



THE 6TH BALTHERNET CONFERENCE IS COMING!

2021 marks 15 years since the first conference focused on the archives of Baltic people abroad. This took place in 2006 at the Estonian Literary Museum in Tartu and led to the official establishment of the NGO Baltic Heritage Network in 2008.

2021 is the year for BaltHerNet's regular conference, but due to the pandemic, we have decided to host it online and not in Vilnius, as was originally planned. The 6th BaltHerNet conference "No Topic Conference" will take place September 15th-16th on Zoom. We have adjusted the event schedule to adapt as much as possible to everyone's time zones. Sessions will take place according to Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian time from 9:30 pm-midnight on September 15 and from 9:00 pm-midnight on September 16. The conference recording can be viewed at a later time at <https://www.balther.net/>

The last year has changed the world quite drastically. At our two-day conference we will discuss in what position has the pandemic situated memory institutions and communities of Baltic people abroad, including their archives groups, and what could we take from this experience. What new ways of working and new methods have been used? How has the pandemic affected the lives and livelihood of diaspora communities?

The conference will be in English.

Read the program here: <https://www.balther.net/>

Register in advance for the conference here:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_FxJiT-C3T6SuFz52WefhA

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

Participation in the conference is free.

The conference is supported by the Compatriots Program (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research), the National Archives of Estonia, and the Museum of Estonians Abroad (VEMU).

All those interested across the globe are welcome!

THE 2021 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF BALTIC HERITAGE NETWORK WILL BE HELD ON SEPTEMBER 15 ON ZOOM

The 2021 Annual General Meeting of Baltic Heritage Network will take place on the first day of the Baltic Heritage Network Conference on September 15, 2021, from 21:00-21:30 (Baltic time) on Zoom. The Zoom link will be sent to you by September 10.

"SHARING OUR STORIES" IN KAUNAS

A NEW SEASON OF DIASPORA RADIO BEGINS IN SEPTEMBER

ESTONIAN CENTRAL ARCHIVES IN CANADA AT VEMU

NEW BOOK ON LITHUANIAN DIPLOMACY ABROAD

THE BOOK ON DUAL CITIZENSHIP IN LITHUANIA

A DETECTIVE THRILLER "ISAAC"

CELEBRATING THE RESTORATION OF ESTONIA'S INDEPENDENCE IN TORONTO

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VEMU'S ONLINE FESTIVAL FOR "ROMAN TOI IO5"

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The Baltic Heritage Newsletter is distributed quarterly, on-line. The next deadline for submissions is November 15, 2021. Please send all related enquiries and submissions to Piret Noorhane: piretnoorhane@gmail.com

The Non-Profit Association Baltic Heritage Network was founded in Tartu on January 11, 2008. NPA BaltHerNet was established to foster cooperation between national and private archives, museums, libraries, and institutions of research, public associations and organizations collecting and studying the cultural heritage of the Baltic diaspora. It aims to facilitate the preservation and research of the historically valuable cultural property of the Baltic diaspora, as well as to ensure accessibility of these materials to the public.

NPA BaltHerNet is also committed to the organising of conferences, seminars and workshops, and to developing and administrating the electronic information website Baltic Heritage Network, a multilingual electronic gateway for information on the cultural heritage of the Baltic diaspora.

www.balther.net

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Agenda:

1. Approval of Minutes of AGM 2020
2. Annual report of 2020-2021
3. Audit Panel report
4. Election of the Board, the President, two Vice-Presidents and the Secretary.
6. Election of the Audit Panel
7. Activities 2021-2022
8. Miscellaneous

If you cannot attend the meeting personally, we ask you kindly to send a proxy indicating the name of the person you authorize to vote instead of you. Please send the proxy by e-mail to: karin.kiisk@gmail.com by September 10.

PARTICIPATE IN THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF ESTONIA COLLECTION CAMPAIGN “INDEPENDENT COUNTRY 30 (103)”

In celebration of the 30th anniversary of the restoration of Estonia's independence, the National Archives of Estonia is putting on a collections campaign titled “Independent Country 30 (103)” to bring more attention to the collection of documents from this period in Estonia's history. The Deputy Manager of the National Archives of Estonian Tallinn Collections Department, Gristel Ramler, explains that the documentation of these revolutionary times is complicated, as at the moment documenting events for the future isn't thought about. However, some items have already been stored in the archives. For example, arriving already in the 1990s the privately owned archives of the Estonian Group for the Disclosure of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the Popular Front of Estonia, and the Estonian National Independence Party. Similarly, in the 2000s, the archives of political parties, which preserve the political diversity of the historical 1990s, were added to the collections. The archives of Ülo Nugis and Mart Laar must also be mentioned here.

