



Sunflower Chapter NEWSLETTER



Fall 2013

Vol. 17, Issue 4

AN ELEGANT CZARINA

By Judy Hoffman



Truly a highlight of the Kansas Roundup on October 26 in Hays, Ks was the grand entrance of "Catherine the Great," forever famous for the "Manifesto" which brought 27,000 Germans to the Volga region in Russia alone.

It was a sight to remember--the elegantly clad empress of Russia, Catherine paid a visit to the Kansas Roundup, filling hearts and minds with a vivid impression of what it would have been like to be in her presence. Cheryl Glassman played the role splendidly, as she was grandly escorted to the podium. Her presentation began with a brief history of her rise to rule Russia. Sophia Augusta Fredrika, at the age of 3, was taken to Russia to meet her future husband,

Peter (age 11). When at the age of 16 she married Peter, she had to leave her Lutheran religion and her country behind. The Russian people did not like Peter and wanted to get rid of him, wishing to name their 7-year old son the new Czar. Sophia had Peter arrested and named herself "Catherine, Czarina of Russia".

Our special guest then read parts of the manifesto that really caught the interest and prompted the immigration of many Germans: it permitted all foreigners to come and settle the country. It promised travel funds and help to build farms and settlements. Most importantly it promised unhindered religious worship, and freedom from military duty forever. Also exclusion from taxation for 30 years.

Germany had just ended the 7 years war and many were war-weary and destitute. The very nature of Germans over the centuries is to boldly go forth to places that promise the hope of a better life for their families. The Russian welcome allowed the building of churches, bell towers and allowing enough clergy for the needs of the people.

Leo and Viola ("Oli") Dorzweiler demonstrated some of the more popular German dances: "The Waltz"; the "Hochseit" and the "Schottische". Leo and Oli have travelled to Germany and Argentina, visiting ancestral villages. When their presentation was over, Leona Pfeifer commented "Now THAT is dancing! Compared to the dances of today, and the music of today. When you see this dancing it's kinda hard to sit back there and not join in!"



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President's Message....Kevin Rupp

This fall has been a busy one for the Sunflower Chapter of AHSGR. In September we had our Annual Breakfast fundraiser at the VFW in which we made about \$1300.00 for the chapter.

We also, with a big help from Amanda Rupp, were able to make available the "Volga German Traditions" book that is a collection of Newspaper Clippings that was written by Lawrence Weigel in the 1970s. A BIG thank you for the generosity of Marvin Rack for printing these at a reduced rate and for the Mary Dinkel who donated \$100.00 towards the printing of the spiral bound book.

The Kansas Round-Up of Chapters was held here in Hays this past October at the Whiskey Creek. Hays hosted the even this year and was packed with many good speakers. For the first time in a few years we made a good profit. Good enough to give some financial aid to AHSGR. It was decided by the Round-Up Board to continue the Round-Up in Hays, with the different chapters planning the event. I would like to thank our dedicated members who helped in various ways, the Ellis County Historical Society for letting us "borrow" a number of items. And finally I need to thank our speakers: Brent Mai, Alex and Nancy Herzog, William and Rose Wasinger, Guy Windholz, and Leo and Viola Dorzweiler.

Our last fundraiser for the year will be the Annual Buffet. It will be held on December 8th at noon at the Munjor Parish Hall. Please call Dolores Pfannenstiel at 625-6452 to make your reservations by December 1, please call BEFORE the deadline because a head count is needed so the ladies can prepare the

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William and Rose Wasinger (to the left) presented a program on local dialects pointing out the difference in language from one German/Russian village to another right in this area. Leona Pfeifer commented there was a day when you met someone around here, if you asked their name, you knew which village they were from. But some last names were in more than one village. Then when they spoke, you could tell by dialect where they were from. This demonstration highlighted dialects of Catherine and Munjor.

Faith through Architecture by Brent Mai pointed out how the faith culture of the Volga Germans was very important to them. 30% of the Volga German settlers were Catholic. He went into detail with photos to highlight different aspects of architecture that were almost always adhered to in Catholic Church structures. This presentation was very informative and interesting, and we found ourselves comparing our local church designs with what had been built in Russia. There were striking resemblances which again pointed out how our ancestors not only brought their village names to America, but their design and priority of majestic churches. This was well worth our time and an education in itself.

