

## **Mennonite Historical Society of Canada**

### **News Release: Historical society moving ahead with centenary projects**

The Mennonite Historical Society of Canada (MHSC) is forging ahead with its centenary projects in 2022 and 2023, hoping that the COVID-19 pandemic will not force plans to change. This organization that brings together Mennonite archives, museums and provincial societies met virtually on Jan. 15 and 16, 2022.

MHSC has some major projects in the works to recognize that a century ago thousands of Mennonites were on the move. Beginning in 1922, more than 7,000 Mennonites left Manitoba and Saskatchewan, moving to Mexico and Paraguay in an effort to save their traditional way of life. To commemorate this largest migration of Mennonites out of Canada, a story-telling exhibit will be on display at the Mennonite Heritage Village in Steinbach, Man. from early summer to the fall of 2022, and then will travel to other parts of Canada. This is a joint project of MHSC, Mennonite Heritage Village and the Plett Foundation.



**Mennonite emigrants to Mexico at train station.  
Credit: MAID CA MHC 107-1.0**

In 2023, MHSC is partnering with TourMagination to host a train trek to commemorate the 21,000 Mennonites who migrated from Russia to Canada in the 1920s. This Memories of Migration Russlaender 100 Tour will run for three weeks in the summer of 2023, beginning in Quebec City and ending in Abbotsford, B.C., with stops along the way to remember how Mennonite communities in various provinces welcomed the newcomers 100 years ago. The journey is divided into three sections and participants can choose to join the train for one or all of the parts. Space is limited and train travel is expensive in Canada, but the provincial Mennonite historical societies are planning events along the way that everyone is invited to participate in. For more information about the Memories of Migration event, visit the website at [mhsc.ca](http://mhsc.ca).

At the MHSC annual meeting, a recurring theme was that the pandemic has forced organizations to be creative and to offer lectures and seminars online. While personal connections are missing with virtual events, distance is not an issue and people far away can participate.

Researching online is becoming ever more popular and there is an appetite for more documents to be digitized. The Mennonite Archival Information Database (MAID) continues to grow and in 2021 added its 15th member. The Mennonite Archives of Ontario has been digitizing materials related to the Russlaender commemoration and the Mennonite Heritage Archives is working on digitizing the *Steinbach Post*, to be posted on a new digital platform.

The Mennonite provincial historical societies, archives and other historical organizations value the connections that are fostered by meeting annually as MHSC. The year 2024 will be its 50th anniversary. Conrad Stoesz has agreed to continue his term as president.