Estonians living abroad played an important role in the restoration



Photo: Embassy of Canada to Lithuania

of Estonia's independence, as they maintained the country's continuity during the years of occupation. The archives of the Estonian National Council, the Estonian National Fund, the Estonian Government in exile, the Consulate General of Estonia in New York and the archives of many other organizations describe the role of Estonian refugees in maintaining and restoring independence, as do many personal archives such as those of Ernst Jaakson, Aleksander Varma, Arvo Horm, and Karl Robert Pusta.

The National Archives of Estonia asks all those who possess documents from the years 1980-1990 to consider donating them to the archives. Documents from organizations and individuals, diaries and letters, audio and video recordings are all priceless source materials for preserving Estonia's history of the restoration of independence. For more information, please contact the National Archives of Estonia: Gristel Ramler, Gristel. Ramler@ra.ee, 693 8003.

“SHARING OUR STORIES” EXHIBITION IS NOW ON VIEW IN KAUNAS

To mark the 30th anniversary of the renewal of diplomatic relations between Canada and Lithuania, Richard Martin-Nielsen of the Embassy of Canada to Lithuania opened the “Sharing our Stories” exhibition at the President's Valdas Adamkus Library-Museum in Kaunas on August 26.

Through photos, documents and life stories, “Sharing our Stories: The Baltic Diaspora at Home in Canada” profiles the age-old story of people forced to leave their homeland due to the Second World War and political oppression and start a new life elsewhere. This exhibit is based on a series of interviews with seniors from Ontario's Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Baltic German communities. Their personal ‘snapshot stories’ shed light on what it means to be Baltic, and on the universal experiences of migration and settlement.

The exhibition was produced by the Baltic Canadian Imprints group. BCI project partners are the Canadian Baltic Immigrant Aid Society, Museum of Estonians Abroad (VEMU), Lithuanian Museum Archives of Canada, the Canadian Latvian Archive and Museum and the Latvian National Federation in Canada). Since 2017, the exhibition has been presented in 18 different locations in Canada, Estonia and now Lithuania.

A NEW SEASON OF DIASPORA RADIO BEGINS IN SEPTEMBER

Estonia's most popular radio station Vikerraadio will once again provide a home for the weekly program “Hajala ringvaade” where historian and BaltHerNet board member Maarja Merivoo-Parro shares news from global Estonians. The program



Photo: Krõõt Tarkmeel

showcasing community events and fascinating personas is financed by the Ministry of the Interior and takes place every Sunday morning. After airing, it is archived as a podcast that can be freely listened to and shared. See more at vikerraadio.err.ee or download the Vikerraadio app. Maarja welcomes suggestions for topics and can be reached via e-mail: hajala@err.ee

THE COLLECTIONS FROM THE ESTONIAN CENTRAL ARCHIVES IN CANADA ARE ARRIVING AT VEMU



Central Archives volunteers at the Estonian House café in May 2006 celebrating the end of the work year. Front left: Johannes Tanner, Jüri Sepp, Nelly Hubel, Virve Mathias, Hilja Suurna. Back: guest from Estonia Eve Sooväli, Uno Koot, Viktor Virak, Paavo Loosberg, Max Kalm, Vaike Külvet and Lehtla Greenbaum. Missing from the photo: Linda Kurvits and Peeter Kalm.

Photo: J. Tanner.

Although summer at the Museum of Estonians Abroad (VEMU) has been quieter than usual in regard to cultural events, intense work has continued despite the heat. This summer's biggest undertaking has been the packing and moving of the collections from the Estonian Central Archives in Canada (EKK) located in the Toronto Estonian House to VEMU.

In 1961, the Estonian Cultural Archives in Canada was established alongside the existing Rahvusliku Välisvõitluse Nõukogu (RVN) and was led by the initiator Karl Eerme.

