Mennonites in Manitoba*

# Mennonite Heritage Village



**AGM** Annual  
General  
Meeting  
**2025**

Mennonite Heritage Village  
(Canada) Inc.

231 PTH 12 North  
Steinbach, MB  
R5G 1T8

Phone: 204-326-9661  
Web: [www.mhv.ca](http://www.mhv.ca)

# Vision and Mission

## Vision

### VISION STATEMENT

**MHV will be the premier interpretive centre for the Russian Mennonite story.**

## Mission

### MISSION STATEMENT

**The mission of MHV is to preserve and exhibit for present and future generations the experience and story of the Russian Mennonites and their contributions to Manitoba.**

### CORE VALUES

**Integrity  
Respect  
Excellence  
Financial Sustainability  
Environmental Responsibility  
Visitor/Customer Friendly  
Member Owned  
Teamwork**

### MHV BOARD MEMBERS

**Willie Peters  
Waldy Ens  
Kerry Fast  
Carlee Friesen  
Sid Reimer  
Neil Klassen  
Conrad Stoesz  
Karren Thiessen  
Erin Unger  
Matt Wieler  
James Loewen**

### PAST PRESIDENT

**Doris Penner**

### BY VIRTUE OF POSITION

**MHV Auxiliary President**

**Linda Schoeder**



# AGM Agenda

60th Annual General Meeting  
April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025



## **Welcome**

Willie Peters/Matt Wieler

## **Approval of Agenda**

Matt Wieler

## **Opening**

Robert Goertzen

## **Minutes of AGM, April 2, 2024,**

Waldy Ens

## **President's Report**

Matt Wieler for Willie Peters

## **Executive Director's Report**

Robert Goertzen

## **MHV Auxiliary's Report**

Linda Schroeder

## **Finance Report 2024**

Matt Wieler

## **2025 Budget**

Matt Wieler

## **Appointment of Auditors for 2025**

Matt Wieler

## **Nominating Committee Report**

Erin Unger

## **Election of Directors**

Erin Unger

## **Closing Remarks and Adjournment**

Willie Peters/ Matt Wieler

# **Mennonite Heritage Village (MHV)**

## **59th Annual General Meeting**

### **Minutes April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 - 7:30 PM**

**1. Welcome and Call to Order:** Doris began the meeting by welcoming everyone. This meeting is to learn how the year 2023 unfolded. MHV is a place where we are reminded of our heritage. She prayed a prayer of opening

**2. Approval of Agenda:** (Report Book page 3) reports

MOTION: That the agenda be approved with amendments (dates):

M/S/C: Sid/Barry Dyck

**3. Opening:** Thanks for coming. It has been a good year in some ways and a hard year in other ways. He has been reading a book called Die Wise - We re-collect the past. He shared that his father is in the hospital and he quoted him. It was a hard journey in 1874-5 for his ancestors. Gary did not know much about the journey until now. It is important to re-collect the past. We are thankful for the museum that does this so well.

**4. Minutes of AGM, April 4, 2023 (Pages 3-4):** Waldy reviewed the minutes.

MOTION: That the minutes of April 19, 2022, be accepted as presented:

M/S/C: Waldy Ens/Erin

**5. President's Report** (Page 5-6): Doris began by reading the mission statement of the village. This statement was successfully followed this year. She highlighted the winter activities, the Spring Gala, the Russlaender exhibit, the renewal of the museum buildings. She thanked Gary and the board and the board members who are leaving. Her term is coming to an end, and she expressed appreciation.

**6. Executive Director's Report** (Page 7): Gary thanked Nathan Dyck for putting the book together so well. 2023 was a good year for events and exhibits. It has been very busy. Some of our exhibits have been travelling and that has been good. There have been many improvements to the buildings on the site. Nathan has been working on digitizing. Program Development has been going well with Robert at the helm. The gift shop is successful with Nita and Joanne. Rentals have also been picking up.

**7. MHV Auxiliary's Report** (Pages 19-20): Mary reported that the auxiliary has had another busy year with many events with an income of over 40k. They enjoyed dispersing these funds in many different ways in 2023. (see report).

MOTION: That the reports of the president, ED and the Auxiliary be accepted into the records.

M/S/C: Al Hamm/Albert Toews

**8. Financial Statements 2023\*:** Carley reported that we have an independent auditor that stated that there are no flags. She stated that we had an increase of total revenues. This is a recalibration year after Covid. Expenses went up significantly. This leads to a significant deficit on the bottom line.

**9. 2024 Budget (Pages 17-18):** Carly reported that donations and fundraising should go up this year leading to a budget that is closer to being balanced. Questions?

Assets are based on a depreciated value. What is the plan for the village center? The Gallery is slated to get a renewal which will be the centerpiece of a Capital Campaign.

MOTION: That the financial statement for 2022 and the 2023 budget be approved.

M/S/C: Carly Friesen/Erin Unger

**10. Appointment of the Auditor for 2024**

MOTION: That MNP be appointed as the auditor for another year.

