



Sunflower Chapter NEWSLETTER

Spring 2014



Vol. 18, Issue 2



FASENACHT MEETING BRINGS SHARING OF DAYS GONE BY

By Judy Hoffman

On Sunday, February 23, 2014, the Sunflower Chapter of Hays, Kansas met in Munjor, Kansas, a few miles south-east of Hays for their Fasnacht Meeting. The Fasnacht or night before the fast or as the people in New Orleans would call it, Mardi Gras. About 35 people attended the meeting.

The meeting began Board members providing Green-bean Dumpling, Sauerkraut, Chicken and Noodle and Ham and Bean soups for the membership. Bread was also provided for a simple meal before the program. A short business meeting was held and the discussion about the AHSGR 2014 Convention in Lincoln Nebraska in July and the Kansas Round-Up of Chapter Meeting in Hays in October 2014.



Norma Pipkin, program chair, discussed Fasnacht what our Germans from Russia people did, or more so, what they didn't do during lent. During the Lent Fast, which was required by all Catholics, no meat not even bacon grease was used in preparation of the meals on Fridays. Chapter members also discussed how the use of music, card playing, and dancing was prohibited in the house. No weddings were allowed during Lent. Norma Pipkin then referred to a doctoral dissertation written by Sr. Eloise Johannes, C.S.J. of the Volga-Germans of Ellis

County. It was not unusual for the whole village to attend Mass each day during lent. Even today, this is still practiced by the many Catholics in the Hays area during Lent.

Customs of Holy Week were also discussed by many of the members. Such items included: the silence of all music and dancing during lent. The silencing of the Church bells beginning after the Gloria on Holy Thursday evening until the Gloria on Holy Saturday. During this time, altar boys would announce the angelus in the village using a "Klepperer". A piece of wood that had a wooden handle on the bottom and a wood type mallet attach to the top side. The altar boys would walk through the village use the "Klepperer" instead of ringing the angelus bells and sing. At the Angelus, 6:00 a.m., noon, and 6:00pm they sang, "Gegrusset seist du, Maria voll der Gnaden" or Hail Mary, Full of Grace. When it was time for Mass in the morning, they sang "S'erst mohl und letzt mohl in die Mess" and then for the afternoon service or stations they sang, "S'erste

Worship Service in the German Language on April 27, 2014

United Emanuel Lutheran Church, located in Milberger, Kansas, will celebrate the Easter season with an afternoon worship service conducted entirely in German on Sunday, April 27, 2014 at 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon.

This service will use the order of worship that the Volga German forebears of the present members brought with them from the Volga River area of Russia. The service will include Holy communion using the common cup as was the practice back when United Emmanuel was founded. An unusual feature of this service is that part of the sermon will be preached using the Milberger dialect of German. It was always the practice that High German was used by the Pastors who served United Emmanuel because they could not speak the local dialect of German known as "Daitsch".

Reverend Delvin Strecker, pastor of Elim Lutheran Church in Marquette, Kansas, whose grandparents and parents were members of United Emmanuel, and who grew up speaking the Milberger dialect, will preach and reside at the worship service.

Terry Batt of Thornton, Colorado will serve as the guest organist. Terry's parents and grandparents were members of the former Trinity Lutheran Church, Bender Hill, Kansas and also grew up speaking Volga German and playing music not only of the local Volga German churches, but also their folk music.

Since many of the area residents don't have an opportunity to sing the old familiar hymns, there will be a short hymn sing following the worship service.

Milberger, Kansas is located 16 miles southwest of Russell, Kansas. We invite anyone who wishes to celebrate their German heritage to join us that afternoon.

Continued on page 2.....

mohl und s'letzte mohl zum Kreitzweg." These customs were in Herzog (Victoria, Ks.) from 1890-1895; Catharine until 1915 and in Schoenchen, Kansas up until the 1940's. At the meeting Janel (Werth) Moore said that she remembers it even in the 1950's.

Easter morning offered another opportunity for the servers to benefit. After Mass, the altar boys who had been busy all during Holy Week announcing the various service be means of the wooden clappers, went from house to house collecting eggs as a pay fro their services. They walked through the street chanting:

"Klepper, Klepper, Eier 'raus
Wenn ihr mir kein'eier gibt,
So schlag' ich euch Loch ins Hays."

'Clapper, clapper, Out with the eggs,
If you don't give me any.
I will knock a hole in your house."

Vigil Pfannenstiel remembered when he was a young lad in Antonino, Kansas saying this little rhyme. After receiving the eggs the alter servers would take them to the store and sell them and divide the money amongst them.