Alex and Nancy Herzog held a captive audience as they related parts of a memoir written by Ida (Hollman) Bender of her life in a forced labor camp in Russia. Her book is titled "Lovely is youth in happy times". The title was chosen in protest of Germans held in forced labor. It's a genuine memoir which depicts the suffering of an entire ethnic group. Her entire family was shipped by cattle car to Siberia, an 18 day journey. Food supplies ran out and stops were rare and brief. On arrival they were separated into labor camps. Conditions were severe; labor demands almost impossible; food rations meager. Many died. Ida was assigned to fishing on the Yensei River. They built little huts along the banks, living there until the winter snows. Ida's mother was assigned to mending nets. When fishing was no longer possible, Ida was assigned to unloading trucks. Then moved on to cutting grass (mowing hay), then back to fishing. Even when the war ended, the forced labor continued, with more heavy work like cutting trees and directing a storage arsenal. After 6 years of intolerably hard work, torture and starvation, her family was finally reunited. We've heard many stories of the hardship forced upon our ancestors in Russia; this was another aspect that touches hearts as it is vividly described in this book. Alex would give background on segments of the book and Rose would read Ida's thoughts and words as expressed in the book. Frankly it was an excellent presentation.

Guy and Oren Windholz gave a presentation about their Volga German family in Argentina. They finally found ancestors there and arranged a reunion in 1989 in Hays, timed to coincide with "Deutshfest". The reunion brought together many of the Windholz relatives here in America. Of course, the Kansas wind blew at its best those reunion days, prompting this remark from one of the Argentines "God let us grow up and apart but the winds brought us together".

The keynote speaker at the banquet was Alex Herzog, whose family immigrated to Ellis County, Volga-German country in 1953. His presentation focused on the history of those who remained in Russia until after World War II. His talk is presented in this newsletter with his permission to reprint.

At the end of the evening, it was decided to hold the 2014 Kansas Round-Up of Chapters once again in Hays on Saturday, October 11th with the Wichita Chapter taking the lead of preparing the event.



Who Is Christkind?

By Norma Pipkin

Christkind, which is German for Christ child, comes out of the Volga-German Christmas tradition practiced in Russia during 1763-1876. This was a unique yuletide custom, which developed out of the Christian faith. The German-Russian colonists told their children that the Christkind would bring them a gift, if they were good and knew their prayers. To further emphasize this point to their children. Someone from the village, generally a woman, would play the part of Christkind. With a white sheet over her head, she would enter the home and ask the children to pray. Sometimes there would also be a doll or a toy briefly passed by the window so that the children could glimpse the desire of their hearts. This custom came to the U.S. in the 1870's and was maintained in the villages until the 1940's. Increasingly the legend of Santa Claus overcame the custom of the Christkind, who brought gifts. The Volga-Germans also gradually moved from their villages to individual farms, which made it more difficult for the Christkind to visit many dwellings in one evening. Because German is a language of various dialects, you may hear Christkind referred to as Christkindja, Christkindchen or Christkindlein.

UPCOMING MEETING DATES for 2013 - 2014
Munjor Parish Hall
Munjor, Ks.

Sunday, December 8, 2013
Christmas Banquet - German Meal
Members asked to bring Deserts

Sunday, February 23, 2014
Fasenacht Meeting
Members asked to bring Soup

Sunday, May 4, 2014

Saturday, August 10, 2014

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

Sunday, December 14, 2014
Christmas Party

CHRISTMAS MEETING

December 8, 2013

Join us for our annual banquet at the Munjor Parish Hall at noon. Members are asked to bring a desert. Members should also pay their 2014 dues at this time. Join us for a great meal, some Christmas Traditions, Music and Fun!

