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Mega March for Ukraine in Toronto, Feb 24, 2023. Photo: Marcus Kolga

AWAITING TAMER TIMES

It's unclear whether the well-known saying "May you live in interesting times" is truly a curse that stems from the Chinese or whether it has been attributed to them by the British. However, a year after the full-fledged Russian invasion of Ukraine, we can be sure of the fact that we wish for tamer, quieter, safer, and more predictable times in the world. Shock, fear, anger, resistance, hurt, empathy, helplessness, hopefulness... and these are only some of the emotions and feelings that have come upon us and that we've experienced during the past year. Evil and terrible violence are two things that we should never get used to.

Russian dissident, Vladimir Kara-Murza's wife, Evgenia, confirmed in an interview with Estonian Television that yes, first and foremost, Ukraine has to win this war, but that is not enough; Russia has to change. "The Russian people have to go through a very difficult and very painful recognition of the past, something that should have been done in the 1990s, after the collapse of the Soviet Union – not only over the last two decades now but over the entire 70-year Soviet period. We cannot turn the page and establish a democratic government without this process." War criminals have to be prosecuted, and "these public trials would have to be carried out to help people to understand what had been done, very often in their names, what crimes have been committed, in which they have been complacent by being silent."

Tamer times are unfortunately not on the horizon just yet. Take this as an opportunity to exercise your sense of humanity and keep standing with Ukraine.

Piret Noorhani
Editor-in-Chief



BALTHERNET'S XI SUMMER SCHOOL TAKING PLACE IN SETOMAA

BaltHerNet's summer school titled "Diaspora Estonian Cultural Heritage Abroad. XI. My Estonian Roots" takes place in Setomaa at Värskä from June 26-29th. Since Setomaa is known for its knowledge of traditions and unique, strong identity, we chose the theme of this year's summer school, identity, and roots, accordingly. Topics such as researching family genealogy and names, ways to preserve your family history, mapping of tombstones, and family, as well as regional heritage, will be discussed and explored. We will introduce collections related to the theme from Estonian and diaspora archives.

Setomaa is also unique and different because it's a border zone. The shuffling

of borders and life in a border zone has created a lasting impact on the people that reside there. We invite Estonians living abroad, Estonians that have returned to their homeland, setos, and identity researchers to participate in discussions regarding the multi-identities of people who live in various cultures.

Summer school participants will meet in Tartu on June 26th and visit Noora, after which the charter bus will depart for Setomaa. June 27-28 will feature presentations and discussions as well as documentary film screenings. On June 29th, we will embark on a road trip of Setomaa, and visit Värskä Agricultural Museum and the Saatse and Obinitsa museums. Participants will be taken back to Tartu by nightfall.

In addition to representatives from diaspora Estonian communities, the summer school will feature presenters from Estonian memory institutions that

Summer 2022 in Hiumaa.

pertain to the aforementioned theme and who are involved with maintaining related collections: the National Archives of Estonia, the Estonian Biographical Centre, the Estonian National Museum, the Estonian Literary Museum, the Estonian Institute of Historical Memory, Setomaa Museums Inc.

Non-profit Baltic Heritage Network summer schools are focused on Estonians living abroad and for employees of Estonian memory institutions who are involved with collecting, maintaining, researching, and distributing information about Estonian cultural heritage. Lectures, courses, hands-on learning, discussions, and dialogue. Experts from various Estonian memory institutes share their thoughts and knowledge about archives, libraries, museums, and other topics. Registration for the summer school begins in April. The working language of the summer school is Estonian.

BALTIC HERITAGE NETWORK DIASPORA RESEARCHERS' SEMINAR HELD IN RIGA

After the pandemic-induced hiatus, the Baltic Heritage Network international diaspora researchers' seminar was again held. This time the get-together took place on September 22nd, 2022, in Riga at the premises of the library of Latvian University. There were five presentations, each dealing with a Baltic history or culture segment.

Maarja Merivoo-Parro (Estonia) presented her mini-documentary about





Participants of the Warsaw Lithuanian Book Club. The founder and leader of the club, Dr. Jūratė Čerškutė, is third from the right. Warsaw, Poland, 2022.

Estonian refugee boats in Gotland. Kristine Bekere (Latvia) spoke of theorizing the birth of the Latvian diaspora. Celine Marks (Canada) discussed restoration and expansion of self-image in diasporic communities. Sander Jürisson (Estonia) spoke about his life as a diaspora researcher who works in a museum. Allison Brooks-Conrad (U.S.A.) introduced the topic that brought her to Estonia and will take her for a longer stay in Latvia next year: gender, labor, and music among Estonians and Latvians.

A SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH OF A LITERARY PROGRAM

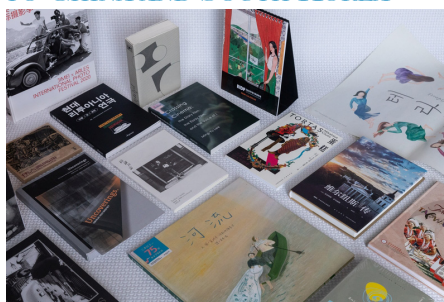
To develop the reading skills of the Lithuanian diaspora, the National Library of Lithuania, together with the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, the World Lithuanian Community, and the Lithuanian Publishers' Association have initiated a program for the Lithuanian diaspora communities. The program aims to introduce Lithuanians living abroad to the latest Lithuanian literature and to encourage them to read it.

The program was launched in 2022 in Poland. With the help of experts and taking into account the needs of the Lithuanian community in Poland, a collection of recent Lithuanian literature was compiled, including twenty-four books on Lithuanian fiction and cultural history. The collection was handed over to the library of the Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania in Poland, thus enabling members of the Polish-Lithuanian community to read and share the latest Lithuanian literature.

The members of the Warsaw Lithuanian Book Club, founded in 2016 by literary scholar Dr. Jūratė Čerškutė, made use of the books sent from Lithuania. Between October and December of 2022, the members of the book club participated in four meetings, where they read and discussed Undinė Radzevičiūtė's, Vita Vilimaite's and Jean-Christophe Mončys' books. Čerškutė was happy that the discussions were interesting, sometimes fierce, and that members of the book club had different opinions. The literary critic said that overall, the time was spent in a useful and meaningful way.

The three-year project will continue cooperating with the Lithuanian Book Club in Warsaw. As the program gains momentum, the organizers plan to involve more Lithuanian book clubs abroad and to create conditions to establish new ones. Plans include cooperation with public libraries abroad, offering to set up a shelf of Lithuanian books for use by local Lithuanians and other patrons.

NEW ARCHIVES FROM THE LITHUANIAN CULTURAL ATTACHÉ TO CHINA AND SOUTH KOREA



The collection includes books and catalogues.

Photo National Library of Lithuania / Vygaudas Juozaitis.

The National Library of Lithuania has added new documents to the collection of documents on the activities of cultural attachés of diplomatic missions of the Republic of Lithuania. The last collection of documents came from Tomas Ivanauskas, who served as Cultural Attaché to China and South Korea from 2019 to 2021. The archive handed over is exceptionally rich in published documents, illustrating the intensity of publishing work.

The books by Lithuanian authors Laimonas Briedis, Jonas Mekas, and Mikalojaus Vilutis and the publication on contemporary Lithuanian theatre are among the books that made their way to the Library. Ivanauskas noted that the loss of the opportunity to present performing arts due to the COVID-19 pandemic had resulted in a focus on photography. This led to two significant photography projects at the end of 2020: Antanas Sutkus's solo exhibition at the Xin Dong Cheng Gallery in Beijing and Tadas Kazakevičius's series "That Which Will No Longer Be" at Jimei x Arles, the most important photography festival in China. The collection also includes catalogues of these exhibitions, as well as publications commemorating the 90th anniversaries of the most famous Fluxus artists, Jurgis Mačiūnas and Nam June Paik, and the 100th anniversary of Josep Beuys.

KLAM - CANADIAN LATVIAN ARCHIVE AND MUSEUM SMALL BUT VITAL

At the outset, when the work of the Canadian Latvian Archive and Museum (KLAM) was recognised and formally named, it was possible to take advantage of the fact that the founder was also President of the Latvian National Federation in Canada (LNAK). Thus it was possible to use this opportunity to link the two and market the idea as a viable community project. This linking raised the profile of both entities, while the marketing aspect continued to be of great importance.



For many years following, located in the Latvian Canadian Cultural Centre, Toronto, LNAK was able to justify using a small uninhabitable space for storage and work by volunteers. These were historical moments since the key people, seniors dedicated to telling the Latvian Canadian story, threw themselves into building the collections and a cataloguing system, literally from point zero. Today, recognised as co-founders, we thank Ženija Vītols, Skaidrīte Tērauds, and Aija Kārklīnš. The latest arrival to the group is Anita Bredovskis.



