



Sunflower Chapter NEWSLETTER



Summer 2012

Vol. 16, Issue 3

GERMANS FROM RUSSIA - A RUSSIAN TV DOCUMENTARY

(Part two of this video was presented at the last chapter meeting)

By: Judy Hoffman

To walk among the cultural monuments and churches today is like walking in the footsteps of a dead civilization. The culture of the Germans from Russia is gone; those who stayed have been assimilated. The rest...is only history.

Almost half of the Lutheran and Catholic churches along the Volga river have been destroyed. The government gave the immigrants the money to help build the churches. As a result, by 1917 over 200 churches, all architectural marvels, were built. Now they lie in ruins; farm animals graze within their walls.

Gothic and classical elements were in their architecture. A priest tried to restore a church; it was impossible to do it alone. Not one of these churches will ever be home to services. They will only stand as witness to the German colonists.

Christmas was celebrated two days. Easter was a big holiday; children also got presents on that day. Each family had their own tradition. The egg was a symbol of life; they were colored by using onion skins. Many were up to greet the sun, symbolizing resurrection.

The Ascension was celebrated by visiting the graves of ancestors.

Wooden crafts decorated a house entrance. The source of heat was dung and straw made into bricks in the summer. They made their own matches. The German "yoke" for carrying water had a dip by the neck to make carrying water easier. The beds were wooden with comforters and lots of pillows. There was one bed - for the parents; the rest of the family slept on the floor.

A typical German breakfast: coffee, flour or potato soup, sausage. Vegetables

were always part of daily cuisine. The names of German dishes began to be used all over Russia.

German immigration to America became very considerable. Some because they didn't want to serve in the army. The language barrier (they didn't learn Russian) singled them out. Also drought caused immigration. American agents came to talk about all the land available. But colonists couldn't sell their land and the poor couldn't afford to leave. They took on terrific debt to immigrate. They needed to pay a fee to leave the border and had to produce documents they were debt-free. They sold whatever they had but it still wasn't enough. Some in America sent money to help.

By 1913, 2,400,00 Germans lived in the Russian empire. In 1913 the largest amount of people left; this stopped in 1914. In 1917 it started again. During WWI an anti-German campaign started in Russia. By imperial order, they were sent to Siberia. The Bolsheviks took power. The rich were not allowed in office. January, 1919 began politics of militant communism.

The German people were oppressed; controlled by the central government. The biggest act of mistreatment was collectivization forced work. Churches were demolished; all denominations could only worship in secret. In 1932 came the Russian gulags, the predecessor to KGB. Deportation was at the start of WWII (1941). Deportees could only take a limited amount of possessions with them but when they arrived at the trains, most items were confiscated. They were moved like cattle; were called "the fascists"; and taken to Siberia and Kazakhstan. The area was surrounded by barb wire. The Church

was turned into a repair shop. When Stalin died, the camp was dissolved. In 1953 it was turned into a communal farm. But the Germans never returned to their homes.

In Sept, 1941 Russian soldiers of German nationality were removed from the front and sent to Gulags. There they experienced hard work, no talking...they lost the will to live. Their stomachs could no longer accept food; many died. They lived under some conditions as prisoners; were never told for how long they would be held there. Hard labor-logging, road building. One fourth of the Volga Germans died. Children were left without parents and were put into orphan homes. They lost contact with each other. The gulags were dissolved in 1946 but now they were only allowed to live in restricted zones until 1956. They were prohibited from leaving the "reservations". Anyone who did was sentenced to 20 years of confined labor. This punishment was reserved only for Germans. Dec.12,1955 Khrushchev freed them from the reservations but did not restore their lost property. Then followed about two million German/Russians moving back to Germany; amazingly, still retaining their customs and faith.

Copies of the DVD have been made available for a \$25.00 donation to the Sunflower Chapter. Our Chapter has about 4 copies left. To inquire about this DVD please contact chapter president Kevin Rupp at krupp@ruraltel.net.