Next, the Easter rabbit was discussed. This was a popular custom with the Germans from Russia, and is still to this day. On Holy Saturday the mother of the family arranges plates in a room, which is later locked, where the Easter Rabbit is to place cookies, candy, and Easter eggs for the children. After Mass on Easter Sunday the children, led by their father, armed with clubs and pepper shakers (the pepper has some magic in it, that if you sprinkle it on the rabbits, it will immediately become your bet), they lined up in the from of the locked door to capture this "Rabbit", so as to have him provide them with sweets throughout the year. Unfortunately the good rabbit is never caught and, after father has explained its strategic escape, the children enter the room, exclaiming, "Der Hase hat schon gelegt." "The rabbit has laid."

After the program, the video, Face of Russia: The Volga Germans was presented. Unfortunately we were only able to watch the first segment of fifteen minutes. The video portrays life of the Germans from Russia in a modern view. How the grandmother is trying to keep the traditions for her family because the younger generation no longer cares. It also shows the Engels archives and the housing of the documents pertaining to the Germans from Russia. The last part we were able to view was on a cultural center in the village of Katharinenstadt that holds concerts by German Russians demonstrating the various songs and dances.

Sr. Rita Thouvenelle, Chapter member, began the next segment of our meeting with show and tell. She opened a small box containing a long piece of lace that her grandfather wore on the day of his wedding. Members wanted to know why the significance of the white lace because of its length. Some thought the length of the lace represented the length of a good and health marriage.

The rest of the meeting was open to genealogy and visiting.



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As I write this the wind is howling outside and the temperature is 43 degrees compared to 77 yesterday, only in Kansas! It has been a busy month and with Holy Week starting today things are just not going to slow down for a while, so I am trying to get this newsletter out to you before it too late.

Thursday, April 3, I left Hays at 4:00 a.m. for the board meetings in Lincoln, Nebraska. We began our first session at about 8:30 a.m., having just made it to the meeting, Bob Wagner, President, introduced the new office manager of AHSGR, Sheryl Loos Pawelko, she goes by the name of Sherry. I had a one-on-one talk with Sherry while I was in Lincoln and found her to be very personable, open to suggestions, energetic, and enthusiastic! Sherry is a German from Russia and once served on the Board of Directors of the Lincoln Chapter of AHSGR. We then met the new FULL-TIME librarian, Diane Wilson. Diane originally lives in Kansas and commutes on the weekend to go back home, but her and her husband will soon be moving to Lincoln. Tom Ineck, Publications and Editorial Coordinator, replaces Gail Gingrich at headquarters. Tom has previously work for a newspaper and brings to AHSGR many skills in publishing. We are very fortunate to have our two ladies who are now the old-timers, Yvonne Dahl who manages the front desk plus many more hats and of course Yulia Tsymbal, AHSGR Special Projects Coordinator and Translator. Our Society is very fortunate to have all these talented people working at AHSGR.

The meetings went very well and much was discussed. I will try to hammer out a few of things in the next newsletter. Also, watch this summer for all the annual reports that usually come out during convention from the various chairs. These reports give you an idea of what is going on at HQ. Speaking of the convention, I hope some of you will consider the 4hour 15 minute drive up to Lincoln for convention this year which will be July 7-13, at the Cornhusker Hotel. If you have any questions please let me know.

I chaired the archives meeting on Friday and we had much to discuss. We have been able to get a few more documents out this past fall and winter, as I mentioned at the Winter meeting, we did get the 1879-1912 family list for the village of Herzog. Many of the documents that came out will be available for researchers at the AHSGR Research Library. Because of the issue with copyright, we can't make these document available for sale, but, if you are looking for a specific family, say in the Herzog Family List, Diane Wilson can look it up for you and make you a copy of just your family, but not the whole list. In doing so, we are honoring the wishes of the Russian Archives.

Our membership seems to be staying about the same. At this time we have about 83 paid members and about ten that didn't renew for 2014.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention that we lost one of our past presidents this winter, Larry Werth. What can you say about this man except with him goes our dialect, our stories, our music, our heritage. Larry was that generation who know the "old-timers" and much of that first hand knowledge was passed on down to them. Larry had the best stories, he was the ultimate storyteller. Larry's death is a stark reminder that if our membership doesn't grow with younger members our heritage will just die out before our eyes. May God bless Larry with eternal peace.

Norma Pipkin, our program chair, had a fantastic program in mind, but for various reasons it just didn't seem to pan out. The idea was to highlight a different village at least once a year and have our meeting in their local. Our first effort of this was going to be Schoenchen, but didn't work out. So, instead of going to Schoenchen, we will just have our meeting at the Munjor Parish Hall as usual, but bring of the plan meeting ideas to Munjor. Norma has asked Alta Grabbe to attend and speak about three family heirlooms. Most of all, we may finally find out about the Liebenthal church bell. We will also sing some song with the "Schoencheneers"!

So, join us Sunday, May 4th at the Munjor parish hall for our next meeting. This will be a POT LUCK meeting, so please bring your favorite finger foods.

Some have asked about the Chapter Library. We have been told that once Munjor finishes remodeling the are of the parish hall that we use, the library cabinet will be brought down for our chapter to easily access. I also want to be sure to thank the Golden Wheat Chapter of Wichita for letting me use a couple of their newsletter articles.