While creating an in-house functional system, there have been opportunities to collaborate with other archives and museums, including the National Library of Latvia.

Though the COVID threat has caused delays and is always with us, we can now start tackling many existential questions. The KLAM project operates independently, but thanks to being under the beneficial wing of LNAK, some future funding should be



anticipated. More recently, additional floor space has been made available as an office, which is already almost full.

Due to our own networking in the community, the importance of saving our Canadian history, with all its Latvian influence, has finally taken on increased popularity. Again, with that come existential questions, which must be faced.

The increased feedback from potential donors now creates questions about storage. Digitisation can work on a small scale, depending on human resources, but these resources must be expanded. One important archival principle that KLAM adheres to is that the original material must stay in the country of current origin. In other words, collections and artefacts, which are in the hands of Canadians, are part of Canada's history, though they may have arrived from foreign locations with various refugees and immigrants. We are fortunate that this contradiction in terms can be solved by digitisation which, in itself, supports global access and research.

The hard reality is that new financial resources are desperately required for storage space and additional human expertise to assess, catalogue, and, of course, digitise.

As a museum, there are other perpetual questions. For example, do we keep books and paintings, and if we do, where and how to process them? Ideally, a dedicated repository should be negotiated with an existing national or provincial archive and museum.

A post-pandemic priority will be to re-establish closer cooperation with digitisation programs in Latvia, assuming they can access funding for digitisation to be done in Canada. Furthermore, it would be in their interest to easily expand their holdings. Though an apparent redundancy, this will also protect valuable cultural heritage in case of natural disasters or war, which unfortunately have become more prevalent in our modern world.



A displaced person before a long trip to Uruguay, 1940s-1950s.

Photo: Archive of the National Museum of Lithuania.

A NEW MUSEUM IN VILNIUS WILL HOUSE AN EXHIBITION ON THE HISTORY OF MIGRATION

Lithuanians change the world, and the world changes Lithuania. With this message, the National Museum of Lithuania will invite visitors to better understand the history of migration by the end of this year. The new exhibition will reveal the history of Lithuanian migration and help to understand the process of migration with all its positive and negative aspects.

Visitors will have the opportunity to be acquainted with the main migration waves of Lithuanian migration and their directions, causes and consequences, as well as with the stories of distinguished personalities who have left their mark in the world. The exhibition will offer an attractive way to learn about the most important phenomena and events in Lithuanian migration history, which have determined the development of Lithuanian society and shaped the identity of modern Lithuania.

The new permanent exhibition will be housed at the newest museum in Vilnius. It will be a gift to the city of Vilnius as it celebrates its 700th anniversary. The exhibition will be open all year round from November 2023.

LITHUANIANS IN KAZAKHSTAN IN 1948-1955

The book about Lithuanians in the special camps in Kazakhstan in 1948-1955, published in 2022 by the

Andris Kesteris

Algis Vyšniūnas

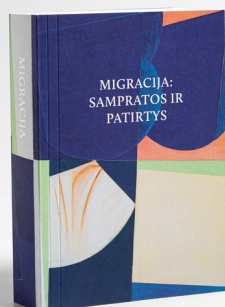
LIETUVIAI YPATINGUOSE KAZACHSTANO LAGERIUOSE 1948–1955 M.



The book about Lithuanians in Kazakhstan was published by the Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania.

Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania, stands out from traditional history books. It provides a panoramic look at the fate of the Lithuanians who were imprisoned in the Kazakhstan camps. According to its author Algis Vyšniūnas, such a look could be taken across the entire territory of the USSR, i.e. the entire Gulag archipelago, because the overall narrative of the Freedom Struggle in Lithuanian history leaves disproportionately little room for the Lithuanians who suffered and died in the Siberian camps.

Vyšniūnas argues that the trajectories of Lithuanian identity have two fundamentally different vectors: ‘partisan fighters’ and ‘suffering exiles.’ Gulag political prisoners do not exist in this scheme. The shocking story of the Kengir uprising alone sheds more light



on the narrative because it becomes clear that the Lithuanian female prisoner, Vlada Miliūtė, who was run over by a tank during the suppression of the uprising, signifies something other than a hardship in everyday Siberian life. The book does not provide answers. It rather aims to revise the whole discourse of historical memory commemoration by complementing existing narratives.