DER NUSHNICK

On Tuesday, January 10, 1989, Al Riedel and Lawrence A. Weigel drove to Victoria Kansas with the intention of measuring some old outhouses to get an idea of how to build one and to obtain the size. This information was to be used for the building of an outhouse at the Ellis County Volga German House site for historical purposes. When Al and Lawrence had finished measuring, the that story that follows tells of their experience, and how they imagined what might have been the reaction inside the home, while they were "schnuffeling" around. The story is told in the Herzog (Victoria, Kansas) dialect.

Am Diensdag Nomidach han ich un mei Nochbr, dr alde Vetter Hannes Karde g'spielt. Ich un der sin gute Freinde, wie's aach immr dr Fall is bei gute Nochbrs lait. Des muss so ungefahr drei Uhr gewehn sin, un ich wollt grad Drump mache, un do guck ich naus aus n Fenstr un do han ich n weisser Pickup gans langsam g'sie fahre in unser Alley.

Ich un der alde Vetter Hannes han jo so a Paar Schnepsjer gedrunck g'hat, un no must ich noch amol gucke ob ich recht g'sie han. Der weisse Pickup hot g'stopped, grad hinner unser Nushnick. Uf a mol gravveld n grosser Mann (der war ung'fehr 6 1/2 Fuss gross) aus den Pickup un geht hin bei unsr Nushnick. Der Vetter Hannes saad "den is amend die Not humm, oder hot der den Dorchfall, loss n nor gehe". Der Vetter Hannes hot sich langsam die Peif gestoppt, hot sa angeracht, un saad: "Mach Drump".

Awwer ich han mich nix gut ingebild. Der grosse Kerl hot an den Nushnick rum g'nuffelt un is ganz drum rum gang un hot nuf un runner geguckt. Uf amol hot der a Fussmoos aus n Sack g'hol, un fangt an zu messe. Du kannst net dir vorstelle, wie's mir in Kopp rum gang is. "Warum dud der unser Nushnick messe" saad ich iwer den Vatter Hannes. Dr Vetter Hannes hot sich umgeguckt un saad, "Verklich der messd den Nushnick, amend wolle die Kerle den stehle, un die wolle sure mache das Nushnick in den Pickup basst." "Des misse Englishe sin", saad ich, "weil ich kenn sa net".

Uf amol is der grosse Kerl wider hien in den pickup gegravell, un hot was uf g'schreib. "Ich denk ich ruf n Marshall", saad der Vetter hannes. "Na", saad ich, "wann die den Nuschnich stehle wolle, no kenne sa denn han". "Ich wollt den schun lang loos gebe". Un wie die Maenner mit der Pickup fort g'fahr sin, hammer widdr so n klennes Schnepsje gedrunck, han unsr Pfeife an geracht un han wider Karde g'spielt.

Translation: On Tuesday afternoon, I and my neighbor, old uncle John played cards. He and I are food friends, like is generally the case between good neighbors. It must have been around 3 o'clock, and I was just about to make trump when I looked out the window and saw a white Pickup driving slowly down our alley.

Old uncle John and I had drunk a few drinks of Schnapps, so I had to look again to see if I was seeing right. The white pickup had stopped just behind our outhouse. All of a sudden a big man (he was about 6 1/2 feet tall) crawled out of the pickup and walked over to our outhouse. Uncle John said, "maybe he got a sudden urge, or he has the diarrhea, let him go". Then uncle John slowly stuffed his pipe, lit it, and said, "Make trump".

But I felt uneasy. The big guy examined the toilet and went all around it. All of a sudden he took a tape measure out of his pocket and started measuring. You can't image what went through my mind. "Why is he measuring our outhouse", I said to uncle John. Uncle John looked around and said "he really is measuring the outhouse, maybe these guys want to steal the outhouse, and they want to make sure it fits into the pickup." "They must be Englishmen", I said, "because I don't know them".

