

Newsletter

Winter 2008

vol. 11, issue 1



Sunflower Chapter
of the American
Historical Society
of Germans
from Russia

Winter weather cancels Christmas meeting

by Sister Alice Ann Pfeifer CSA

IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE WE LAST HAD A WINTER LIKE THIS. The snowy, icy weather caused the cancellation of our last meeting. Members learned of it through local radio announcements and good old-fashioned word of mouth. Then, too, many Sunflower members simply *knew* not to venture out on December 9.

This means that the door prizes intended for our Christmas party will be given away at our *Fasenacht* meeting instead. Besides the usual prizes offered every year, a gift certificate to a Hays restaurant is included. Just think: to have a chance to win it, all you have to do is sign in at our next meeting!

What on earth, some of you may ask, is *Fasenacht*? The German word literally means "eve before the fast" and corresponds to the French celebration of Mardi Gras that happens every year on the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. Volga Germans had their own special way of celebrating this day, which included feasting on some of their favorite foods, playing cards, and dancing before giving up these enjoyments for Lent.

So how were *Fasenacht* and the 40 days of Lent observed in your home? Be prepared to share your memories with other members when we get together on February 10. The meeting will also include, as a result of the last chapter board meeting, some important proposals for you to consider. Your voice can't be heard if your body isn't there, so be sure to join us for our next gathering!



Grandfather Frost, the Russian Santa Claus, plods through the snow to deliver gifts to all children, naughty and nice, on New Year's Eve. The Cyrillic script says, "New Year Greetings" on this picture postcard sold in Russia's post offices in the 1990s.

from the various Volga German towns of the area, will present the program. It will be an informative, nostalgic look at how Lent used to be observed among our people.

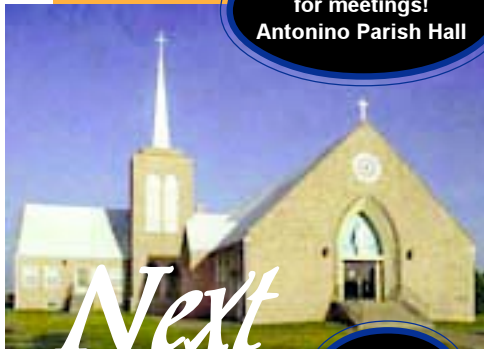
To get to the parish hall in Antonino, take US-183 south from Hays for 5.6 miles, then turn west onto Antonino Road and drive another 3.9 miles. Once you get to Antonino, you'll see the church on your left.

SOCIAL...12:00
POTLUCK...12:30
PROGRAM...1:30

Our next meeting will include our *Fasenacht* celebration, so bring your favorite Volga German dish to share with your chapter friends: German sausage, beans and noodles, *Kartoffel'n'Glump*, *Grebbe*, *Schwarzbeeren Kuchen*, whatever! Bring along an extra friend or two as well! Who knows? Maybe one of your guests will be a lucky door prize winner.

Leona Pfeifer, along with representatives

NEW LOCATION
for meetings!
Antonino Parish Hall



Next
MEETING

Feb. 10

THE TOPEKA STATE JOURNAL

Dec. 14, 1906

Several of the Russians who have been working in the sugar beet fields at Sterling, Col. returned to North Topeka yesterday, and have reopened their homes in Little Russia and gone to housekeeping. They say that their venture proved to be very lucrative to them.

(Reprinted courtesy of Frank Jacobs and Gary Ubert)



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

HAPPY NEW YEAR! I could wish in German, but my German spelling is very poor and I am afraid you would all laugh at me!

I hope that all of you enjoyed a very blessed Christmas. Sorry we had to cancel our December 9th Christmas dinner and meeting--we had such a nice Christmas program planned for you. Due to the ice and snow we did not want us older people to get out in the dangerous conditions.

Our next meeting is planned for Sunday, February 10, at the Antonino parish hall. This will be our annual *Fasnacht* potluck. Bring your favorite Lenten foods to share with everyone. It is always fun to taste the great variety of German foods.

Be sure to bring along another Volga German couple or friend, anyone that you feel would be interested in joining the Sunflower Chapter of the AHSGR.