The so-called "idea seed" for the archives was the material from the book exhibit organized for the 1960 Estonian National Congress in Canada. The exhibit included books donated by authors and publishers such as the Estonian Writers Cooperative, Orto, and Estoprint. In 1964, the archives were given their own room in the Estonian House. In 1968, the archives were renamed to the Estonian Central Archives in Canada. The archives have also been led by Richard Antik, Enn Salurand, and Martin Ahermaa. EKK's last leader was the passionate history enthusiast Paavo Loosberg.

The Estonian Central Council, which was in charge of curating EKK, decided a few years ago to donate the EKK collections to VEMU. The necessary preparations began three years ago. In spring 2018, Tiit Kravtsev and Sven Lepa from the National Archives of Estonia worked with the EKK collections describing the document archives. Their stay in Canada was supported by the Compatriots Program, the National Archives of Estonia, and VEMU. In 2019, VEMU employees compared EKK books to VEMU's book collection to sort out which publications published outside of Estonia VEMU already had. At the end of that year, the duplicates were sent to the Estonian Repository Library in Tallinn, where other Estonian libraries may select books for their collections.

In relation to the sale of the historic Toronto Estonian House located on Broadview Avenue, the time came to begin emptying the rooms in the

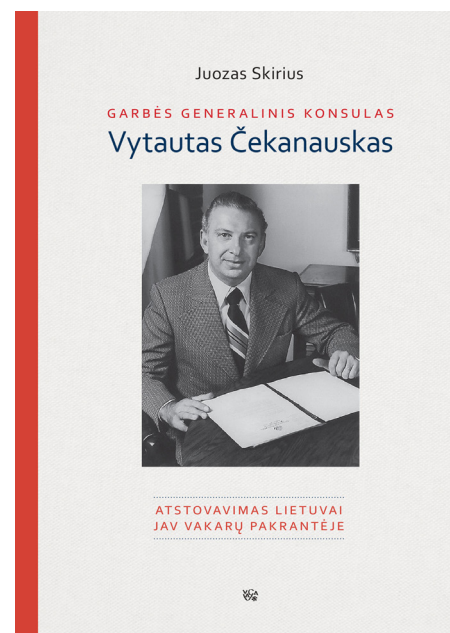


From left: Amelia Herrmann, Rasmus Rattas, Kerly Ilves, Piret Noorhane, Mark Spokowski, Victoria Hutchings.

building. We began packing EKK's collections in July 2021. One of the Estonian school classrooms was filled with piles of boxes. Today, the documents archives, photo collections, microfilms, and most of the library collection has arrived in VEMU's current home at Tartu College. By the end of September, the remaining books, artifacts, film and audio collections will be moved – a total of over 500 boxes containing the history of Estonians.

Many people have assisted in moving the collections to VEMU, including the Estonian House board member and manager Ingrid Laar, Estonian Central Council chairwoman Kairi Hemingway, and young Estonian volunteers Mark Spokowski, Amelia Herrmann, and Victoria Hutchings. We are deeply grateful to them as well as to the employees of VEMU and Tartu College, Kerly Ilves, Rasmus Rattas, Taavi Tamtik, and Linda Karuks who assisted in moving the EKK collections.

Piret Noorhane



NEW BOOK ON LITHUANIAN DIPLOMACY ABROAD

Prof. Juozas Skirius wrote a new book on Lithuanian diplomacy in the US. The monograph, called "Garbės generalinis konsulas Vytautas Čekanauskas: Atstovavimas Lietuvai JAV Vakarų pakrantėje" ("Honorary Consul General

Vytautas Čekanauskas: Representing Lithuania on the West Coast of the United States”), is a biographical study about the life, social, political and diplomatic activities of the Lithuanian-American Vytautas Čekanauskas (1929-2009). The author of the book, using historical sources, reveals the most important moments of the consul’s work on the West coast, his relations with Lithuanian public figures in Los Angeles, ordinary emigrants, American and Lithuanian organizations, and US officials. The 480-page monograph is illustrated with archival documents and photographs.

THE BOOK ON DUAL CITIZENSHIP PRESENTED AT THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF LITHUANIA



In her newest book, the author Regina Gytė Narušienė, J.D. writes about dual citizenship—a pressing issue in Lithuania for almost thirty years. She is convinced that the decision on the issue of citizenship can no longer be postponed because the country will lose even more Lithuanians.