I hope you all have a Blessed Easter and please pray for rain! I will see you on Sunday, May 4 in Munjor. Our Pot luck will start about noon.

*Macht's Gut,
Kevin Rupp*

Village Coordinator Reports for 2013 Post on AHSGR Website

The AHSGR Village Coordinator reports for 2013 are now posted on the AHSGR website at http://ahsgr.org/Villages/VC_Reports_2013.htm. The Village Coordinator program is an important resource available to persons who are researching their family history. Coordinators are member volunteers who you may contact for assistance "where might I find..." when you are up against a brick wall and need help. You are encouraged to read what has been happening in research for your village. A complete list of coordinators in the program is in http://ahsgr.org/Villages/Village_Coordinator.htm.

AHSGR Convention Quilt Drawing

Below is a photo of the quilt that will be raffled at the International Convention in Lincoln, NE, July 7-13, 2014. The quilt is a beautiful garden Bouquet Pattern, white on white, and finished size is 88" x 106".

There will be tickets available to the May 4th meeting. Tickets are 6 for \$5.00 or \$1.00 each. If paying by check, please make it out to AHSGR.



2014--A Year of Anniversaries of Important Events in German Russian History (Part 1)

Paulsen, Nina, *Volk auf dem Weg*, March, 2014, 37-39.

*Translation from the original German-language text to American English
is provided by Alex Herzog, Boulder, CO. With editorial assistance from Dr. Nancy Herzog.*

With this topic, the *Landmannschaft* wishes to shed light via brief articles on events and dates from 250 years of German Russian history, and to point to future writings. In this first installment the reader is reminded of three historical events that occurred some two hundred and ten, ninety, and seventy years back, ones that strongly marked the history of our ethnic group.

210 Years after the 1804 Manifesto of Alexander I and German Settlements in the Black Sea Region and in the South Caucasus

As a result of several successful military campaigns in South Russia led by Tsarina Catherine II against the Ottoman Empire, spacious tracts of land on the northern shore of the Black Sea were conquered. Under Alexander I, Catherine's grandson (who reigned from 1801 to 1825), the Russian border was expanded to where the Danube enters the Black Sea.

Tsar Alexander took advantage of favorable conditions for recruitment in Europe resulting from the Napoleonic Wars (1792 – 1815) and opened up the border, thereby triggering a renewed wave of immigration to Russia. His determination to employ the colonists for the benefit of his state is confirmed by the 123 *ukases* he issued during his reign, which included important innovations he intended to promote the colonial system.

In his very first manifesto, the recruitment edict of February 20, 1804, the emphasis for luring foreigners changed from quantity to quality. Most importantly, the manifesto placed special value on immigrants who were good farmers, tradesmen, vintners and animal breeders.

Immigrants were required to be free of debt, to be part of a family and have 300 gulden to their name. By this time, each farming entity was assigned sixty-five hectares [ca. 175 acres] rather than only thirty-five hectares [ca. 95 acres]. Additionally, they were assured free choice of settlement and free religious practice, exemption from military service, thirty years of exemption from taxation, as well as a guaranteed return to their homeland at any time.

Tsar Alexander placed supervision over the colonies into the hands of Duke Richelieu (Odessa) and Samuel Kontenius (Yekaterinoslav).

The ensuing major wave of immigration to Russia between 1804 and 1817 emanated for the most part from the Württemberg region in the Southwest German area. Between 1804 and 1820 more than 20,000 Germans from Alsace, Baden, the Palatinate, Württemberg and West Prussia (Danzig, at the time) arrived in the Black Sea region and founded more than 225 settlements on the Molochna River (Halbstadt), on the Dnieper (Josefstal, Chortitza), near Nikolayev (Beresan), near Odessa (Grossliebental), near the Kutschurgan River (Selz), on Crimea, and near Tiraspol (Glückstal). By 1897 the number of settlements would grow to 991.

In the Caucasus, too, dozens of German colonies were established. During the early 19th Century, the South Caucasus became a desired goal of German emigrants from southern areas. Many wanting to emigrate believed that they would reach the Promised Land at Mount Ararat as the Bible had described it. On the other hand, Tsar Alexander was strongly interested in settling the South Caucasus area. The region was part of the territory recently conquered by Russia.

By 1817, some 1500 Schwabian families, numbering ca. 9000 persons, received permission papers to settle in the South Caucasus. On the way, many of them fell victim to illnesses and the stresses of the journey.

Ninety Years after the Establishment of the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR) of Volga Germans

The establishment of the ASSR of Volga Germans (German acronym: ASSRdWD) was the highest status the German ethnic group could ever have expected in the Soviet Union.

The new powers emerging from the Revolution considered of vital importance the Volga Germans settlement areas, in which large amounts of grain could be produced. It was no accident that the Volga Germans would therefore become the first minority to enjoy the acclaimed rights of an autonomous republic.