We have 35 members who have not paid their dues for 2008. Please, we need you! Delinquent members will be dropped after January 31. Make your check for \$55 payable to the Sunflower Chapter and mail it to our treasurer, Elmer Dreher, at 1319 MacArthur, Hays, KS 67601. Do it now, and *thank you!*

We will have a drawing for several door prizes at our meeting, so remember to register as you come into the hall. You may be a lucky winner. We have a nice program planned for

you, including a presentation on the purpose of the AHSGR. Come and enjoy good Volga German friendship!

--Joe Werth

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Glueckseliges Neues Jahr! I hope as many of you as possible come to our meeting February 10. We have some important decisions to make and we will need your input.

This issue is the last full-color newsletter being printed for the chapter free of charge by Marvin Rack. He has done us a great favor in the past year, allowing us to celebrate our year of hosting an international convention with a full-color newsletter. At the next meeting we'll discuss whether we should have all or part of the newsletter printed in color at our own expense in the coming year. Kevin will talk with Marvin about prices and present us with some options. I remember from my years as a high school yearbook adviser that color printing is always way more expensive than most people realize, so give this matter some serious thought before our next meeting.

Down the road we'll also have to consider raising our chapter dues to meet the rising costs of paper and postage. It's been many years now that we've been mailing out five newsletters a year for only \$5 in chapter dues. But if a change does come, it won't be until 2009.

Finally, I have to admit there was a big boo-boo in the last newsletter. In the

VICTORIA VISITOR

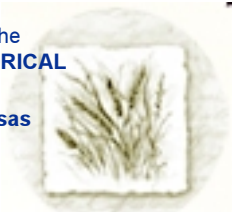
June 1, 1950

Pfeifer, Kansas can boast of the smallest telephone dial system of any place in the United States. It is owned by the "Farmers' Telephone Co.," organized in 1913, and serves eleven residential and eight business phones or nineteen in all.

George Murphy, of Gorham, installed the system, ready for the first call January 17, 1950. It is housed in a 10-10 building constructed as near weather- and dirt-proof as it is possible to build,

Since installation the dial system has handled 3,000 calls. It automatically rings twice and if no answer gives, the busy signal sounds. The future was considered in installing this system. There are accommodations for 100 phones. The town of Pfeifer has 32 families according to the last census.

Presented courtesy of the
ELLIS COUNTY HISTORICAL
SOCIETY MUSEUM,
100 W. 7th, Hays, Kansas



Winter Hours:
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Tuesday-Friday. Closed Saturday-Monday.
Admission: Adults, \$3. Children 3-12, \$1.

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"Overheard" column, I incorrectly stated that Betty Leiker's family had lived for a time in Colorado to pick beets. At Christmas choir practice in December, Betty pointed out to me that I must have meant Betty Pfannenstiel. Note to all the Bettys in our chapter: I'm sorry I keep mixing all of you up! If it's any consolation to you, I do the same thing with all the Kylees in my Confirmation class.

--Sister Alice Ann Pfeifer CSA

Please pray for Sunflower
Chapter member Francis
"Giebe" Giebler, who died
on January 12, 2008

+

The Russians who have during the summer, been working in the sugar beet country, are returning home by the car loads. This week two coach loads of them arrived from the west and one car load of household goods. These people lived in the Vinegar works neighborhood and in Little Russia and left

the train on Curtis street. The work in these sugar beet fields has proven very profitable for these Russians. One man, after paying all of his expenses, brought back with him \$700 as a result of the summer's work.

The real estate agents report that they have recently received a good many calls for small tracts of land of one to five acres from men who want them for truck gardens. Since

the talk of a canning factory has been revived and as it now appears the factory may be established, enterprising men are on the lookout for land in Shorey in from 15 to 30 acre tracts on which to put out onion sets. It is said that the Billard tract in Oakland has been mentioned, and very favorably, as a site for the canning factory.

(Reprint courtesy of Frank Jacobs and Gary Ubert)

Why they left home, pt. 1

by Helen Jira

ED. NOTE: The story has been told and re-told about how and why Germans left home in droves to settle wild Russian frontier lands in the late 1700s. With so many new members in our chapter this year, I thought it would be good to reprint the late Helen Jira's simple and straightforward account. It is given in her Schaeffer genealogy book, published in 1994 by Mennonite Press of Newton, Kansas. Permission for this reprint kindly comes from Helen's daughter, Fran Kovach.