NEW PUBLICATION ON MIGRATION

Migracija: sampratos ir patirtys (compiled by Margarita Matulytė, edited by Margarita Dauartienė). Vilnius: Lithuanian National Museum of Art, Lithuanian Culture Research Institute, 2022

The collection of articles, Migration: Concepts and Experiences, is based on presentations delivered at the conference of the same title held at the National Gallery of Art in Vilnius in 2022. The articles reveal the complexity of migration as a phenomenon. It highlights the notions of migration process through biographical narratives, literature, the culture of rural daily life and recent developments in migration. Historical cross-sections are also presented, including the differences between Lithuanian and Jewish migration to the West, the post-war integration of Lithuanian Catholic clergy in emigration, and the demographic changes in Lithuanian-Australian society. The publication extensively discusses individual experiences that led to migration and diasporic memories in the context of contemporary conceptions of memory. Finally, by using the work of artists from different periods and in different fields, the authors of the collection examine the reflections and experiences of migration in the works of artists who have worked outside Lithuania.

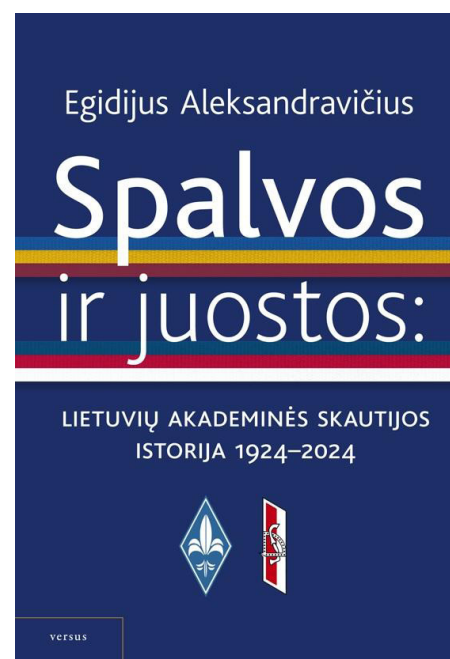
Margarita Matulytė, the compiler of the collection, notes that the book, using research in history, sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, art studies, and literary studies, discusses the phenomenon of migration in a comprehensive way, analyzes the development of migration in the nineteenth- and twenty-first-century and the context of its factors. It also attempts

to define a multidimensional concept of migration from an interdisciplinary perspective.

A BOOK ON LITHUANIAN ACADEMIC SCOUTING

Egidijus Aleksandravičius, Spalvos ir juostos. Akademinės lietuvių skautijos istorija 1924–2024, Vilnius: Versus, 2022.

According to Egidijus Aleksandravičius, the author of the history of Lithuanian Academic Scouting, Colors and Sashes. The History of Lithuanian Academic Scouting 1924–2024, the questions of the beginnings of Lithuanian Academic Scouting should be asked with patience, calm tolerance and skeptical wisdom. It is important to seek a compromise between the general features of the development of civil society in the revived Republic of Lithuania, which declared its independence on February 16, 1918, and the undeniable singularity of the Lithuanian Academic Scouting, which depended on the determination and will of a few free individuals. Therefore, in his newest book, Aleksandravičius tries to identify the names of those who started the organization and to find out what circumstances influenced them, what individual psychological factors might have been at work. The book is illustrated with documents and historical photographs.



The book recounts the history of Lithuanian Academic Scouting.

SMALL COUNTRY. BIG IDEAS.

inspired concerts + panels
art + culture exhibitions

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ESTONIAN MUSIC WEEK IN TORONTO CELEBRATES ITS FIFTH ANNIVERSARY THIS YEAR!

The first Estonian Music Week took place in May 2018 in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Republic of Estonia. This festival has now become VEMU's greatest cultural event throughout the year. To date, three full festivals have taken place (2018, 2019, and 2021), many concerts and tours by renowned Estonian artists, and much more. The latest of these endeavours was helping bring the Estonian-Ukrainian band Svjata Vatra on a Canadian mini-tour in February 2023. The concerts took place in Guelph, Hamilton, Ottawa, Montreal, Niagara Falls, and in various venues around Toronto.

The fourth festival is coming up on May 24-28 in Toronto and Hamilton; the slogan is: "Small country. Big ideas." Experience the sights, sounds, and tastes of the Nordic high life right here in Canada with five days of artists who push the boundaries of genres - folk artist of the year Mari Kalkun, avant garde jazz pianist and composer Kirke Karja, experts of ancient folk hymns Ansambel Triskele, renowned electronic music innovator Kara-Lis Coverdale. Plus, we're keeping a few names as a surprise until we announce the full line-up. Save the dates for our 5th-anniversary celebrations with sound and light installations, culture exhibits, regional cuisine, artists' talks, a conference, and tons of music!