M/S/C: Carly Friesen/Conrad Stoesz

**11. Nominating Committee Report** (Pages 19-21): Erin reported that there is a slate of candidates: Sid Reimer, Willi Peters, James Loewen, Karen Thiessen  
Motion Kerry second Neil

**12. Election of Directors:**

**13. Closing Remarks and Adjournment:**

Gary did a presentation of plaques to Roland and Doris

Doris Adjourned the meeting. (8:14)

\* Document attached

# Board of Directors Report

## Willie Peters | Board President

Board of Directors' Report I am so pleased to welcome you to the 60th Annual General Meeting of this Manitoba Signature Museum! We have weathered a year of changes. While 2024 contained some complications, those tests prompted a significant evaluation of the organization's mission, vision, and values. Encouraged by the strong community surrounding us, we formulated a plan to move from the old to the new.

Just over a year ago, while on an extended holiday, I received several calls from a Nominating Committee member urging me to consider returning to serve on MHV's Board of Directors. If truth be told, it was more of a push than a tap...and here I am! I want to express sincere appreciation to Doris Penner who followed and preceded me in a leadership role. She has served in numerous capacities. Doris' valuable contributions as the President concluded on April 2, 2024. Since then, she has assisted the board as the Past President. Along with Doris, there are two individuals who will also be leaving their seats. Waldemar/Waldy Ens has been an integral part of the board as well as the Executive Committee, and Neil Klassen served one term. We are so grateful for their involvement!

Following the resignation of Executive Director Gary Dyck effective April 19th, we were left with a vacancy. The Executive Committee and Board of Directors were heartened when the employees picked up the slack while decisions were being made about how to proceed. Enthusiasm for the future of the organization surfaced when Robert Goertzen accepted the appointment of Interim Executive Director (May) and permanent Executive Director (November). We want to acknowledge Robert's diligent work as the Program Manager – a post he reluctantly let go to step into his new job. There were others who left our employment: Development Coordinator Nathan Dyck, Private Events Coordinator Jenny Froese (later Fleimann) and the assistant for the "Private Events" position, Shai Braun; Custodian Carmen Enns and Custodian Makenzie Lavoie. I want to thank those staff members who richly contributed to life in our village! We were delighted to see Senior Curator Andrea Klassen come back in early March 2025 after her maternity leave. Welcome to each new staff member who started in 2024!

The Board of Directors received four members last year: James Loewen, Karen Thiessen, and Sid. Reimer and myself. While we faced some steep mountains in 2024, there were also bright spots. All of the events were skillfully prepared and well attended! Our region was fortunate to have pleasant weather for the summer. The staff, Board of Directors, MHV Auxiliary and volunteers displayed incredible teamwork! I am overwhelmed when I consider the massive amount of work that was done – during and beyond regular hours, behind the scenes, in committees, and by partner organizations. Many prayers for and gifts to this institution were generously offered!



MHV's leadership (volunteers and employees) would like to make our circle of friends aware of the serious challenge we are currently facing. We need extra help with our budget. The cost of operating the facility increases every year. At the same time, it is necessary to maintain programming for the continuation of the Mennonite Heritage Village. We struggled to create a budget that is reasonable, however we will need extra help to reach it. Therefore, we ask you not to forget us as you consider where to direct your donations in 2025.

Museum employees and supporters find themselves in a contradictory situation as they work to remain relevant to a contemporary audience while sharing history...and in our case, a cultural legacy. It is a juggling act to find the right balance between fulfilling the purpose and drawing an audience. As we look ahead, focusing on our mission to preserve the story of the Russian Mennonites, we think about those who did not relocate and are now suffering in Ukraine. A quote by Robert Edsel articulates it so effectively. If, in time of peace, our museums and art galleries are important to the community, in time of war they are doubly valuable. For then, when the petty and the trivial fall away and we are face to face with final and lasting values, we... must summon to our defense all our intellectual and spiritual resources. We must guard jealously all we have inherited from a long past, all we are capable of creating in a trying present, and all we are determined to preserve in a foreseeable future.



# Executive Director's Report

## **Robert Goertzen | Executive Director**

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

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

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

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



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



# Membership Committee Report

**Matt Wieler | Chair of Membership Committee**

## **Changes to our Membership Committee**

In 2024 we started off the year with some changes to our committee. We watched Kaitlyn, Gary and Barb leave our membership committee. The remaining members being Matt Wieler and Sid Reimer. With the changes to our executive director in April, high level demands were put on our executive committee to work with our Board of Directors, and our Finance Committee. Although Matt Wieler was the chair of this membership committee, it was more important to work with our executive and finance committees in 2024 to ensure the future of MHV was focused on as a priority. Looking back, allocating all time towards the executive committee and the finance committee was the right choice.