Catherine the Great played a major role in the early lives of the Schaeffer families. It was in the year 1762 when most of our forefathers lived in continental Europe where most of them were farmers and peasants. For many years they had been helpless in the ever-recurring wars between the territories of the Holy Roman Empire. *[Germany did not exist as a united sovereign state at that time, but was divided into many smaller states and principalities that were part of the larger "Holy Roman Empire." Despite its name, there was actually very little that was holy about it!]*

Their homes served as battle grounds. Preparations for war and the continuous compulsory military service never seemed to end.

The ruling royalty of the eighteenth century were dictators and every command was carried out or a death sentence was imposed. The rulers reveled in luxury and the people existed as serfs.

The Empire was in shambles when the Seven Years' War (1756-1763) ended. Many hoped for peaceful times but their pleas were not heard. Frederick the Great continued to expand the military with more weapons and increased taxes. People were finally fed up and looked for a way out.

It was at this time when Empress Catherine II of Russia saw an opportunity to strengthen her power. She was born in 1729 as a little German princess to marry the Archduke Peter. He was soon going to be the Czar of Russia. Since he wanted the two countries to be friendly, he picked on Princess Catherine at age fourteen to go to Russia and marry Peter.

At age fifteen she married retarded Grand Duke Peter III. When her husband ascended to the throne, she was thirty-two. Six months later Catherine participated when the soldiers revolted and took him captive. He died shortly after being captured. Now the former German princess was the ruler of Russia.

(continued on p. 4)



This is seventh in a series of unedited reprints. The column "Liebenthal Locals" appeared in the LaCrosse Republican intermittently throughout the early 1900s.

At this time either unsere Leute were making noticeable efforts to become "more American," or their newspaper editors in LaCrosse were trying to Americanize them. This can be seen in the use of the title "Reverend" for Liebenthal's Father Stollenwerk and the frequent Americanization of German names--using Smith for Schmidt, Weaver for Weber, and so on.

THE LACROSSE REPUBLICAN December 3, 1914

Rev. Stollenwerk was out of town a few days this week.

Stephen Smith and wife and Geo. Smith were over from Hays Sunday.

John Riedel, Andrew Depperschmidt and Stephen Herrman, who are attending High School at Hays were here Sunday.

Jake Smith is putting up a new house.

[Two unintelligible words] wife were here from Schoenchen Sunday.

Adam Herrman has nearly finished putting up a new barn.

Jake Diehl has a new Studebaker car.

Jas. Herrman Sr. is putting up fence this week.

JANUARY
31

Did it slip your mind? Were you planning to catch Elmer at the December meeting that got cancelled? Not to worry! If you didn't do so already, you can still pay your 2008 dues if you mail them to our chapter treasurer by January 31.

You need to do this if you want to keep receiving the AHSGR Journal published in Lincoln and our own Sunflower Chapter Newsletter published locally.

Mail your \$55 payable to Sunflower Chapter to:

Elmer Dreher
1319 MacArthur
Hays, KS 67601

Don't miss out on all that will be coming up in 2008. Please renew your dues today!

Why they left home, pt. 1

(continued from p. 3)

Catherine moved quickly to strengthen her power. In 1762 Russia was mostly illiterate and undeveloped. Her solution was to open Russia to foreign immigration. She preferred Germans with agricultural experience.

On December 4, 1762 Catherine issued a Manifesto inviting foreign immigration in general terms. Since there was no response, she issued a second Manifesto on July 22, 1763. It gave the conditions, rights, and privileges under which the settlers could enter the Russian Empire. It promised the following points which prompted the German people to emigrate to Russia:

- Freedom from civil and military service
- Freedom from taxation to all who established colonies on undeveloped lands for thirty years
- Freedom of religion
- Freedom to settle in any desired province
- Freedom of self-government for each colony
- Free transportation and travel expense to Russia
- Freedom from furnishing quarters for soldiers
- Permission for the establishment of colonies on productive lands
- A ten-year interest-free loan for housing and farming

The combination of promises and the desperate conditions under which the

people lived made them easy prey. Between 1763 and 1768 an estimated 8,000 families comprising up to 30,000 persons left the Holy Roman Empire for Russia.