VEMU's 2023 WINTER EVENTS

2023 has been deemed the year of movement by the Republic of Estonia's Ministry of Culture. In that light, VEMU's program reminds people that a healthy body means a healthy mind

and soul. On January 22nd, we had a screening of the 1959 Soviet-era Estonian film "Mischievous Curves," which tells a surprisingly propaganda-free tale of a love triangle and motor-racing. The film is well-known amongst those who have grown up in Estonia, yet for most local Estonians, this was a new viewing experience.



VEMU has aimed to introduce and educate about various sports and modes of healthy movement. You can hear about these themes in the first two Estonian language episodes of season 2 of EstoCast, a joint podcast venture between VEMU, Estonian Music Week, and Estonian Life newspaper. Helle Varrik, a sports lover and graduate of Tartu University with a degree in fitness sciences who has lived in Canada for over 30 years, speaks about what role women's rhythmic gymnastics, skiing, and golf have played in her life. Young Canadian-Estonian sports and movement enthusiast Kirke Timmusk delves into the interesting world of karate, axe-throwing, and many sports-related topics. To continue with the exploration of movement, Julia DeSotto conducted a Zumba workshop on March 1st with a focus on middle-aged and older individuals interested in movement.

We've also had various captivating lectures and seminars on everything ranging from historical to current topics and everything in between. On January 11th, journalist, political



scientist and Macdonald Laurier Institute senior fellow Marcus Kolga spoke about "Disinformation Awareness and Defence". As someone very knowledgeable and well-versed on digital communication, he had a lot to share with listeners - for example, interesting details on information warfare from Russia and China, as well as tips on how to tell the difference between information, misinformation, and disinformation. A lively Q&A session and discussion followed the lecture.

A Zoom seminar titled "Libraries - a Fashion Trend?" occurred on January 28th. This question was pondered and answered by Anne Määrmann and Kristi Prinzmann, interior architects from the firm Bob&Doko who worked on the modern Viimsi Library, the director of Viimsi Library Tiit Valm, who spearheaded the rejuvenation and modernisation of the building, and director Janne Andersoo as well as operations manager Kristel Veinmann from the National Library of Estonia, which is also starting on a major rejuvenation and renovation. Since VEMU is also preparing and planning for its permanent exhibit in the new building, there are ongoing discussions about what functions and purposes this kind of institution should fill. VEMU has the largest Estonian-themed archival library in all of North America, as well as the smaller-scale Estonian Studies Library, which is popular among readers in the local Estonian community. And so therefore, we have to educate ourselves and our readers and stay in touch with





what modern libraries are like. The event was also a conclusion to the 2022 year of libraries.

On February 5th, we celebrated political scientist and professor Rein Taagepera's 90th birthday, who has a lot in common and a shared history with Canadian-Estonians. Professor Taagepera recalled the tense years between 1987 and 1991 in Estonia and abroad, his first visits to Estonia, how he was a candidate in the Estonian presidential race, and much more. He read excerpts from his book of memoirs titled "When History Started to Move," which was released in the fall. All copies of his book by publisher Ilmamaa that were available for sale were sold out. Following the lecture was a less-formal celebratory gathering, at which the professor was serenaded with "Ta elagu!" and a champagne toast. Several congratulatory speeches were held. The event took place in partnership with Korp! Rotalia and the University of Toronto Chair of Estonian Studies.

Tõnu Tõsine, an avid history enthusiast, presented a lecture on February 15th titled "The Unique Journey of Estonian Refugees: The Trip to North America with Viking Ships". "Viking ships" were the vessels that Baltic refugees attempted to journey to North America with after the Soviet Union began to demand their return in 1944. Due to the legal immigration process being very slow, smart and energetic, people began to search for their creative ways to get

to the West. All hard-earned savings were fair game, ships were bought, and so these courageous individuals began their trying journeys. Most of the refugees that arrived illegally in Canada were allowed to stay. The arrival of the "Viking ships" in Canada created a sizeable reaction and convinced the government to simplify the immigration process.

VEMU's winter program has its own place for films. On February 26th, a screening of the first part of the long-awaited Middle Ages crime movie "Apteeker Melchior", (director Elmo Nüganen, 2022) based on Indrek Hargla's popular book series took place. Come spring, many more film nights are planned.