Sid Reimer joined our board of directors in April 2024 and has continually supported the MHV from his wise experienced perspective. Sid Reimer has been and currently is a great asset to the MHV and we greatly appreciate Sid's support now and over the years. Sid's visionary perspective along with this seal for excellence challenges MHV to raise the bar and expect a higher goal. We appreciate this perspective.

Now in 2025, our board of directors will work together with Robert Goertzen on re-establishing a new membership committee with a willing chair to support this membership committee. We hope to see a new membership committee meeting after our AGM after April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Sid Reimer and Matt Wieler will be willing to sit on this committee to help transition the new membership committee into the new leadership it requires, but both Sid and Matt have passed on chairing this committee in 2025.

# Curatorial Department's Report

**Andrea Klassen | Senior Curator**

**Garth Doerksen | Assistant Curator**

## **Curatorial Department Annual Report for 2024**

This year was an unusual one for the Curatorial department, as Senior Curator Andrea Klassen left on maternity leave in March. We are grateful to Assistant Curator Garth Doerksen, who ably led the department's activities this year.



With Andrea away, a team was assembled to create an exhibit to mark the 150th anniversary of Mennonites immigrating to Manitoba. The team was led by Roland Sawatzky, Curator of History at The Manitoba Museum and former Senior Curator at MHV. Historians and experts in material culture Ernest N. Braun, Edward G. Krahn, Alexandra Kroeger, along with graphic designers Anikó Szabo and Oskar Sawatzky, joined Garth to complete the team. Installation took place just in time for Pioneer Days at the start of August and the exhibit officially opened September 24.



The exhibit features seven themes, tracing the Mennonites' journey from Imperial Russia to settlement in Manitoba to the inevitable changes which occurred during the first decades as the Mennonites began to integrate into Manitoba society and its economy. This artefact-rich exhibit also highlights the vital assistance provided to these early Mennonites by the Métis, First Nations, and the neighbours from the Clear Springs settlement. This exhibit will remain on display in the Gerhard Ens Gallery through 2025 to mark this special anniversary.



While *Mennonite Reflections* was the major exhibit at MHV in 2024, several others also took place. In February, *Mennonite Village Photography: Views from Manitoba, 1890 - 1940*, a traveling exhibit created by the Mennonite Historic Arts Committee, opened. This exhibit featured a collection of never-before-seen, enlarged photographs created by four Manitoba Mennonite photographers, two from the East Reserve and two from the West Reserve, in the twentieth century. Throughout 2024, the traveling exhibit *Leaving Canada: The Mennonite Migration to Mexico*, created by MHV with exhibit partners Mennonite Historical Society of Canada and the Plett Foundation, continued to travel across western Canada. From 2023 until the summer of 2024, the exhibit traveled to museums, archives, community centres, galleries, and other community spaces from British Columbia to Ontario. We would like to thank volunteer Doug Kathler for his excellent carpentry that brought the vision for this exhibit into a physical reality. The exhibit was well-received at each host location and won the Association of Manitoba Museum's "Award of Excellence" and the Association of Manitoba Archives' "Manitoba Day Award."

## Out in the Village

In 2024, we completed the “Village Street Renewal” project, which began in 2023. The project saw the repainting of the Village Centre trim and the exteriors of the General Store and Livery Barn Restaurant, each of which also received new hand-lettered signage. Perhaps the largest part of the project was the complete renovation of the Printery, whose rotten foundation was completely excavated and replaced. The renovated building reopened in 2024 as the “Steinbach Post Printery,” highlighting the significance of the *Steinbach Post* newspaper in Mennonite history. The Windmill also saw extensive maintenance as we welcomed a team of windmill technicians from the Netherlands for the first time since the pandemic. They performed much-needed maintenance, ably assisted by our volunteer Windmill Maintenance Team, led by Gary Snider. Phase 2 of the outdoor signage project was also completed in 2024. The project produced 15 new interpretive panels throughout the Village. 2025 will see the final phase of this project to complete the overhaul of the interpretive signage in the village. Finally, we were pleased to host Dale Hildebrand, who used the village as the set for filming scenes for *Where the Cottonwoods Grow*, a documentary about the 150th anniversary of the Mennonites’ arrival.



## Collections

In the collections department, MHV took in 24 donations consisting of 89 objects, each valuable to enhance MHV's mission of telling the story of Russian-descendant Mennonites in Canada.

A deep gratitude goes out to the many people who contributed to the curatorial department throughout 2024, especially in light of Andrea's absence. It certainly takes a village to accomplish great things. Thank you!



# Development Coordinator's Report

**Brian Cabral | Development Coordinator**

**Brian Cabral on Behalf of Nathan Dyck**

The Development Coordinator role at MHV is primarily responsible for connecting with supporters and donors, both individuals and businesses. As well, a lot of time and energy is focused on promotions, marketing, and public awareness. 2024 has been a busy year on all fronts.

Through networking at Steinbach Chamber of Commerce events and through private conversations, MHV has increased the level of support through business sponsorships, both the seasonal sponsorships and the event sponsorships, totaling \$33,000 in 2024. The expectation is to continue to build on these business connections and to find ways to engage more community-minded companies.