As early as April, 1918 a "Commissariat for German Affairs on the Volga" was created and placed under the leadership of Ernst Reuter. (*During World War I, Ernst Reuter had become a Russian POW, where he turned into a Communist and was then sent to the Volga as the People's Commissar. Thirty years later he became the Lord Mayor of Berlin.*)

On October 19, 1918, Lenin signed a decree establishing the "Workers' Commune" (of the autonomous region) of Volga Germans.

Volga German farmers were obliged to deliver many times the "normal" country-wide requirement of foodstuffs. This reckless exploitation led to a devastating famine that impacted their Workers' Commune more severely than any other region.

In 1919 Katharinenstadt was renamed Marxstadt, but by 1922 Pokrovsk assumed a leading role. It was made up predominantly of Ukrainian-Russians and was annexed to the autonomous region. Rumor had it that Lenin personally saw to this shift in order to reduce the degree of autonomy for the ethnic Germans, whom he did not trust.

In January, 1924, the Eleventh Regional Congress of Soviets (January 6 – 10, 1924), upgraded the Workers' Com-

Continued on page 5....

mune to an Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, and a decree of February 20, 1924 by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee officially confirmed the January decision.

In 1931, Pokrovsk was renamed Engels. The city was the center for Volga German cultural institutions, including vocational and university level schools, newspapers and state publishing houses, the German State Theater founded in 1930, the symphony orchestra of the Volga German State Philharmonic established in 1918, and the German Song and Dance Ensemble (presumably founded after 1935).

Impressive as well were the agricultural successes of the Republic. The most important crops included summer wheat, sunflowers, *machorka* (tobacco), mustard, melons and pumpkins. The Volga Republic was also a leader in manufacturing diesel motors (Marxstadt), dairy processing plants, processing of bones, meat production, and Sarprinka Manufacturing. The meat processing plant in Engels was one of the largest in the entire Soviet Union.

However, for the Volga Germans the years of Soviet power were marked not only by autonomy and a brief economic and cultural upturn, but above all also by suffering, repression, and a multitude of victims caused by the famine of 1921-1922, suppression of farmer uprisings, arrests and political repression and, as a final climax of persecution, mass deportation.

The August 28, 1941 decree, "On the Resettlement of Germans Living in the Volga Rayons," issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviets of the USSR, accused all Volga Germans of espionage and collaboration, thereby creating a formal basis for deportation. Subsequently, some 433,000 Volga Germans were deported to Kazakhstan and Siberia, the ASSR of Volga Germans was dissolved, and the Volga German Republic territory was divided among regions.

Seventy Years after the 1944 "Administrative Resettlement" and the Escape of the Black Sea Germans to the West

During early August of 1941, the German *Wehrmacht* and the Romanian army reached the villages around Odessa and Nikolayev, and in the fall of 1941 those in the Dnieper region. However, following the defeat at Stalingrad, the *Wehrmacht* retreated and ordered a so-called administrative resettlement of around 350,000 *Volksdeutsche* [ethnic Germans] from South Russia to the *Wartheland* [the German-occupied western Poland region dissected by the *Warthe* River]. This resettlement from the occupied areas of the Soviet Union was carried out between October, 1943 and May, 1944, mostly in the form of large treks [usually consisting of long, organized lines of horse-drawn wagons].

The people on the long stretches of the treks were exposed to severe strain and great perils. These included lack of decent clothing, weather problems, illnesses due to poor hygiene and exhaustion, attacks from partisan groups along the way, being shot at, bombardments, and some sections being cut off and remaining behind, only to be at the mercy of Russian troops. These factors led to considerable losses of people, animals, and materiel. And in such situations, people attempted to take things into their own hands and to risk hopeless escape across borders.

At transition points ranging from Poland to Austria, especially in the so-called *Warthegau* [the Nazi name for the *Wartheland*], resettlement camps (or collection and reception camps) were set up for the escaping "resettlers." Most of the camps were in the General Gouvrenement and in the *Warthegau*, set up with surrounding barbed wire fencing and guarded by the SS.

On entering the camps, the people were "de-loused", their clothes were disinfected, and families, depending on the number of persons, were placed into various wooden houses. Food was dispensed from central camp kitchens. A resettlement commission registered the new arrivals by place of origin, family status, occupation and religion.

A bank made it possible for people to exchange Russian currency they had brought along for German money, or to deposit in savings accounts. Camp residents were given the opportunity to acquire [Reich-German] citizenship, and many did so.

Depending on specific occupation, families were distributed to neighboring villages, assigned provisional housing, and put to work. Permanent resettlement was to take place at a future time. Nearly all men eligible for military service were drafted into the *Wehrmacht*, assigned overwhelmingly to units of the Fighting SS and, following a brief basic training period, were soon deployed on the Eastern Front, where many lost their lives.