Even from the beginning the situation failed to be what the Empress' recruiters had promised. The long distances were exhausting for the poor since they walked. Rich emigrants rode in carriages or on horseback to the Volga.

The journey continued in southern or western territories as they traveled to Roslau, the first underground gathering station. The group then sailed down the Elbe to either Hamburg or Luebeck. These were the primary ports of embarkation.

Traveling from Luebeck to Kronstadt on the Gulf of Finland lasted weeks or even months depending on weather.

(to be continued)

BELOVED VOLGA GERMAN HYMNS

'Befiehl du deine Wege'

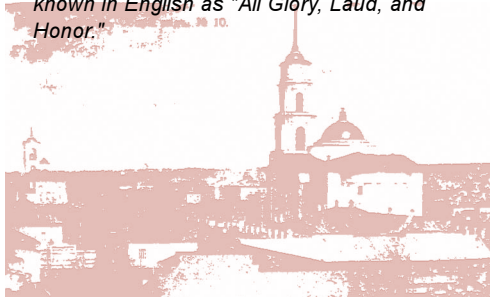
This is a well-known Palm Sunday hymn, known in English as "All Glory, Laud, and Honor."

1.
Befiehl du deine Wege
Und was dein Herze kraenkt,
Der aller treusten Pflege
Des, der den Himmel lenkt!
Der Wolken, Luft, und Winden
Gibt Wege, Lauf und Bahn,
Der wird auch Wege finden,
Da dein Fuss gehen kann.

2.
Dem Herrn must du vertrauen,
Wenn dir's soll wohl ergeh'n;
Auf sein Werk musst du schauen,
Wenn dein Werk soll besteh'n.
Mit Sorgen und mit Graemen
Un selbst Gemachter Pein
Laest Gott sich gar nichts nehmen,
Er muss erbeten sein.

1.
All glory, laud, and honor
To Thee, Redeemer, King,
To whom the lips of children
Made sweet hosannas ring!
The people of the Hebrews
With palms before Thee went;
Our praise and prayer and anthems
Before Thee we present.

2.
Thou art the King of Israel,
Thou David's royal Son,
Who in the Lord's name comest,
The King and blessed One!
To Thee, before Thy Passion,
They sang their hymns of praise;
To Thee, now high exalted,
Our melody we raise.



Katerinenstadt, Russia, 1917

OVERHEARD

Whenever LeRoy L. Herrman is asked how he spells his last name, he says, "You spell it just the way it sounds. First comes *H-e-r-r*, which means 'king,' and at the end comes *m-a-n* for 'man.' I am the king of men!"

One of Sister Frances Rose Dinkel's favorite childhood memories concerns all the Dinkel children's efforts to make candy whenever

their folks left the farm to run errands or make social calls. Their favorite confection was caramel candy. "I still can picture in my mind," she says with a chuckle, "the day my brother noticed we were out of milk when he needed some for candy making. There he was, out in the yard, running around with a cup and trying to catch the cow!"

Sister Rose Walters has fond memories of swimming in the stock tank summer days on

the farm. The green scum in the water never bothered her until years later, when at the convent in Wisconsin she was served--for the very first time in her life--canned spinach. "All I could think of was that stock tank back home," she concludes, while making a sour face and imitating the way she picked at her plate.

Life Sketches of Early Agnesians

by Sister Alice Ann Pfeifer CSA

The second in our series of life sketches belongs to Catharine Dreiling. She was the very first Volga German woman from Kansas to become a Sister of St. Agnes.

Catharine was only ten when two Sisters of St. Agnes, Aurea Sellner and Agatha Beschta, first arrived in Herzog to start a school. By the time the girl was 15, she knew she wanted to travel to distant Wisconsin to become a sister, too. Most likely she had gotten to know Sisters Aurea and Agatha well because the two sisters stayed in the Dreiling family's town home during the first year they lived in Kansas. The people of Herzog at that time were still too poor to build the sisters a convent.

One feature that made the early Sisters of St. Agnes different from other orders, Sister Margaret Lorimer points out in her new book *Ordinary Sisters*, was that they were willing to live in people's homes for awhile, if needed, when starting a new school somewhere. In the nineteenth century most women's religious orders required a parish to supply a suitable convent before agreeing to send any teachers to the parish.