Our fundraising events continue to offer a way for various interest groups to support the mission of MHV. The partnership that we had with Eden Foundation for Tractor Trek (antique tractor ride) and Peace Trek (bicycle ride) was put on pause in 2024 due to some changes in organizational focus, but the hope was to reengage with Eden Foundation again in 2025. Nevertheless, both events went ahead as planned with net revenue for each event exceeding the previous year's totals. A highlight of the year was the Spring Gala, held in May, with 100 guests enjoying wonderful food, lively music entertainment, and two guest speakers, former premier of Manitoba, Edward Schreyer and former MLA, Kevin Chief. The evening was a tribute to the community leaders who started Mennonite Heritage Village as well as a challenge to continue to listen to the stories of our neighbours and friends, as we celebrate our own heritage.

Marketing and communications are important for outreach into the local community and to promote tourism from other parts of Manitoba and beyond. We have very good relationships with our local media organizations, and we are very thankful for the interest that they show in our activities, programs and events by featuring MHV in numerous 'community interest' stories. We also engage with Travel Manitoba to assist with the promotion of MHV to the broader tourism community.

Information technology is essential for many aspects of our museum, from admissions to memberships, from social media promotion to everyday communication and planning within the organization. For this reason, we received a grant from the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce to do an assessment of our current IT needs, our current IT deficiencies, and our future requirements.

The results have meant an increase in our IT security practices and a basis for knowledgeable conversations with Aspenlane Technology, our IT provider, to maximize the tools that we currently have available. We were fortunate to get funding to hire a summer student to work on digitizing thousands of photographs and images currently held in photo albums. Some of our long-time volunteers assisted with identifying people in the photos for proper description of the images.

MHV continues to apply for grants for various aspects of our operations and funded projects. These grants typically come from various levels of government or from private foundations. Efforts are made to ensure that the grants are assisting us with existing needs and programs. We thank all members and supporters for your continued support of the MHV as we form partnerships with the broader community to provide an amazing space for gathering and events. The work we do generates memories and connections that are an invaluable part of the community, and we are excited to work alongside our amazing volunteers, community groups and businesses to be a place open to all!

# Program Manager's Report

## Robert Goertzen | Program Manager

Mennonite Heritage Village commemorated two anniversaries in 2024, the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of the first Mennonite settlers for Manitoba and the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of MHV's creation to preserve and tell these stories of early Mennonite settlement in southern Manitoba. These anniversaries were featured throughout our events and programs in spring, summer and fall.

The Education department was very capably led by our seasonal Education Coordinator, Reann Thiessen and supported by assistants Hannah Klassen and Desiree Vermette. They hosted nearly 3000 students, providing experiential learning opportunities for school groups and creating engaging activities for the day camp program in July, August and December. The support of dedicated volunteer interpreters enabled MHV to provide a safe, outdoor environment for meaningful interactions in a historical context. Teachers and parents continue to provide positive feedback with high levels of satisfaction for our school visits and our day camp programs.

An unusually rainy spring challenged our program staff to find ways to keep visitors dry and safe. Our July 1<sup>st</sup> Canada Day celebrations were hampered by wet grounds and steady rain for much of the day, so most of the outdoor programming was cancelled, including horse drawn wagon rides and demonstrating pioneer skills. 1600 people attended our flag raising ceremony and stayed to enjoy great food from the Livery Barn Restaurant and the Waffle Booth as they listened to our planned music entertainment in the Peter Barkman Summer Pavilion. Though we had only one third of our usual attendance, it was still worthwhile to offer free programming for our community, utilizing indoor spaces like the Auditorium, the General Store, and the Summer Pavilion.

Our Pioneer Days festival on the August long weekend continued to focus on early pioneer activities like horse drawn field work, spinning wool into yarn, butter churning and threshing grain with antique equipment. We were excited to include a Saturday morning reenactment of the arrival of Mennonites at the banks of the Red River in 1874, being assisted by the Red River Metis who used their carts and horses to move people and belongings to shelter and eventually to their homesteads. Armand and Kelly Jerome participated by demonstrating this act of community generosity and assistance between Metis and Mennonite settlers. Another highlight of the Pioneer Days weekend was the premier showing of the 25 minute 'teaser' of the newly created film, 'Where the Cottonwoods Grow' directed by Dale Hildebrand and commissioned by the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society.

The mini film was shown 4 times throughout the weekend to a full house each time. This was a wonderful portrayal which looked at the reasons for the Mennonite migration to Manitoba and the difficulties encountered in this journey. While this was only the first part of the entire film, there was much anticipation for the fall release of the final version of the complete film. We were very happy to have been one of the settings used for the filming of various film interviews and equally thrilled to be able to host the premiere at Pioneer Days.