All of a sudden the big guy crawled back into the pickup, and wrote something down. "I think I'll call the marshall", uncle John said. "No", I said, "if they want to steal that toilet, they can have it." "I wanted to get rid of it a long time". When the men drove away with the pickup, we have another little drink, lit our pipes and continued to play cards.

KANSAS ROUND-UP OF CHAPTERS Annual Meeting - Topeka, Ks.

This years' Kansas Round-Up of Chapters will be hosted by the Topeka Chapter on Saturday, October 27th at the Topeka Ramada Inn and Hotel and Convention Center, 420 East Avenue, Topeka, Kansas. Cost of the room is \$97.71 per night which includes all taxes and a full breakfast. (785-234-5400) Cut off date to receive the discount rate is October 5.

Registration for members is \$10.00
Registration for non-members \$15.00
The Banquet meal on Saturday night is \$30.00. Lunch is on your own.

Speakers include:

- ◆ "German Russians to Kansas with the Help of Railroads" presented by Ike Appelhantz, Ed Schwerdt and John Rupp
- ◆ "What's New in Family Search.org" presented by Jan Wilkes, Topeka LDS Family History Center Administrator.
- ◆ Banquet Speaker: "In Coming to Know Our History We Come to Know Ourselves" presented by Father Tim Haberkorn. He is the pastor of St. Joseph and Sacred Heart Parishes in Topeka, Kansas.
- ◆ Plus other events to be named.

Watch your August mail for registration and meeting information. Friday night will be a get-together and time for genealogy or just time to visit with old friends. Make plans now to attend the Kansas Round-Up of Chapters meeting in Topeka, Kansas on Saturday, October 27th.

Future Meetings Munjour Parish Hall

Sunday, September 9, 2012
VFW "All You Can Eat Breakfast"

Sunday, September 30, 2012
Genealogy Program

Sunday, Dec. 9, 2012
Christmas Banquet



9th AH\$GR Membership Campaign

June 15, 2012 - May 15, 2013

EACH ONE - REACH ONE

The Membership Campaign rewards AH\$GR members and chapters who recruit new members for AH\$GR or purchase gift memberships for new members. Cash prizes will be awarded at the 2013 Convention. Membership Data Forms are available through Chapters or on-line at <http://www.ahsgr.org/membership.htm>

- *\$100 to the AH\$GR member AND \$200 to the AH\$GR Chapter who recruits the largest number of new members*
- *\$75 to the AH\$GR member AND \$150 to the AH\$GR Chapter who recruits the 2nd largest number of new members*
- *\$50 to the AH\$GR member AND \$100 to the AH\$GR 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 AH\$GR

Every Member Counts - Talk to your Family & Friends - Tell your community about AH\$GR - 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 AH\$GR member, we help to assure the future of AH\$GR

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS



Many exciting things are in the works for AHSGR this coming year. The website continues to be updated new information on the Society. Those who are wanting to join the Society may be able to do this all on line soon. Speaking of joining and renewing your membership, 2013 shows to bring a new range of membership levels to the Society.

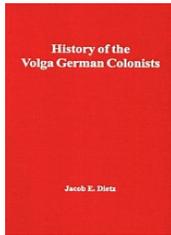
These include:

- ◆ **Basic Membership** \$35.00 (All member benefits except no Journal, Newsletter of Clues)
- ◆ **Standard Membership** \$50.00 (All member benefits except no clues)
- ◆ **Premium Membership** \$100.00 (All member benefits plus Clues & MembershipPlus subscription)
- ◆ **Youth Membership** \$8.00 (14 years old & younger - receives Kinderzeitung & no Clues)
- ◆ **Student Membership** \$15.00 (15 years to 24 years old - receives Journal, Newsletter & no Clues)
- ◆ **Life Membership** (All members benefits plus Clues & MembershipPlus subscription)

Another new feature that is in the works for the AHSGR Website is a "Members Only" section. Certain membership levels will be able to gain access to many documents without having to go to AHSGR headquarters. Watch the AHSGR Newsletter for updates to this exciting new addition to the website.