How highly the Sisters of St. Agnes valued their first Volga German member can be seen in this longer-than-usual life sketch. Young

Sr. Felicitas Dreiling, 1869-1909

Sister M. Felicitas, Catharine Dreiling, was born at Herzog, Russia on February 2, 1869. Her parents were Aloysius Dreiling and Catharine Rohleder. She entered the Convent on November 19, 1884; was admitted to the novitiate in 1887; to first temporary vows on January 21, 1888; to second profession on August 23, 1890; to perpetual vows on July 31, 1897. Sister died at Victoria, Kansas on May 16, 1909.

In the postulate Catharine was studious and obedient; in the novitiate she devoted herself most earnestly to the study of the religious life; and, to the joy of her Superiors she became a model religious.

Sister accomplished much good in the parochial schools and conscientiously filled the office of local superior on the missions. She labored on several missions in Wisconsin, Illinois and in Altoona Pennsylvania, her last field of labor.

To our deep sorrow our good Sister's health failed while she was in Altoona, and,

everyone realized the fact, she had developed consumption. In the hope of again recovering her health in Kansas her native climate, where Mother Agnes had purchased a home for the sick Sisters, she requested that she might be permitted to go there. The request was granted; however the disease had already gained such headway as to be beyond control.

Realizing that she could not recover, Sister bore her lot with patient resignation and prepared her soul for its homeward flight. However, she lingered for a year and five months. Early in the spring of 1909 she was confined to her bed. The good Capuchin Fathers at Victoria attended her spiritual wants. Before receiving the last Sacraments she devoutly renewed her holy vows, and humbly asked pardon for any offense which she might have given. Pressing the crucifix to her lips, and calling on the holy names of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, she peacefully winged her flight to heaven on May 16, 1909.

Sister was buried in St. Fidelis Cenetary at Victoria, Kansas. R.I.P.

Catharine, named Sister Felicitas in religion, without a doubt was bright, dedicated, and responsible--because those were the qualities sought in sisters selected to be teachers in the schools and superiors in the local convents. Both were roles that Sister Felicitas fulfilled faithfully in her short 40 years of life.

Her death by tuberculosis was rather common among the pioneer sisters. However, simply contracting the disease was not an automatic death sentence. Today's oldest living Sister of St. Agnes had tuberculosis when she was young, too--but lived to

celebrate her 90th jubilee this past July! She is 108.

To help you better understand these life sketches, here are definitions of words that appear often in them:

postulate: the first stage of preparation to be a sister, lasting at least six months

novitiate: the second stage of preparation, lasting one to two years

mission: any location where sisters were sent to serve as teachers, parish workers, nurses, or social workers

Grandpa's long walk, pt. 2

by Edgar B. Dreher

When John Philip Dreher, Jr. left Russia in 1876, he was only nine years old. But this strong young boy lived long enough to share the experience of his exhausting trip out of Russia with his grandson, Edgar B. Dreher. Presently 86 years old and residing in Longmont, Colorado, Edgar shared the following write-up with his cousin, Elmer Dreher of Hays.



ED. NOTE: In part one, we left off with the emigrants having walked from Neu Obermunjour to Samara to Saratov. Now they are heading west from Saratov, no longer comforted and sustained by the the great Volga River or any of her tributaries.

"Here comes the worst of the walk," Grandpa said. "Now we are on land. Dirty-- everything you can imagine. There is so much dust in our eyes that they burn. We headed west and had to stay on the right side of the little cities. Then every day we marched on. As we marched, if someone in a family had to

go to the bathroom, the whole family moved out of the march to stay together. There was no shame when one went to the bathroom." Grandpa said you had to hurry because the group didn't stop to wait. There was no set position for each family in the total group. Sometimes a family would be in front, sometimes in the middle, sometimes at the end of the line.

"Now we are away from the river and on uncharted, open land," Grandpa said. The landscape was hills and rocks, undeveloped land that made the voyage harder. They had tall men stationed throughout the whole length of the procession. When someone got sick, a tall man carried the person until he or she died. When that happened, the man carrying the dead person would holler and the message would be relayed from the front to the back of the moving crowd.