By this time the *Warthegau* was already overpopulated, and prospects for being assigned to a Polish farm property became very low. Many resettlers were deployed in the construction of the San-Weichsel railroad line. Those still in resettlement camps were ordered to work in agriculture, where district farming directors imported from the Reich usually demanded Germans from Russia as their work force. Many German Russians in their temporary places of settlement, generally decried as "Bolshvists," were initially assigned to work

Continued on page 10.....

VOLGA GERMAN TRADITIONS

BY LAWRENCE WEIGEL

Made available by the
Hays, Ks. Sunflower Chapter of the
American Historical Society of Germans from Russia
Proceeds to benefit the local Chapter and International Society



VOLGA GERMAN TRADITIONS



by Lawrence Weigel

To order a copy send \$30.00 per book and \$5.00 for shipping and handling to:
Sunflower Chapter of AHSGR
2301 Canal Blvd,
Hays, Ks. 67601

JUST RELEASED.....

1857 Census of Louis In the District of Samara, Russia

Dated October 1857

Translated by Viktor Pink
Edited by Brent Mai

Cost - \$50.00

You may order this through -
Kevin Rupp
krupp@ruraltel.net or

Brent Mai
bmai@cu-portland.edu



10th AHSGR Membership Campaign

July 13, 2013 - May 15, 2014

EACH ONE - REACH ONE

The Membership Campaign rewards AHSGR members and chapters who recruit new members for AHSGR or purchase gift memberships for new members*. Cash prizes will be awarded at the 2014 Convention. Membership Data Forms are available through Chapters or on-line at <http://www.ahsgr.org/membership.htm>

- \$100 to the AHSGR member AND \$200 to the AHSGR Chapter who recruits the largest number of new members
- \$75 to the AHSGR member AND \$150 to the AHSGR Chapter who recruits the 2nd largest number of new members
- \$50 to the AHSGR member AND \$100 to the AHSGR Chapter who recruits the 3rd largest number of new members
- A \$25 cash prize to 3 new members selected at random.

New Members are Critical to the Growth and Success of AHSGR

Every Member Counts - Talk to your Family & Friends - Tell your community about AHSGR - Buy a Gift Membership for someone

79% of New Members Join Because Someone Asked Them!

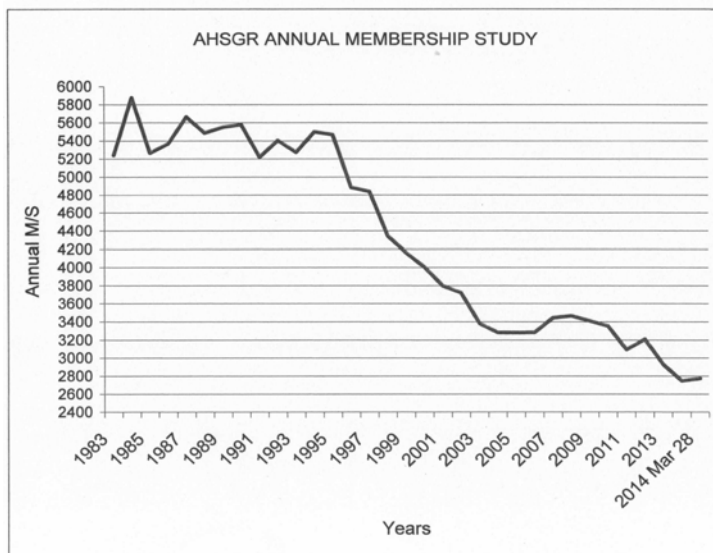
If EACH ONE of us strives to REACH ONE new AHSGR member, we help to assure the future of AHSGR

* 1st, 2nd and 3rd place Reward Winners must have recruited the following number of new members for AHSGR: AHSGR members, 5 or greater; and Chapters, 10 or greater.

See the reverse side for a Membership Data Form - Copy and Recruit

This graph below was handed out at the last AHSGR Board meeting. You can see that our membership has been declining every year. We need your help to build back up our membership. Take advantage of the **"Each One Reach One"** campaign. Total membership as of April 1st was at about 2807 members. If you know of someone who is interested in joining let us know. We can't do this all on our own. Buy a relative a membership as a gift and lets get em' hooked!!!

AHSGR MEMBERSHIP STUDY YEARS 1983 TO 2014



45th International Convention of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia

The Great Adventure Continues

JOIN US IN OUR celebration
of the 210th Anniversary of the
reissue of Catherine's Manifesto
by Tzar Alexander I on February
20, 1804, which invited foreigners
to settle in Russia. Come acknowl-
edge the Germans from Russia who
immigrated to the Americas, and in
doing so brought with them a rich
cultural and agricultural heritage.



July 7-13, 2014

The Cornhusker Hotel

333 S. 13th Street • Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

For conference rates and registration deadlines, please visit ahsgr.org.