The 2012 Committee Reports have been placed on the AHSGR Website for review. To view these reports go to:

http://www.ahsgr.org/Organization/board_of_directors_annual_report.htm



HISTORY of the VOLGA GERMAN COLONIES

By: Jacob Dietz

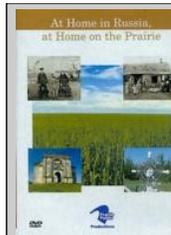
Originally written in Russian, translated into German, and now English. The author, a German Russian himself, gives the reader an insight into how the colonists lived and the many challenges they faced. This book is a fascinating documentation of the history, lives, economics and politics of their times. Historians have long known of the existence of the manuscript of Jacob Dietz, which has been included in a series of bibliographic guides, but its location was long unknown. It was found only a few years ago in the Engels branch of the State Archive of the Saratov Oblast.

AHSGR has just finished the translation of a second book by Jacob Dietz entitled, "Journals of J. E. Dietz" (May - August 1909) The manuscript of the journal was compiled in the Russian form in 2010 with an introduction by I.N. Komarov and E.M. Erina from the Engels Archives. The Journal was translated into English this Summer by AHSGR. Please watch your AHSGR newsletter about it availability.

The first book, "History of the Volga German Colonists" is available from the AHSGR Book Store.



The AHSGR Library is now on-line at:
<http://50.56.96.131/12152/libsearch.exe?dbNum=1&action=3&Type=B>



At Home in Russia, at Home on the Prairie

A river flows gently into its broad lagoon, its banks punctuated by once German villages, dazzling fields of grain, abundant vineyards, fruit trees and gardens. The land is fertile. The area is typical of many German settlements that once made these Russian steppes a breadbasket of grain and other agricultural products. The Germans who settled the area are largely gone now scattered in a diaspora of forced migration through difficult decades of political unrest and change. And though the region no longer exists as when the Germans lived there, it endures in the minds of the people, lingering fragilyly "Da hamm in Russland," "Back home in Russia."

"At Home in Russia, at Home on the Prairie" tells the story of the Kutchurganers. The life they led in South Russia and their life after journeying to the prairies of North America.

This DVD is now available from the AHSGR Book Store.

Trace Your Roots... Discover your Heritage

"Our past is in the archives and records from villages in Russia, Ukraine and the Black Sea... Our mission is to discover, collect, preserve and disseminate information of German settlers in the Russian Empire and their descendants"

Join today and let us help you trace your family history with access to the following member services:

- Online Genealogical and Historical Database
- International Library, Bookstore and Museum
- 43 chapters across the United States and Canada
- Genealogical Services

American Historical Society of Germans from Russia

402-474-3363 • www.ahsgr.org
International Headquarters, 631 D St., Lincoln, NE 68502
Monday-Friday • 9 am-4 pm

Inquire about membership - get involved today!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

"ALL YOU CAN EAT BREAKFAST",
Sunday, September 9, 2012, 7:30a.m. -

12:30 p.m. at the VFW in Hays. Tickets will be available at our August 5th Chapter Meeting. This is our BIG fundraiser for our chapter and your help is needed!



2012 AHSGR ANNUAL CONVENTION PORTLAND, OREGON

By Denise Grau
(from the Topeka Chapter)

I went to Portland expecting to have a great time at the convention, and I wasn't disappointed! Concordia University at Portland has a beautiful, easy to navigate campus. Many of the sessions were in the library, an attractive, well equipped facility. Since my husband Mike and I stayed at the dorms, we were always a short walk from the cafeteria, the library, or any of the other buildings used during the event. Staying at the dorms was like... well, staying at a dorm, except that we had a private bathroom. It wasn't luxury accommodations, but our room was spacious and had internet access and I enjoyed being with other convention attendees. I would stay at the dorms again.

