It has been a year since a deadly global pandemic has affected many aspects of our life. Most of us are sick of hearing phrases referring to these unprecedented times. There is value, though, in recording our experiences for posterity. Many organizations, including our library and archives, preserve artifacts that recall the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic. There are many tools available to record these memories.

Mennonites have a long tradition of journaling their thoughts and feelings. Whether you have a notebook for this purpose or use a digital document on the computer, this record will be of interest to you at a later date. Eventually, your descendants will appreciate the stories.

Perhaps you are not comfortable with writing. Recording an oral history is another possibility. If you do not have a voice recorder, many apps are available if you own a smartphone. You may even consider interviewing family members about their experience. For more information, check out a presentation Jean Kilheffer Hess gave at the York History Center at bit.ly/OralHistoryGen.

Video is another powerful tool to consider. Create a video diary of your daily life. We all look forward to a time when we can say, “Remember when we had to wear those cumbersome masks?”

For those more creatively inclined, preserving photographs or creating a scrapbook may be a more satisfying activity.

Social distancing can be exhausting. Working through complicated feelings of loneliness and anxiety can be an additional benefit of this process. Create a sense of hope by documenting activities and friends you want to revisit when this pandemic is behind us.

You may want to share your stories with Anabaptist History Today, a collaborative, community storytelling project with support from sixteen Anabaptist archives and history organizations in the United States and Canada. Visit their website at aht.libraryhost.com.

Mini Bookworm Frolic
Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society
April 15 & 16, 9 am to 7 pm &
April 17, 9 am to 4 pm
$3 hardbacks, $1.50 paperbacks,
half-price Saturday
or fill a box for $12.
Must wear a mask and observe
social distancing.

Reopening April 1
After a year of overcoming challenges due to the pandemic, all of our locations plan on opening in April.

We thank you for your patience and are excited to host a series of new experiences and content.

Our museum store at the Historical Society has been transformed. Enjoy an entirely new shopping experience and freshened product mix. Find a delightful array of items, including products based on items in our unique collections.

Experience the Biblical Tabernacle through an all-new multimedia format that features lighting effects, simulated smoke, narration, sound effects, and music.

The 1719 Herr House and Museum continues to provide original programming. Tiffany Fisk hosts a Hearth Cooking Class that explores the culture and food preparation of the 18th Century. See back page for details. Custom field trips for school groups return, as do drop-in tours.

We invite you back with joyful hearts.
New Administrative Assistant at Herr House

The 1719 Herr House & Museum welcomes new administrative assistant, Lori Savitch. Lori joins the team with 40 years of communications experience, including broadcast news, children’s television, and healthcare marketing. Lori is new to the Lancaster area but was born in nearby Kennett Square. She has a 21-year-old daughter who is finishing her senior year at West Virginia University. In her spare time, Lori and her husband like to walk their rescue dog, Maggie. She also likes to crochet, a skill taught to her by her grandmother.

Cora’s Slate Book Bag

In her latest book, *Cora’s Slate*, Lynette Leaman Brenneman introduces us to Cora, a student at Walnut Run School, who loves her studies and wants to please her teacher, Miss Edwards. Her mission is disrupted when her slate mysteriously disappears. Cora wrestles with a tough decision in this heartwarming story.

*Cora’s Slate*, as well as two other books by the author, *Susanna’s Surprise*, and *Christian’s Choice*, are available in our museum stores, for shipping, and for contactless pickup. Online at bit.ly/ShopLMHS or call 717.393.9745.

Get Involved

Volunteers are the lifeblood of our organization. We continue to thrive and deliver engaging programming due to their generous efforts. We’d love to match your skills with a need. The result: community impact. Here are exceptional opportunities at each of our locations.

- Assist with research in our Library & Archives or help prepare books for our sales and auctions at the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society. Contact Michael Bodner at operations@lmhs.org or 717.393.9745.
- Host our new tours of the Biblical Tabernacle at Mennonite Information Center. You’d provide warm hospitality, not a lecture. Contact Paul Garber at groups@lmhs.org or 717.299.0954.
- Attend a meeting for new volunteers on Tuesday, March 16 at 11 am. At the 1719 Herr House & Museum, provide interactive, captivating tours, work in the museum store, restore the heirloom kitchen garden, or help maintain property and buildings. Contact Tiffany Fisk at museum@lmhs.org or 717.464.4438. A volunteer training session is scheduled for Saturday, March 13 at 10 am.