Throughout the summer, our Program Assistant, Jaysa Thiessen, worked with our hundreds of volunteers to prepare for the big festivals and the smaller programs. She coordinated the recruiting and training of new volunteers and equipped our returning volunteers with the supplies and space needed to demonstrate pioneer activities, to welcome all visitors and to contribute to a better understanding of our heritage. Our volunteers continue to be integral to the success of Mennonite Heritage Village. They support our grounds maintenance and beautification, they repair and maintain our buildings, structures and equipment and they enable us to plan events, programs and activities for visitors and the community by sharing their expertise and experience through the telling of our heritage stories and experiences. Thank you for continuing to value our museum and the opportunities to pass on our heritage as we welcome all generations and all members of our community.



# Admissions, Village Books & Gifts, General Store

## **Nita Wiebe | Reception, Village Book & Gifts**

### **Admissions/Reception:**

2024 was another busy year at MHV and our reception team processed thousands of visitors, a 20% increase from 2023. Fall on the Farm had the greatest increase in attendance with 30%. We were able to hire an admission support staff for the summer months giving weekend support for festivals and relief for permanent staff on regular weekends. Wages were covered by a grant.

### **Village Books & Gifts:**

While our souvenir sales dropped slightly in 2024, the General store was carrying several items normally sold in the Giftshop and they saw a 25% increase in their (our) souvenir sales. A profitable partnership with VBG stock in two locations for added visibility.

We also increased our book sales by 7%, partially due to double the number of Author's Nights, featuring some authors with a large 'fan base', namely Ralph Friesen and James Urry and their newly released books. Attendance was excellent and book sales were brisk both nights. Jo-Ann did the organization this year while I, Nita made sure books were in stock and hosted the events.



## Jo-Ann Friesen | General Store

In 2024, the General Store was used as a warming hut for folks taking in all the winter outdoor activities during Winter in the Village as well as the Winter Carnival. The regulated temperature of the store has been a tremendous improvement to its functionality year-round.

May 1 – Sept 30, the General Store greeted all of our visitors with a fantastic selection of handmade products provided by eleven local artisans, a wide variety of old-fashioned candy, MHV's own Windmill stone ground flour, toys, and souvenirs. The General Store was usually the first stop as folks toured the museum grounds and was a bustling destination all season long. Upon entering the store, visitors were met with a friendly nostalgic environment, artefacts lined the walls and products for sale throughout. Folks repeated time and again that the store is a true gem in that it is not just a building, but an actual "working" store. Looks of wonder, huge smiles, and stories of bygone times are shared as they rediscovered many childhood artefacts and memories. They commented on how alive and welcoming the store feels, and how it is so very important in today's ever-changing world that we keep history alive. Visitors expressed their sincere appreciation for the work MHV is doing.

With the old-fashioned candy being so popular, during Canada Day, Pioneers Days, and Fall on the Farm, the General Store moved the candy under a booth set up on the grounds. Folks were elated at the ease of access and loved stopping by to get their bag full of goodies.

The local artisans participated in being storekeepers throughout the season, always ready with warm smiles, hearty conversation, and relevant information about the General Store, its artefacts as well as the museum.



# Private Events Report

**Elise Plessis | Private Events Coordinator**

## **Private Events Coordinator Report**

I began my Private Events journey in April 2024 After nearly 20 years in the manufacturing industry. The switch was quite the culture shock so to say. While it was quite challenging to take over the role from the outgoing coordinator right at the start of the busy wedding season, I was able to navigate some very bumpy roads with the kind assistance from the wonderful seasoned staff members so I would just like to say how grateful I am for their knowledge and willingness to answer all of my endless questions.

That being said, here are some highlights of the Private Events Department for 2024.

- There were 26 weddings held last year.
- Theater productions from The Looking Glass Theater.
- We were part of a movie set for Autumn at Apple Hill which filmed here in June.
- Attended the Wonderful Wedding Show.
- Committed to bring many “outsourced” services back into the museum such as obtaining the trophy case covers which we would previously have to rent ourselves, and more catering opportunities for the Livery Barn Restaurant with a new private event catering lunch and dinner menu, working together with the Food Manager.

I have worked hard to bring in more documentation and rental policies to protect the interests of the museum as well as to bring in more décor options and services to improve the experience of our rental clients and increase revenue for the museum. I am looking forward to the busy season this year with a better understanding of how all the cogs in the MHV machine work together and I am very happy to be one of those cogs. Showcasing the beauty of the museum and hearing the many compliments and referrals from guests is a personal highlight for me.



# MHV Auxiliary Report

**Linda Schroeder | President**

**Janet Ens | Vice President**

**Frieda Loewen | Secretary**

**Martha Friesen | Treasurer**

Auxiliary meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month at MHV with an average attendance of 18 and a membership of 24.

2024 saw several changes for the MHV Auxiliary. We made the decision to relinquish running the Waffle Booth to MHV. This certainly made a large dent in our anticipated income, but it was easier knowing the MHV staff saw to running the booth very successfully. Secondly, we committed to operating the Summer Kitchen during special event days. We continued to cook rollkuchen to serve with watermelon on the special event days.