A new feature of the convention I enjoyed was the lunch included with registration prepared and served by the Portland German American Club. Not only did I enjoy the food - my favorite menu was rouladen, spaetzle, red cabbage, and bread roll - but I especially enjoyed the convenience and the additional socializing time it provided.

Since I hadn't received a single RSVP, it wasn't a surprise when nobody showed up for the colony reunion I scheduled for Schoenchen, Wittmann, Zug and Luzern. My husband Mike had a joint colony reunion of some Lutheran villages from the same area, so I ended up with them and enjoyed the good company and interesting conversations. The next evening the turnout was better for a Mariental, Louis and Chasselois colony reunion that was added to the schedule only days before the convention began.

At the Area 6 Researchers Round table (which is the Village Night replacement), there were three people there in addition to myself. I enjoyed this small group and found that I had an ancestral family connection to everyone there. The surnames of interest to our small group will be familiar to western Kansas Volga Germans - including Quint, Pfeifer, Spies, There, Hermann, Rohr, Kinderknecht, Kreutzer, Kuhn, Werth, Dreher, Wasinger.

There were a number of excellent speakers and interesting presentations at the convention. The variety and quality of the sessions were impressive! My biggest problem with the convention was that the concurrent sessions made it impossible to include all of the sessions I had hoped to

attend. I'm looking forward to reading about some of the presentations I missed in a future issue of the Journal.

One of my favorite sessions was by German (sounds like Herman) Sack from Argentina on the hammered dulcimer. He was talented, entertaining and informative. Another interesting session was by Tatyana Popkova-Hein of Tyumen, Russia, on the topic, "Researching My Family's Past in the Archives of Siberia". The records she obtained included autobiographical and family genealogy information, as well as information on movement, arrests and later rehabilitation.

My husband attended cooking classes on kuchen and grebble, and while he didn't bring me any samples, I did get to sample Sam Brungardt's watermelon syrup kuchen, a variety that was new to me. Delicious!

Following the convention we stayed in Oregon to explore the beautiful region from the Columbia River Gorge, Mt. Hood and the northern Pacific coast.


Saving Our Ancestral Records

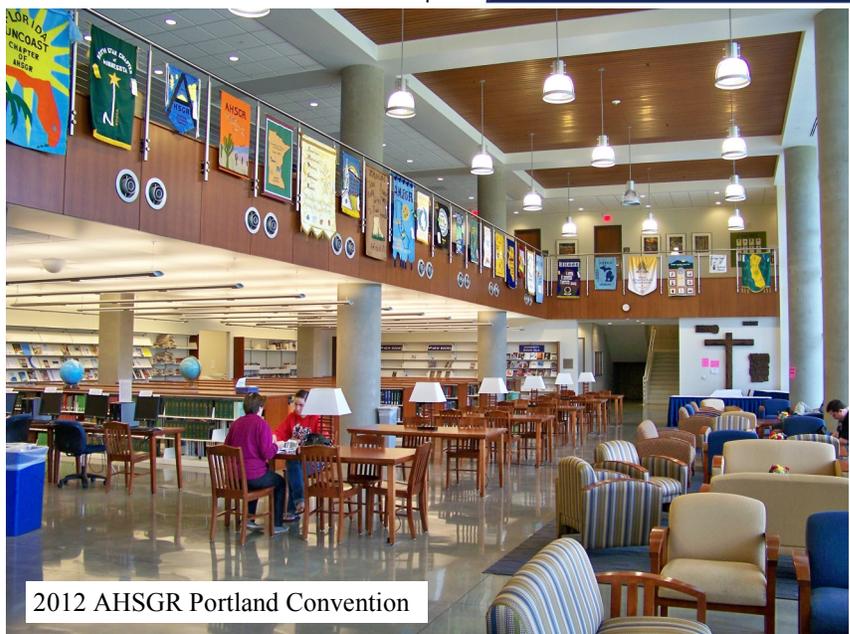
**Find SOAR at our
website ahsgr.org.
Click on the *SOAR*
button and begin
your voyage of
discovery!**