We follow rigorous safety protocols. Mask and social distancing are required. The wellness of our staff, volunteers, and customers is of the highest importance.

Join our mission to conserve history and promote storytelling. We look forward to working alongside you!

Cora’s Slate Book Bag

One copy of *Cora’s Slate* book, one 7” x 10” natural slate chalkboard with natural wooden frame, and two natural wood encased chalk pencils, all in a 11” x 17” double-corded drawstring handcrafted fabric bag. (Fabric patterns and colors will vary.) $24.99
“How are you doing?”

In many social settings this question counts as a rote part of greeting someone, and you’re not really supposed to answer with transparency or details. In Mennonite communities, it’s a real question, an earnest question. We really want to know how each other is doing. Mental health experts tell us that now is an important time to reach out and ask friends and loved ones and congregation members, how are you doing?

We’re in the midst of an adjustment period, from life before the threat of COVID-19 to our new reality with it. At this writing there have been 2.4 million deaths worldwide attributed to COVID-19, a half million of those in the U.S. Largely without adequate defenses beyond common sense steps like physical distancing and mask wearing, this new life necessarily has many isolating features. I haven’t seen my congregation in-person for a year! Same thing with our board of directors. We’ve found other ways to engage, and despite the physical separation I’ve felt connected. I hope you have too.

How is Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society doing? During 2020 our new reality resulted in being cut off from many of those we typically reach with mission services. We saw drastic reductions in mission business income: things like admissions to our museums and tours, retail sales, and events income. Coronavirus arrived just as the tourist season was beginning, and we were closed to the walk-in public for much of 2020. We survived an 85% reduction in admissions and a 67% reduction in retail sales. Team members experienced multiple furloughs or work hours reductions. We applied for and received Federal, state, and local emergency relief grants.

In the midst of all this, your shining partnership let us know that you’re invested in our mission and you’re with us in creating community impact! You renewed your membership or became a first-time member. You gave generously. Your confidence, expressed in partnership dollars, pushed us right past our 2020 budgeted membership and gift income of $365,000 to achieve $392,700. This is rocket fuel for the mission; the dollars matter and so does the trust. We ended the year close to breaking even.

How are we doing? We’re doing alright. I am grateful to God, grateful to a tenacious team, and grateful to you. Many thanks. —Jean Kilheffer Hess, Executive Director

Recent Acquisitions

Religion/Theology
- Eshleman, J. David. 75 scriptures that will amaze you: living on a higher plane. Masthof Press, 2020 (BS391.3 .E84 2020)
- Woofenden, Anna. This is God’s table: finding church beyond the walls. Herald Press, 2020 (BV601.9 .W66 2020)

Biography/History/Genealogy
- Alderfer, Glenn. I was a young pastor. Masthof Press, 2020 (BX8143.A43 A3 2020)
- Eshleman, Dianna L. Burkey. The Eshleman-Sauder connection: genealogical records, family stories and pictures of Leon Clarence Eshleman’s parents, Clarence Marvin Eshleman . . . [Dianna Burkey Eshleman?], 2020 (CS71.E7658 2020)

Miscellaneous

Are you a 2021 member?

Benefit from member-only resources and support our mission.
More info at bit.ly/MemberLMHS.
Antique Quilt Video Experience

Get an up-close look at featured antique quilts in our collection. Our Antique Quilt Video Experience, with commentary by quilt expert Barbara Garrett, will be released Saturday, May 8, 2021. Purchase for $30 at bit.ly/QuiltVideo.

Hearth Cooking Class

Celebrate May Day by learning about and cooking Spring recipes of the early 18th century at the 1719 Hans Herr House and Museum. Taught by Tiffany Fisk, Administrator, who has over 20 years of historic foodways experience. A varied menu will be built around veal cutlets in paper.

Saturday, May 1, from 10 am–4 pm
Cost: $75 a person
bit.ly/HearthCook

Book Release (Virtual)

Tuesday, April 27 at 7 pm
Complimentary Zoom event
bit.ly/WHLCBook

Inside:

- Documenting ‘These Unprecedented Times’
- Director’s Reflection: “How are you doing?”
- Get Involved

Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society (USPS 882-020)
2215 Millstream Road
Lancaster, PA 17602-1499