We had two very special occasions that we hosted this past summer. The first was a collaboration with the Steinbach & Area Garden club at the beginning of July. The Auxiliary hosted a Garden Tea in the front yard of the Housebarn. The Garden club hosted garden tours around Steinbach & area with the tour ending at the MHV garden where we also served the tea. 200 guests enjoyed the event immensely and it was a beautiful afternoon with a lovely view and a delicious English tea with a Mennonite twist! The second event was a celebration of Mennonite Pioneer women. It was to honor our grandmothers and great grandmothers whose stories are rarely told. There were 10 presenters at various stations in the outdoor village and of course the delicious faspas with Zwiebach & cakes ended this wonderful warm afternoon.

We have continued to cater small lunches in the Village Center during the winter months. Several women are still quilting on a regular basis every week. We held the quilt raffle in September this year and will do so again in September 2025.

We are often challenged to do new things and during last winter we were asked to cater a charcuterie snack for a chamber event at MHV. It too was a fun experience for us and also expanded our catering capabilities!

In fall we were again asked to cater the Southeast Rotary Dare luncheon.

The Christmas Market & Winter Carnival also had us providing small lunches & snacks.

These events have allowed us to again raise funds for MHV and provide much needed supplies or upgrades for food services. We provided \$5000. for funding to help with the Education programing. We provided just under \$3000.to the Garden club for plants, shrubs & supplies. We also purchased a wheelchair and provided new curtains for the Summer Kitchen. We also agreed to pay for flooring and paint in the meeting room in the Village center, but the work will only be completed in 2025.

We are so grateful for the opportunity to work together with the staff and many volunteers at MHV. We are proud of the work our small group has been able to accomplish. We realize that it takes a whole village of staff and volunteers to create this successful world class museum. Thank you too all!

# MHV Auxiliary Profit & Loss 2024

AUXILIARY PROFIT AND LOSS 2024	
<b>Income</b>	
9110- food taxable	\$6325.74
9120 - food catering	\$9,955.00
9130 - gratuities	\$699.75
9140 - gift shop sales	\$5,375.91
9150 - quilting	\$1,574.02
9170 - donations	\$2,030.00
9180 - interest	\$6.94
9190 - misc.	\$190.36
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$26,157.72</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
9220 - groceries	\$3,905.77
9230 - kitchen supplies	\$88.37
9240 - sewing/quilting supplies	\$966.76
9255 - fundraising expenses	\$1,013.89
9260 - projects	\$5,209.99
9270 - garden club	\$2,280.39
9280 - bank fees	\$22.83
9290 - misc.	\$1,500.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$14,988.50</b>



# Finance Committee Report

**Matt Wieler | Chair of Finance**

## **Changes to our Finance Committee**

In 2024 we started off the year with some changes to our committee. We want to thank Carlin Thiessen for chairing this past committee with his resignation happening in April of 2024 at our AGM. Additional to Carlin's departure, our previous finance committee members were Gary Dyck, Doris Penner, Carlee Friesen. We want to thank the past finance committee for all their work and efforts. We know the challenges you faced. Thank you for your service.

After a change to our executive director in April of 2024, it was decided by our executive team to rebuild our finance committee with a new group of fresh minded individuals. Chaired by Matt Wieler, Willie Peters our MHV Chair was invited to participate along with our interim executive director Robert Goertzen, Laurie Wiebe our accounting administrator, James Loewen, our newest board member that came into MHV in April of 2024 along with Allan Kroeker, who had been our past chair of finance while he was on our board of directors at MHV.

Our first finance committee meeting was scheduled for May 29<sup>th</sup>, where we wanted to understand our past committee's work, and understand the financial picture we were at with MHV. Our goal was to gain a clear understanding of MHV's financial picture so that we could start making progress on the \$-280,000 overage we had posted on our 2024 fiscal budget.

With a lot of effort put in wholistically with our team, we were able to achieve as a finance team:

- 1) A better understanding of our lending structure with SCU and how our long-term debt was connected with our short-term operating line of credit. Thank you, Robert, for meeting with SCU to gain that clarity and realign us with SCU.
- 2) An understanding of our current financial position. We also gained a cash flow analysis of where MHV could be at financially as of May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025. A big Thank you goes out to Laurie Wiebe for your diligent work on completing all the bookkeeping work to empower the team to understand where we are at today. We recognize the amount of effort it took to get all of 2024 financials completed for our January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, meeting. Thank you, Laurie, for all your hard work in 2024. Thank you to James Loewen for completing the cash flow analysis which helped MHV understand where our financial position is at, and where we are headed without change. This process encouraged the team to look more intimately at our budget and be more intentional on how we operate in 2025. Thank you, James, for your clear direction to the team.