***SOAR* has:
Over 400,000
individual documents
pertaining to**

- birth
- death
- marriage
- immigration
- confirmation
- other life events
of Germans from
Russia
- reference works



**AHSGR has the
largest genealogical
library for Germans
from Russia in
the world and a
commanding Internet
presence.**



2012 AHSGR Portland Convention



2012 SUNFLOWER CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP FORM

Member's 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.

_____ \$60.00 Individual / Family or _____ Pro-rated Dues (This includes national & local dues)

_____ \$10.00 Local Dues Only (International Dues have already been paid to headquarters)

_____ I am a Life Member

Membership dues for **new members** are prorated throughout the calendar year.

Prorated annual National and Local dues are as follows: Jan. 1 - June 30: \$60.00; July 1 - Dec. 31: \$30.00

Membership renewals are due by January 1

Discounted Life Membership	
Year of Birth _____	
___ Ages 26 - 40	\$950
___ Ages 41 - 55	\$800
___ Ages 56 & older	\$650

PLEASE SUBMIT ALL RENEWALS FOR
LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL TO OUR
 TREASURER:
 Jerry Braun
 2223 Felten Dr.
 Hays, Ks. 67601

Areas of Interest:

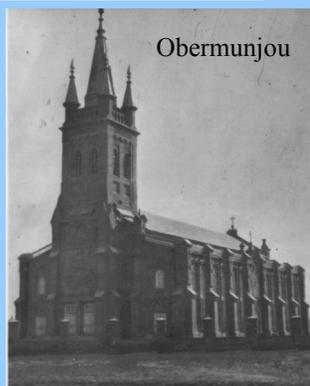
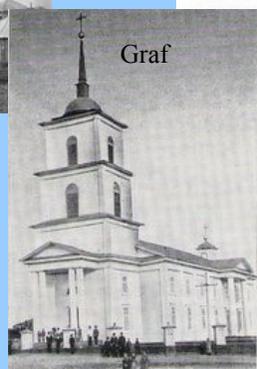
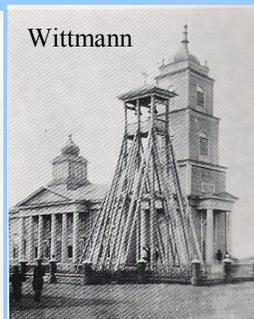
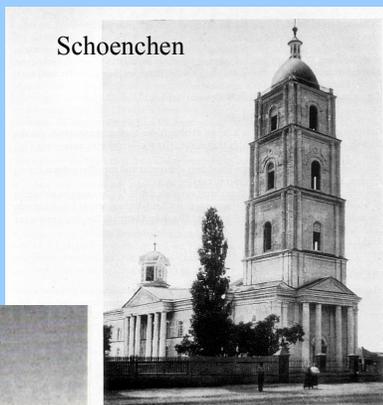
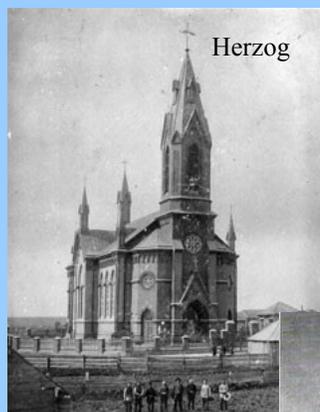
We are always looking for more help in our chapter. Please mark your areas of interest:

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

How did you hear about AHSGR? Website ___ Facebook ___ Magazine Ad ___
 Society Visit ___ Other _____

Name of referring Chapter or Member: _____

KIRCHEN IM BILD



SUNFLOWER CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

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