American Historical Society of Germans from Russia

*"Our past is in the archives and records from
villages in Russia, Ukraine and the Black Sea."*

**For more information or to become a member
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NEWS FROM AHSGR HEADQUARTERS



Changes to the SOAR Project

(Taken from the Golden Wheat Newsletter)

Mike Meisinger, chair of the SOAR/Technology Committee mrm1970@aol.com, released the following message describing changes that have been made to the SOAR Project.

The SOAR website is now closed as of 1 March 2014. Obituaries are being transitioned to the FamilySearch website. The FamilySearch search engine allows searching for complete name of the deceased. The first of these are now available on the FamilySearch "SOAR / Research your German Russian Ancestors" web page <https://familysearch.org/search/collection/2284875>. For an example of what the search results provide, search for Otila Boschee and browse through the search results. A "how to search obituaries" has been posted in http://ahsgr.org/Find_Your_Ancestors/SOAR_GR_Research.htm.

As of Saturday, March 15th, 76% (over 300,000) records have been indexed and 45% (over 180,000) records had been verified. (FamilySearch uses a process where each obituary is indexed by two different individuals and any discrepancies are resolved in the verification process.) As "batches" are completed, (all records within the "batch" have been indexed and verified), they are ready to be published. More will be added on a regular basis as new "batches" of indexed and verified Obituaries are completed by the FamilySearch indexing volunteers. A larger quantity of on-line SOAR obituaries was planned to be on-line at this time but FamilySearch encountered a technical problem which slowed their desired progress. In addition, the "SOAR / Research your German Russian Ancestors" web page has links to Cemetery Records, Homestead Records, and Passenger Lists. More of our former SOAR records will be added over time. Please visit the "SOAR / Research your German Russian Ancestors" web page to check out the changes. http://ahsgr.org/Find_Your_Ancestors/SOAR_GR_Research.htm (That link is found at the lower right hand corner of the AHSGR Home Page <http://ahsgr.org/index.htm?aspxerrorpath=/>).

The Arthur Flegel Library Collection is in AHSGR Lincoln

(Taken from the Golden Wheat Chapter Newsletter)

The Arthur Flegel Library collection arrived and (after the boxes were unpacked) was installed in a room adjacent to the AHSGR bookstore 11-13 March. Diane Wilson is now cataloguing the material so it can be made available for research by others. This is a special reason to attend the 2014 Convention in Lincoln – although it is iffy if the collection will be ready for research purposes during the convention, you can at least see it. The primary material was in 45 boxes with ~35 more boxes of supplemental material in the shipment. The Golden Gate chapter had packed the material and prepared a handwritten index for each box. The next step was to match that index to the material in each box – sometimes not a simple step, followed by placing the material in the new shelving. These three photos will give you a feeling for the 'before' and 'after' shelving operation for the 45 boxes of primary material. The balance of the shipment was placed in the basement Library area and will be integrated with the rest of the AHSGR Library.



Tom Ineck & Dennis Zitterkopf begin unloading the many boxes



Boxes waiting to be unpacked



Books unpacked and placed on the shelves in the Arthur Flegel Collection Research Room. There are still many more boxes that will need to be unpacked.



Pre-2000 Journals on Website for Viewing

For those of you that like to read the AHSGR Journals, the pre-2000 Journals will be going on line soon. Look on line at, <http://ahsgr.org/Products/Journals.htm>, go to the right side where it has listed the Journal year and chose a year. Once you have selected the year page look for the pre-2000 journal that you would like to read. These will be available in pdf form. Click on the "View Journal Here" link and the pdf will download. All the pre-2000 Work Papers and Journals should be uploaded by the end of April. Enjoy reading!!!

New Video to Showcase AHSGR

About a couple of weeks before the board meetings we learned that our fellow board member, Jim Griess, had died from a series of strokes. During this past year he worked to develop a video that showcased AHSGR and explained our heritage. Jim gave the society one last gift of his dedication to the Society before he died. As soon as the video is released it will be posted on our website.

THE ONLY ONE WHO CAME

By Judy Hoffman

Michael Hoffman was one of 11 children of Michael Hoffman and Mary Ann Schreiner. He was born March 22, 1884 in Graf, Russia. At age 24 he decided to do something no one else in his family did: emigrate to the United States. He was able to find a sponsor, the Mermis family of Russell County, Kansas - which was required of all immigrants, and sailed from the port at Bremen, Germany on the Kaiser Wilhelm II on July 18, 1907. He landed in New York on September 4, 1907.

He settled in Ellis county like many others who were descendants of more than 28,000 Germans who immigrated to Russia between 1763 and 1767 at the invitation of Catherine the Great. Included in this group of German immigrants were ancestors of Nicholas Roh-Graf on March 25, 1861. He was also from the Graf area. They married Clementina and Peter. In early 1892 they left for the United States on the SS Gellert from Hammany. When they arrived in New York on March 14, 1892, Clementina was ill and was not allowed to leave Ellis Island. Nicholas brought the children to stay with relatives and returned to New York, where he died. She was buried in North Brothers Island, New York.