- 3) Our team, with Robert's leadership proposed balance budget for 2025, showing our Board of Directors the \$100,000 challenge the Finance Committee has placed on ourselves to meet this goal. Thank you, Robert, for your intimate analysis of this budget to challenge us to do our absolute best to realign and gain the most out of our expenditures. Thank you for focusing on challenging MHV to be intentional on some additional revenues we could be more intentional about. Robert's leadership within our group was greatly appreciated as he was most intimate with our finances at MHV as our executive director.

I want to thank Willie Peters for his consistent and patient leadership. Your deep passion for MHV was evident in stepping into the Chair position to help lead MHV into a more promising 2025 year.

I want to thank Allan Kroeker for his steady and purposeful comments to bring the past into the present. Allan brought the history of stability of finance to our team with being familiar working together with both Laurie and Willie in the past. Truly our group was stronger with Allan's participation and insights. Thank you so much for your participation, Alan. MHV thanks you for your service.

Leading into 2025, our Finance Committee is well aware of the challenges facing MHV. We will encourage our Board of Directors to come alongside Robert and support him with donation opportunities that arise. The slogan goes "it takes a village", and it will take our villages support to ensure the longevity of our precious organization not only survives but turns the corner to start to thrive supporting one another where we can.

I am truly encouraged by the teamwork I witnessed inside MHV in 2024. With 2025 being my last year on the board, I look forward to seeing other volunteers, board members and committee members step into roles where they have strengths to provide their gifts that will be warmly accepted by all our passionate MHV'ers.

# Mennonite Heritage Village (Canada) Inc. 2025 Budget

	Actual 2024	Budget 2025
Operating Budget		
Income		
Total 4000 · Grants	290,664	307,500
Total 4100 · Donations & Fundraising	644,579	450,830
Total 5000 · Admissions	201,952	234,886
Total 5200 · Income - Food Services	279,601	314,430
Total 5300 · Income - Sales	102,651	117,923
Total 5400 · Income - Private Events	136,799	165,173
Total 5500 · Income - Other	54,791	62,358
Total Income	1,711,037	1,653,100
Cost of Goods Sold		
Total 6400 · Food Service Expenses	256,375	258,002
Total 6500 · Retail - Gift Shop & General Store	119,789	129,476
Total 6600 · Rental Expense	103,094	98,023
Total 8400 · Fundraising Expenses	82,832	76,733
Total COGS	562,090	562,234
Gross Profit	1,148,947	1,090,866
Expense		
Total 6000 · Collections Management	98,708	127,557
Total 6200 · Program Management	175,205	136,402
Total 6700 · Marketing & Advertising	16,904	16,900
Total 7000 · Facility Management	166,264	150,433
Total 7200 · Occupancy Costs/Property Fixed	145,601	170,650
Total 8000 · Administration	439,650	438,189
Total 8200 · Office Expense	39,840	43,120
Total 8500 · Board & AGM Expenses	3,747	1,710
Total Expense	1,085,919	1,084,961

# Nominating Committee Report

## Erin Unger | Nominating Committee Report

In compliance with the General By-Laws of MHV,  
the Nominating Committee issued a call for nominations in February 2025.

Board members whose terms expired this year:

*Waldy Ens*  
*Kerry Fast*  
*Neil Klassen*

Resignations this year:

*None*

Vacancies this year:

*One*

Standing for re-election:

*Kerry Fast*

Candidates standing for election:

*Stephanie Klassen* (Three-year term)  
*Terry Wiebe* (Three-year term)  
*Warren Kroeker* (Three-year term)

Respectfully submitted:

*Sid Reimer*  
*Kerry Fast*  
*Waldy Ens*  
*Erin Unger, Chair*  
*Ex Officio, Willie Peters, Board President*  
*Ex Officio, Robert Goertzen, Executive Director*

# I Nominees



## Kerry Fast

Kerry is an editor for Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre. Previous to this, she was an independent academic editor for twenty years. Kerry has a PhD from the University in Toronto in Canadian women's religious history. She has researched and published articles on Colony Mennonites in Mexico, Bolivia, and Southern Ontario. She is vice-chair of the D.F. Plett Historical Research Foundation board. Kerry grew up in Blumenort.

## Stephanie Klassen

Stephanie Klassen served her community in the field of violence prevention for 15 years through a variety of organizations. This work included serving as Executive Director for a non-profit in northeast Manitoba, along with years of networking, public speaking, budgeting, financial forecasting, grant writing, and project management. She and her partner currently own and operate The Public Brewhouse and Gallery where they celebrate locally produced goods, local cultural production, and bringing people together as much as possible. They live in Steinbach with their twins and love adding joy to their community.





# Terry Wiebe



Terry's first career was in trucking transportation, as the owner of a small fleet, focused on the transportation of agricultural products, both in Canada and the U.S. In 2000, Terry and his wife Erna began their Oakridge journey. And so, Terry's next career was as the owner/operator of a garden centre. He served on the Emmanuel Evangelical Free Church Global Impact Team for seven years, as well as being part of the leadership team that started up Novo Communities, a residential addictions treatment centre in Bolivia. This included Novo Adventures, a business that was set up to generate a revenue stream for the facility. Terry has a keen interest in business, politics, history, and sociology, and he and Erna have always had a heart for the less privileged in our society.