"Now it is going to get rough and we have to depend on what we can find to eat," Grandpa continued. "Of course we still had our peanut brittle and hard candy. After walking awhile, everyone got tired and the spotter would call out that we could rest. Then everybody would go way outside the resting place to do their duty so no one would step in it. Sorry, but that is the way it went. When they started walking again, there would be more singing, praying, and crying. One time we saw a cloud of dust. It turned out to be bad men on horseback."

Grandpa had tears in his eyes when he said, "They hit us, they hurt us, and they took babies from us and threw them to the ground. When at last they left, everyone was injured and crying. The government was always hunting us. We stopped for the night and a pack of wolves came so we again hunted them for food. The next morning everybody was up early, getting ready to continue on the walk."

By then they were on the longest part of the trek, because it was approximately 1200 miles from Saratov to Warsaw. Along the way, they ate rodents or anything else they could get to eat. When they finally got to another river, they drank first, then filled their canteens. Then they all bathed in the river and washed their clothes. That night a pack of wolves came and they were able to cook more wolf meat for their journey. "I used my [beeswax] squares to heat the water and everybody used them," Grandpa said. "I was proud of myself."

The next day they prayed, sang, and cried as they walked and walked. People continued to get sick, but the big men carried them until they either got better or died. "If they died, we buried them in shallow graves and we prayed over them, then set out again," Grandpa said.

Another time they saw a cloud of dust on the horizon and again were attacked. "But this did not stop us from continuing the trek to freedom," Grandpa said. At a later stop by a river, the people saw big animals they could not identify. But again they hunted the animals and had meat to eat. More and more people succumbed to the extreme conditions, however, and the dust they stirred up by their walking continued to burn their eyes.

(to be continued)



CAROL RIFFEL 1938-2007

With deep regret Sunflower Chapter members learned of the passing of Golden Wheat Chapter member Carol Riffel. As recently as June, we had seen her pitching in with all her might to

help out at the AHSGR convention. But even then, she was carrying on a silent battle with cancer, which finally claimed her on December 23.

Our sadness is mainly for those who had to say goodbye to her, for surely by now Carol is spreading around her warmth and laughter in heaven. And can't you just see her chasing after all her Volga German

ancestors, finally getting all her genealogical questions answered?

As another AHSGR member said in a tribute to Carol posted online, "You have been a leader, a participant, a friend. You have joyfully taken on tasks when your schedule was already full...I ask all who read this to please take a moment and offer prayers for Carol's family, for strength and comfort."

A history of Brazil's Volga Germans, pt. 2

The following is extracted from the book *Resumo Histórico e Genealogia dos Alemães do Volga* ("Historical Summary and Genealogy of the Volga Germans") by Carlos Alberto Schwab. It was edited in 1997 on the occasion of the 120th anniversary of the immigration of the Volga Germans to Brazil. Kevin Rupp procured this manuscript for us.

They [the Volga German scouts] didn't know anything about [South American] land; they were plain practical settlers. Seeing the high grass and the great bushes of the fields, they thought of this as good land. They didn't know that it was highly acidic and bad for cultivating wheat.

Besides, the place looked similar to the right side of the Volga. When seeing the beautiful wavy fields, intermixed with small forest capons, they admired a place that reminded them so much of the *Bergseite*. And maybe in their momentary enthusiasm, they did not think to investigate more carefully the soil type, the kinds of crops cultivated in the area, the productivity of the land, and other factors that could have changed the direction of things.

Eyewitnesses tell that the wheat grew beautifully, but it was not very much like the wheat of the Volga. As if that had not been enough to discourage the settlers, a lot of farms were destroyed by cattle herds that passed through. Paraná at that time was free range. Also, the harvested wheat was difficult to sell; nobody wanted to buy unprocessed grain, only flour from milled wheat. It happened a bit later that Mr. Gustav Wichert built a hydraulic mill.

Between the delegation and the Brazilian government it was agreed that the immigrants would receive lands for the colonies to be formed and that the people would continue, as in Russia, to live in closed colonies--without any mixing of religious confessions and ethnic groups.

After returning to the Volga with the emissaries that the Brazilian government had sent along, the scouts began organizing meetings to transmit to others what they had seen in the Empire of Brazil. Nikolaus Schamne agitated against emigration there. As already mentioned, he had previously escorted two groups to the United States, where probably he also intended to go.