In 1893 Nicholas married Mary Herman. They had 12 children of their own while living on a farm northwest of Emmeram in Ellis County. They attended church where they owned a small house used mainly on Sundays. Michael (Mike) married their oldest daughter, Mary, in 1909. They had four children before she died in 1918.



Mary Herman, their own while living in Ellis Church in Emmeram used mainly on Sundays. daughter, Mary, in 1909. They

Mike then married Clara Nemecek, who came to the United States from Austria in 1898 at the age of 10 with her grandmother, parents and seven brothers and sisters. She was a native of the province of Bukovina (now part of Romania) which means "land of trees". The area was a sparsely populated part of the Austrian empire in the late 1700's and early 1800's when the Hapsburg ruling family recruited German speaking people to settle the forested lands. Like the Germans in the Volga River area of Russia, these people also lived in ethnic German communities preserving their language and customs. After nearly 100 years of living in Bukovina, land became scarcer and some of these Bukovina Germans migrated to South America, Canada, and Ellis County. In 1912 Clara married Andrew Dinkel, a native of Ellis County and a widower with three children. They had one son, Ferdinand, before Andrew died at the age of 34 while hand digging a well which caved in on him. Clara then married Mike Hoffman in 1919 and together they had 11 children. The marriages of Michael Hoffman - Mary Rohleder- and Clara Nemecek produced 70 grandchildren by the time of the family reunion in 1992, as well as 128 great-grandchildren and numerous great-great grandchildren.

There were times when Tony, the youngest child, remembered his dad, Mike, praying the rosary and shedding tears as he anguished over the fate of the rest of his family that had stayed behind in Russia. For a period of time he heard from them, then nothing ever again.

Some of the Hoffman boys served in World War II and the Korean War: Joe was in infantry and was wounded outside of Rome. His one regret was he never made it to the

"Eternal City". Dan ended up in the Navy and was assigned to LCI (Landing craft infantry). During the course of the war his ship was at Hawaii, the Philippines, Okinawa and Japan. Michael Jr. was an MP. His outfit was in England when the invasion of Normandy took place. Twenty-eight days later he was part of the landing on Omaha Beach. He also participated in the Battle of the Bulge under General Patton. Once when asked how he survived 5 years of war Mike answered "I had a good guardian angel!". Frank and Steve served during the Korean war. Like most veterans, these guys just don't talk about it much. All I can say is I thank God for all our veterans and their sacrifices for our freedom.



INTERNATIONAL

**KANSAS ROUND-UP
OF
CHAPTERS
Saturday, October 11, 2014**

**Hays Oktoberfest
Friday, October 10, 2014**

**Whiskey Creek
Hays, Ks.
Hosted by the Wichita Chapter**

**Watch for
more information**



UPCOMING MEETING DATES for 2013 - 2014

Munjor Parish Hall
Munjor, Ks.

Sunday, May 4, 2014

Spring Meeting
Social & Library - 12:00 p.m.
Pot Luck Meal - 12:30 p.m.
Meeting - 1:30 p.m.
Followed by Program
Guest Speaker: Alta Grabbe

AHSGR Convention - Lincoln, NE
Thurs., July 10 - Sun., July 13, 2014

Sunday, August 10, 2014
Sunflower 'Picnic'

Sunday, September 14, 2014
Chapter Breakfast Fundraiser
VFW - Hays - 7:30am - 12:30pm

Saturday, October 11, 2014
Kansas Round-Up of chapters
Hays, Ks. - Wichita Host Chapter
Whiskey Creek - Days Inn

Sunday, December 14, 2014
Christmas Party
Fundraiser Banquet



2014--A Year of Anniversaries of Important Events in German Russian History (Part 1)

Continued from page 5

in large industrial concerns, where, without pay, they were supposed to "learn how to work."

A great number of Germans from Russia who had been placed as agricultural workers in large farm operations experienced a gradual process of outer and inner impoverishment. All former village communities, which had been formed during a century and a half, and whose cohesive nature had withstood even Soviet famine years, *dekulakization*, collectivization, and mass deportations, were now irrevocably dispersed.

[Earlier, at the end of the treks,] the confiscation of wagons, horses and cattle they had brought along with great effort and over thousands of kilometers evoked a wave of pain, indignation, and even open protest among the German Russians. Furthermore, the trek leadership ignored any declarations of ownership and refused to issue receipts of property taken away, and that meant the final loss of everything that had been brought along.

Even by the war's end, a large portion of the 350,000 German Russian resettlers in the *Warthegau* and in the General Gouvernement still found themselves in collection camps. When the Red Army arrived, around half of those were deported to Siberia and Kazakhstan. The others had fled on their own to Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia, where at war's end the Soviets gathered them up and, during the second half of 1945, likewise transported them to areas beyond the Ural River, where until 1955-1956 all slaved away in forced-labor camps, under political custody.