The publication provides significant insights, analysis, and suggestions on the issue; it is also valuable for the appendices. The book was presented at the National Library of Lithuania at a virtual event. Narušienė was interviewed by Dr. Dalia Cidzikaitė.

The presentation in Lithuanian can be viewed on “Youtube”: <https://tinyurl.com/v3stvxvu>



A DETECTIVE THRILLER “ISAAC”

2019 Lithuania; 91 min; director Jurgis Matulevičius

Three friends, separated by war and emigration, Andrius, Gediminas and Elena, meet again after twenty years. During the war, Andrius committed a terrible crime. After his return to Lithuania, Gediminas wants to make a film about the massacre of Kaunas Jews at the Lietūkis garage in 1941. Andrius realizes that in order to start living again he would have to make amends for what he did in the past. The film, based on the short story of the Lithuanian émigré writer, Antanas Škėma, tells a story about friendship and love and delves into the participation of Lithuanians in the Holocaust. The film combines elements of a detective and Soviet thriller.

“Isaac” is Jurgis Matulevičius’s debut feature film. The film received the highest recognition in 2020 when it was selected among the six best European debut films at

the prestigious European Film Awards and was screened at the US Slamdance Festival.

AN EXHIBITION DEDICATED TO AMERICAN-LITHUANIAN CONTRIBUTION IN HELPING LITHUANIA

The new exhibition “Vardan laisvos Lietuvos. JAV lietuvių paramos Lietuvai tradicija” (“In the Name of Free Lithuania. The Tradition of American-Lithuanians Supporting Lithuania”) opened on July 6 at the Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania. The exhibition displays the history of the Lithuanian diaspora in the United States and the work carried out to restore and maintain Lithuanian statehood, as well as the formation of the tradition of supporting Lithuania. The contribution of the Lithuanian diaspora in the US, one of the largest Lithuanian diaspora communities, to Lithuania’s statehood has been extremely significant, including not only political and economic but cultural aspects as well. The exhibition consists of five parts based on the chronological principle.



THE NATIONAL LIBRARY RECEIVED THE ARCHIVE OF REGINA GYTĖ NARUŠIENĖ, J.D.

On July 14, the National Library of Lithuania welcomed the archive of Regina Gytė Narušienė, J.D., chair of the Board of the World Lithuanian Community and an activist of the Lithuanian Community in the US.

Narušienė has been a long-term friend of the National Library of



The signing of the documents.

Photo: National Library of Lithuania.

Lithuania. She has maintained close ties with the library and cooperated in various activities from the day of the restoration of Lithuania's independence.

The archive consists of documents reflecting Narušienė's many years of work in the field of law and public activities. The documents contain a lot of information concerning the dual citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania, for example, the laws and rulings of the Constitutional Court with the records, corrections, and comments of the World Lithuanian Community, Narušienė's articles, book preparation material, sources, and etc.

The archive also consists of documents related to Narušienė's latest book that has been recently presented at the National Library of Lithuania, "Lietuviais esame mes gimę, lietuviais norime ir būt. Pilietybės išsaugojimo pagrindai ir argumentai" ("We Were Born Lithuanians and We Want to Remain Lithuanians. Fundamentals and Arguments for Preserving Citizenship"). The archive is supplemented by another significant material used in the book on the contribution of American-Lithuanians to the restoration of Lithuania's Statehood, published in 2018.

Narušienė was born in Kaunas, Lithuania. At the end of WWII, she fled with her parents to Germany, where she lived in the DP camps. After the war, she travelled to the USA. Narušienė earned her BA in political science and a PhD in law from the University of Illinois. Her speciality is constitutional law. For eight years, Narušienė was the chair of the World Lithuanian Community; she also participated in the work of the Lithuanian Parliament and the Lithuanian-American Community Commission.