# Warren Kroeker

Warren's earliest years were spent living in Steinbach and Linden. After high school, he worked in road construction and then in the insurance industry for a time. After graduating from the University of Manitoba with a degree in Agriculture, Warren farmed in Landmark and Niverville for 50 successful years, with a focus on cropping and poultry. He also sold real estate for 20 years and has established a charitable foundation. Warren and his wife Mary are proud of their four children, 10 grandkids, and one great-grandchild. God has been good!



# Calendar of Events 2024

## Calendar of Events 2025

### Hours of Operation

#### May – September:

Monday – Saturday	9:00am – 5:00pm
Sunday	11:30am – 5:00pm

#### October – April:

Tuesday – Saturday	9:00am – 5:00pm (The Village Centre is open)
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#### December – February:

Tuesday – Friday	9:00am – 5:00pm
Saturday	9:00am – 8:00pm

### Events & Festivals

**Saturday, February 15, 2025, 9:00am-8:00pm & Sunday, February 16, 2025, 12:00pm-8:00pm, Winter Carnival**  
Family activity days at the museum include skating, tobogganing, sleigh rides, walking trails, games, and food.

**Tuesday, April 8, 2025, Annual General Meeting, 6:00pm**

Presentation of reports, approval of financial statements and election of board members. Open to the public.

**Saturday, April 19, 2025, The Great Easter Egg Hunt 10:00am-2:00pm**

Family activity day, including finding chocolate eggs all over the museum grounds.

**Thursday, April 24, 2025, Volunteer Orientation, 7:00pm-9:00pm in the auditorium.**

An informational evening for new and current volunteers.

**Saturday, April 26, 2025, MHV Spring Market**

Details to follow. Check website.

**Wednesday, May 1, 2025**

Outdoor village and Livery Barn Restaurant open for the season.

**Saturday, May 10, 2025, Manitoba Day celebration**

Manitoba Day ceremony. Come celebrate Manitoba's 155th birthday with us! Watch our website for more details.

**Sunday, May 11, 2025, Mother's Day Lunch Buffet**

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

**Friday, May 23, 2025**

**Spring Gala Fundraising Banquet:** Celebrate with us... 61 years of MHV, 151 years of Steinbach.

**Friday, June 13 – Sunday, June 15, 2025, Summer in the City**

Enjoy fresh homemade waffles at the MHV booth on Steinbach's Main Street. Get to know the history of our city and region at the Heritage tent.

**Saturday, June 21, 2025, Tractor Drive**

16th Annual MHV tractor drive fundraiser.

**Sunday, June 15, 2025**

**Father's Day Lunch Buffet:** Take dad out for a Mennonite feast at the Livery Barn Restaurant.

**Tuesday, July 1, 2025, Canada Day**

Canada Day opening ceremony and birthday cake. Enjoy tours, entertainment, rides, and lunch in the Livery Barn Restaurant.

**July 7-11, 2025**

**Pioneer Day Camp** for children ages 5-7

**July 14-18, 2025**

**Pioneer Day Camp** for children ages 8-10

**July 21-25, 2025**

**Pioneer Day Camp** and apprentice camp for youth ages 11-14

**Saturday, July 26, 2025, Heritage Classic Car Show**

Classic cars, up and down Village Main Street. Enjoy dedicated workmanship and interesting stories.

**Saturday, August 2 – Monday, August 4, 2025, Pioneer Days**

Relive our Mennonite past through pioneer activities, steam powered threshing, music, and lots of good food.  
Our biggest event of the year!

**August 11-15, 2025**

**Pioneer Day Camp** for children ages 7-11

**August 16, 2025, Peace Trek**

4th annual MHV/Eden Foundation peer-to-peer fundraiser with cyclists doing the Peace Trail.

**August 18-22, 2025**

**Pioneer Day Camp** for children ages 7-11

**Monday, September 1, 2025, Fall on the Farm**

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

**Tuesday, September 30, 2025, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation**

A day to reflect on our relationships with Indigenous friends and neighbours.

**Wednesday, October 1, 2025**

Village grounds and Livery Barn Restaurant closed for season.

**Thursday, October 2, 2025, Volunteer Appreciation, 7:00pm**

If you have volunteered at MHV this year, you are invited to attend.

**Saturday, November 1, 2025, Family Pumpkin Event.**

Tentative

**Saturday, November 8, 2025, Christmas Market**

Christmas market, wagon rides, hot chocolate

**Saturdays in December 2025 to February 2026**

**Winter in the Village:** experience winter in the village with sleigh rides, coloured lights in the village, hot chocolate and more. Open until 8:00pm.

**December 22, 2025 – January 5, 2026**

Closed for Christmas/New Year

**December 29-31, 2025, Mini Winter Day Camp** for ages 6-11