More on this general topic can be found in the *Heimatbüchern* of the *Landsmannschaft* (1966, 1985/89, 1997/98, 2001/02, 2003, 2004) and in Nelly Däs' book *Wölfe und Sonnenblumen. Der Zug in die Freiheit* [Wolves and Sunflowers. The Train to Freedom] (1999), which can be ordered from the *Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland* (Stuttgart) [the nationwide Association of Germans from Russia].

Nina Paulsen collected material for the article from publications of the *Landsmannschaft*, from the *HFDR Wall Calendar 2013*, and from *Lindenblätter – Deutsche Auswanderung, Russland III*.



Obermunjou, Russia taken by Evgeny Moskov.



2014 SUNFLOWER CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP FORM

Members Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____ Phone _____

Birth date: Month _____ Day _____ Year (optional) _____ German-Russian Heritage Yes _____ No _____

Ancestral Names (Self) _____

Ancestral Villages (Spouse) _____

Spouses Name _____ Spouses Maiden Name _____

Birth date: Month _____ Day _____ Year (optional) _____ German-Russian Heritage Yes _____ No _____

Newsletter: _____ By e-mail; _____ By Postal Mail; _____ Both

DUES: Renewal _____ New Member _____ Dues for year 20 _____

Date Paid _____ Check # _____ Cash _____

Privacy Option: _____ Check here if you do NOT want your information published to others in the Society. (Clues/GED List)

You must be a member of the International Organization (AHSGR) before joining the local Sunflower Chapter.

- _____ **\$45.00 Basic Annual Membership** - Includes all Member benefits, voting rights & Open Access SOAR*, and receives, special notices and annual appeals except NO Journals, Newsletters or Clues. This includes national & local dues.
- _____ **\$60.00 Standard Annual Membership** - Includes all Member benefits, voting rights & Open Access SOAR*, and receives, special notices, annual appeals including Journals, Newsletters except NO Clues. This includes national & local dues.
- _____ **\$110.00 Premium/Contributing Annual Membership** - Includes all member benefits, voting rights, Open Access & Members Only SOAR* & receives convention notices, special notices & annual appeals including Journals, Newsletters & Clues. This includes national & local dues.
- _____ **\$10.00 Local Dues Only** (International Dues have already been paid to headquarters or I am a Life Member)

If new member, how did you hear about AHSGR?

Website _____ Facebook _____ Magazine Ad _____ Society Visit _____ Other _____

Name of referring Chapter or Member: _____

Membership renewals are due by January 1

Areas of Interest:

We are always looking for more help in our chapter.

Please mark your areas of interest:

Program _____	Newsletter Information _____
Hospitality _____	Help w/VFW Breakfast _____
Photographer _____	Publicity _____ Folklore _____
Clean-up _____	Genealogy _____

Make your check out to the
SUNFLOWER CHAPTER
SUBMIT ALL RENEWALS FOR
LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL TO OUR
TREASURER:
Jerry Braun
2223 Felten Dr.
Hays, Ks. 67601

Additional Commentary:

1. **Clues** – A genealogy helper for researching family histories: Lists of villages & surnames that AHSGR members are researching. Lists AHSGR member contacts who are will to exchange research information and the AHSGR Village Coordinator Network. Provides instructions for submitting GEDCOM files to the AHSGR database. GEDCOM is an acronym standing for **GE**nealogical **D**ata **C**OMmunication. **Important consideration:** To be listed/published in **Clues**, do not select the "Privacy Option" on the printable **Membership Application and Data Form**.
2. ***Save Our Ancestral Records (SOAR)**, with no fee or masking of search results. **Open Access SOAR** is accessible be all members & non-members. **Members Only SOAR** is **Open Access SOAR** plus additional research data that will be available to authorized membership levels sometime in mid-2014. See the SOAR description at <http://www.ahsgr.org/membership.htm>

UNSERER HEIMAT IM BILD - Obermunjou, Russia



SUNFLOWER CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

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INSIDE THIS NEWSLETTER

- 1... Fasnacht Meeting Brings Sharing of Days Gone By
- 1... Worship Service in the German Language on April 27, 2014
- 2....Faenacht, pt. 2
- 2....Sunflower Chapter Board
- 2... President's Message
- 3... 2013 Village Coordinator Reports
- 3... AHSGR Convention Quilt Drawing
- 4... 2014 - A Year of Anniversaries of Important Events, Pt. 1
- 5... 2014 - A Year of Anniversaries of Important Events, Pt. 2
- 6... Volga German Traditions/Each One/Louis 1857/Membership
- 7... The Great Adventure Continues, Convention 2014
- 8... News From Headquarters
- 9... The Only One Who Came
- 10.. Upcoming Meetings
- 10...2014 - A Year of Anniversaries of Important Events, Pt. 3
- 11...2014 Sunflower Chapter Membership Form
- 12...Unserer Heimat im Bild