CELEBRATING THE RESTORATION OF ESTONIA'S INDEPENDENCE IN TORONTO

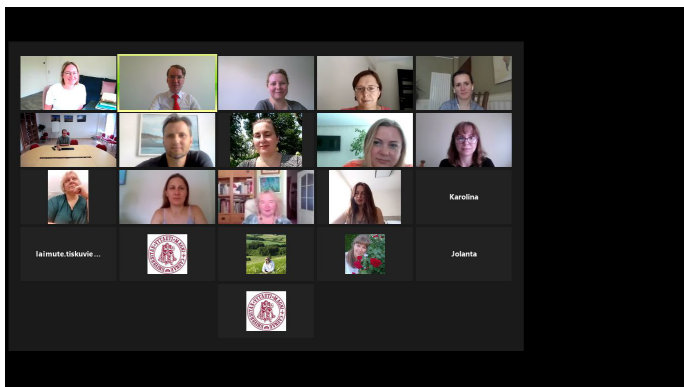
August 20th marked 30 years since the restoration of Estonia's independence. The Museum of Estonians Abroad, VEMU, celebrated this historical day with an online event. We offered the full VEMU 9th Fundraising Dinner program from spring 2021 including interviews, music, and archival footage at a discounted price. The archival footage of professor Marju Lauristin's November 4, 1989 lecture held at the University of Toronto and titled "Estonia's Political Situation" (Eesti poliitiline olukord) was also available to view free of charge. How precise were her predictions on Estonia's independence? You can find out by watching the lecture here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VQAs6oIgQY&t=705s>

LECTURES BY THE RESEARCHERS OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF LITHUANIA

On July 17-31, the courses for teachers who teach at the Lithuanian schools abroad were organized at the Academy of Education of Vytautas Magnus University. This year, teachers from 28 Lithuanian schools from 13 countries attended the courses.

For a few years now, the organizers of the courses have been cooperating with the National Library of Lithuania. On July 26, the researchers of the National Library of Lithuania gave lectures to the participants.





Teachers from 13 countries attended the courses.

Photo: Matas Baltruškevičius.

Silvija Stankevičiūtė spoke about creative writing courses for young people organized at the National Library of Lithuania last year. Matas Baltruškevičius, the head of the Statehood Center at the library, presented lectures on political education carried out by the National Library of Lithuania. Dr Dalia Cidzikaitė gave a lecture about Marija Gimbutas analyzing the ways of introducing the famous scholar and her works in the classroom at the Lithuanian schools. Dr Džiuljeta Maskuliūnienė discussed children and young adult literature.

VEMU'S ONLINE FESTIVAL FOR "ROMAN TOI 105"

June 18th marked 105 years since the birth of the celebrated Canadian Estonian figure, composer, conductor, organist, and musical pedagogue, Dr Roman Toi. There are many more roles and positions that Roman Toi held over his long life; however, he has remained in the hearts of Estonians as first and foremost Canada's father of song – the analogue to the greatly loved Gustav Ernesaks of Estonia, but in exile. Through his fruitful activities, the maestro built many bridges between the homeland and Estonians abroad, between souls, as the shortest path to an Estonian's heart is music.

To celebrate Dr Toi's 105th birthday, the Museum of Estonians Abroad (VEMU) organized an online festival. The website created for the event was available from June 18-20 for those interested in remembering the maestro and perhaps to learn something new about him. Various concerts and interviews from

the VEMU and Estonian Television archives were available to view. The group singing event held at Tallinn's Forest Cemetery and broadcast on Estonian Television on June 18th was also streamed on the website. Chairman of the Estonian Choral Association, Hirvo Surva, spoke at the event on behalf of choir singers and R. Toi's friends.

Director Kalli Paakspuu kindly gave permission to view excerpts of the soon to be completed documentary film titled "Maestro Roman Toi: My Most Beautiful Songs I Dedicate to You" (Maestro Roman Toi: kaunimad

laulud pühendan sul), which offered an exclusive insight into Roman Toi's development and life work.

Website visitors were also given the opportunity to view the online version of the exhibit prepared by the Estonian Theatre and Music Museum in collaboration with VEMU for R. Toi's 100th birthday.

The maestro's son Dr. Ants Toi, the chairwoman for the Estonian Singers Federation in North America and conductor of the mixed choir Estonia Ingrid Silm, the conductor of the Toronto Academic Mixed Choir Ööbik Rosemarie Lindau, and the conductor of the Toronto Academic Men's Choir Avo Kittask, shared their memories of the maestro by video. The website also gave visitors the opportunity to read the newspaper article series dedicated to R. Toi and published in Estonian Church (Eesti Kirik) by the titular provost and pastor emeritus Ivar-Jaak Salumäe.

The online event was warmly received by the admirers of R. Toi's talent all over the world.