Almost simultaneously, another movement took thousands of Germans from the Volga to Argentina, where wheat was being cultivated with reasonable success. Youths who were being recruited for the Russian army got ready quickly and formed the first contingent to travel to Brazil. Almost all of them single, they were *de facto* fugitives from Russian militarism. Possibly they arrived in Brazil in March of 1877 as part of the first group consisting of only 27 persons. These took root in Guaraúna (today

the municipal district of Teixeira Soares). Of their number, the names of only two are known today: Gottlieb Krutsch and Jakob Krüger.

In August of 1877, the first contingent to be composed of Protestant families left Russia. This group included 24 families and some single boys. They totalled 300 in number and arrived in the port of Paranaguá on September 22, 1877. Days later they met with the boys who had arrived in the beginning of the year.

Once in Ponta Grossa, Palmeiro and Lapa, they were sent by the municipal districts to several different colonies. The city of Ponta Grossa, the largest, numbered at that time approximately 3000 inhabitants, and the Volga Germans that came were around 2000 in number. The imperial Brazilian government granted each immigrant free passage from the port of Paranaguá or Antonina to his or her colony, besides food during the trip and for the next 12-20 months after the date of arrival. The construction of houses, also, was done at government expense, including those houses built by the settlers themselves.

(to be continued)


See you in Casper July 28-August 3!

Plans are moving forward for the joint GRHS and AHSGR convention to be held in Casper this year, and we need your help. Please check our wish list and join us in planning and implementing this fantastic and historic event!

1. Donations for sponsoring two foreign speakers. The donations would cover visa, travel, room and board for Nina Waschkau, professor and head of department of history at Volgograd State University, Volgograd, Russia. and for Mila Koretnikov, a German from Russia now living in Germany. Using records from archives in Russia to trace family, Nina will speak on the significance of the deportations of the Volga Germans in 1941. Nina is of German descent and is excited to join us for the 2008 convention. Mila lived in the US for a year and taught at the University of Wyoming. She will talk about the Germans who have left Russia and resettled in Germany in recent years. Both of these women are dynamic speakers dedicated to the preservation of the history and culture of the Germans from Russia.

2. Volunteers to help out during convention in all areas. We are also looking for a coordinator for the youth program. Some of the activities we would like to offer youth include a pizza party; activities for learning German dances, games, and language; a movie night; miniature golf; and field trips to area museums such as the National Historic Trails Museum and Fort Casper. The youth program coordinator would be responsible for the overall program, but we also need volunteers to help with different aspects of the program. If you or someone you know might be interested, please call Patti Sellenrick, 2008 Convention Co-Chair, at (307) 674-8196, or e-mail her at gsellenr@bresnan.net. *Danke schoen!*

International Convention of
Germans from Russia



Parkway Plaza Hotel & Convention Center




Casper, Wyoming

July 28-August 3, 2008

Make plans now to join us for this joint international convention
of the GRHS and the AHSGR

Genealogy	Research Center	Storytelling	Heritage Hall
Folklore	Superb Speakers	Bookstores	Sing-a-longs
Village Visits	Essay Contest Awards	Welcome Night	Travel Programs

American Historical Society of
Germans from Russia
831 1st Street
Lincoln, NE 68502-1189
(402) 474-3363 ahsg@ahsg.org



Germans from Russia Heritage Society
1125 W. Tumpline Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58501-8115
(701) 222-6167 gfrs@gfrs.org

Celebrating our Common Heritage

Visit our convention web site at
www.germansfromrussia.net

SUNFLOWER CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

1703 Henry Drive, Apt. B
Hays, KS 67601

e-mail: rossiya@ruraltel.net
website: www.volgagerman.net



Inside *this newsletter*

- 1...Christmas Meeting That Wasn't...Next Meeting
- 2...Topeka State Journal, 1906...President's Message...Editor's Message...Victoria Visitor, 1950
- 3...Topeka State Journal, 1906...Why They Left Home, Pt. 1...Liebenthal Locals, 1914
- 4...Blg Deadline...*Befiehl du deine Wege*
- 5...Overheard...Sr. Felicitas Dreiling, CSA
- 6...Grandpa's Long Walk, Pt. 2
- 7...Carol Riffel Remembered...Brazil's Volga Germans, Pt. 2
- 8...Convention in Casper