On February 24th, VEMU/Estonian Museum Canada helped organise the celebration of Estonia's 105th Independence Day at Tartu College, along with the Estonian Central Council in Canada. Young Estonian rising musician Ingmar Kiviloo, currently studying at Berklee College in the US, provided fantastic entertainment throughout the night. After the march in support of Ukraine that took place in the heart of Toronto, several representatives of local Eastern European communities who had been at the march joined in on the festivities at Tartu College. The warm and truly amazing sense of unity that formed gave everyone the strength to carry on.

VISITING VEMU

Travelling has become possible and popular yet again, and so VEMU/Estonian Museum Canada has already had many great guests at the beginning of 2023.

On January 17, the President of the Alberta Estonian Heritage Society, Kelly Schuler, met with VEMU as well as other Estonian organisations at Tartu College. She shared how her family arrived in Canada at the Bibliography Club's luncheon. Kelly is the descendant of Crimean Estonians Jakob & Mari Erdman, who, as young children, left their Paide area homes with their parents and other family members in a larger group, trekking 2000 km on foot to Crimea in 1861. When Mari



and Jakob grew up, they married and had nine children while farming in the mild warm climate near the Black Sea. By 1901, there were rumours of forthcoming war in Russia; Kelly's family uprooted their lives once again to get away and re-establish a farming and ranching life in South Dakota. However, the climate there was too harsh after 40 years in semi-tropical Crimea, and the group looked for new homesteading land, finding it in southern Alberta, near the town now known as Barons. There are dozens of multi-generational descendants of Jakob and Mari spread throughout Alberta, elsewhere in Canada and the USA. Kelly, her mother and her two children are among them.





Estonian musician and contemporary music expert Tarmo Johannes visited on February 2nd. Tarmo performed an innovative program titled “Bog” that included virtual reality at the 2019 Estonian Music Week in Toronto with U-Ensemble. His focus during this visit was to research the legacy of Estonian-Canadian progressivist composer Udo Kasemets for an upcoming U-Ensemble concert program. Tarmo familiarised himself with VEMU’s collections and discussed future collaboration plans with the EMW team.

At the beginning of February, the Ukrainian-Estonian band Svjata Vatra toured Ontario and Québec. Band leader and vocalist Ruslan Trochynskyi, along with his wife Terje and daughter Rute were also able to fit a tour of VEMU into their schedule.

Kadri Linna from the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Liis Kalle, an educator at The Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre and opera stage director living in Berlin, visited and familiarised themselves with VEMU’s collections and activities at the end of February. Kadri is known amongst Estonians living abroad as the advisor of the Ambassador at Large for the Diaspora Marin Möttus, the organiser of virtual forums focused towards Estonians living abroad, and the newsletter’s editor. Liis was especially interested in VEMU’s collections since they include the personal archive of

the first Estonian opera stage director Hanno Kompus. Since Liis is planning on writing a monography of Kompus, she will be back in Toronto in the near future.

THE ESTONIAN ARCHIVES IN AUSTRALIA HAVE A NEW HOME

Estonian House in Sydney is being renovated, and part of it is being prepared for commercial letting. This meant that the Archive had to move from its previous location on the first floor to a new site on the lower ground floor. Though smaller than the previous one, the new architect-designed, airconditioned and light-controlled room is a much better fit for our collection. We had to carefully review our collection, especially the library, to decide what to keep and offer other memory



institutions. The new compact takes 660 archive boxes; we are rearranging the library shelves and will, for the first time, have room to display our collection of paintings.

The Archive is still open on Wednesdays from 10 am to 3 pm, but we also have it open whenever there are functions at Estonian House. The new site is easily accessible from both inside and outside Estonian House and has led to an increase in visitors and a renewed interest in our collection.

The Archive opened on 27th November 2022, with numerous past and present volunteers and representatives of the Sydney Estonian Society, the Estonian House Cooperative Society and the Council for Estonian Societies in Australia attending.

Maie Barrow - Hon. Archivist

NEW TV-SERIES HONES IN ON EXILE ESTONIAN HOME VIDEOS

Starting from March 7th Estonian Public Broadcasting TV-channel ETV2 is broadcasting an 8 week specialty show examining the various aspects of exile Estonian life. The documentary series is based on a wide archive of home videos which were given to the production team by Estonians all over the world. The program is called “8mm elu” (8mm of life) and it airs every Tuesday at 21.30 Estonian time, also has repeat slots and will be viewable on the public broadcasting streaming site jupiter.err.ee