SUNFLOWER CHAPTER BOARD

President/Newsletter

Kevin Rupp
2301 Canal Blvd.
Hays, Ks. 67601
krupp@ruraltel.net

Vice-President

LeRoy L. Herrman
2011 MacArthur Rd.
Hays, Ks. 67601
785-628-8010

Secretary

Judy Hoffman
kansasjudy@yahoo.com

Treasurer

Jerry Braun
2223 Felten Drive
Hays, Ks. 67601
785-625-6502
thegerman.jjb@gmail.com

Membership

Jerry Braun
2223 Felten Drive
Hays, Ks. 67601
785-625-6502
thegerman.jjb@gmail.com

Librarian / Historian

Shirley Brungardt
2409 Virginia Dr.
Hays, Ks. 67601
785-628-1494

Hospitality

Dolores Pfannenstiel
1243 Munjor Rd.
785-625-6452

Publicity

Amanda Rupp

Folklore

Norma Pipkin
npipkin@yahoo.com

VOLGA-GERMAN OBITUARY COLLECTION GIVEN TO FORT HAYS STATE UNIVERSITY

By Frank Jacobs - Northeast Kansas Chapter

In the later period of the 20th Century, Mr. Pfannenstiel in Colorado started outlining the members of the original Volga German Catholic families who settled in Ellis County.

This became a framework for many of the settlers contained in various church books.

Simultaneously Ike Appelhanz in Topeka started clipping and saving the Catholic VG obits which appeared in the Topeka papers. He did this for about 30 years.

I, Frank Jacobs, had a foot in both camps, being from Herzog, Munjor and Pfeifer families. I graduated from St. Joseph Military Academy in 1962 and would occasionally visit Lawrence Weigel to ask research questions. I subscribed to the Ellis County Star to read Mr. Weigel's columns and history, as well as to see obits and family history pictures published but he Star.

When I arrived in Topeka in the early 1970s I became acquainted with the Shawnee Country VG relatives of the Ellis County families. After visiting Pfeifer relatives in Germany coming out of Siberia, Gary Ubert and I started collecting any Catholic VG obits available. This was over 15 years ago and we now have over 14,000 obituaries in TEXT with the Northeast Kansas Chapter of AHSGR, in computer readable TEXT format, as well as a partial Family Tree data base of 140,000+ VG individuals from various sources, some duplicated.

The original obits in the Ellis County Star were in graphic format. As such they were photo copies of an obit written by a friend or relative. In short, there were pictures and the computer could not interact with the data in the picture, as it was a picture and not "language". The same could be said of the obits saved from the Topeka papers by Ike Appelhanz. Gary Ubert obtained a translator program that scanned the graphic obits and converted them to TEXT, essentially a language translation of the photo of an obit.

We were then able to consolidate the obits from these various sources into an alphabetized obituary collection. We have provided these records to the International AHSGR Society as well as the Fort Hays Forsythe Library Special Interest Library Collection.

While the International AHSGR Society started its obits collection under its SOAR collection, the state of data collection at that time was heavily focused on massive data scanning, largely in a graphic format. Categories were established for specific items of strategically useful data in future research. Unfortunately this technique while pragmatic at the time, limited future research to previously perceived "pigeon hole" categories of interest. Whereas a TEXT type research allows the researcher to request all occurrences of a "string" of spelled letters, wherever they occur throughout multiple documents, allowing greatly inquiry on topics never yet imagined at time of document creation.

The problem now appears to be the need for Fort Hays State University Library to develop policies on the use of and protection of this collection, while serving public inquiries, at the same time determining the staff time needed to manage inquiries of this collection, including their internal staff time and distribution costs.

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

An Overview of Major Migrations of Germans from, to, within, and out of Russia, Including their Struggles and Successes in Four Continents.

*Given at the 2013 Hays, Kansas Chapter of Round-Up
By Alex Herzog, Boulder, Colorado*

First, I wish to do what I always do when I appear in public in Hays, KS. “Volga German” Hays happens to be the first home town in the US for my BLACK SEA immigrant family. My parents have passed on by now, but my siblings and I will always be grateful not only for the way we were welcomed here, but also for the manner in which the people of Hays, especially the parishioners of St. Joseph’s parish, helped us in many and various ways to get on our feet.

I am also grateful for having had the chance to graduate from St. Joseph’s Military Academy and to finish two full years of college at Fort Hays before my family moved to Spokane, WA. These experiences, in two very good academic institutions, gave me a great start in pursuing further educational opportunities, including graduate school at the University of Wisconsin, where I met Nancy, my future wife and now my spouse of just over fifty years.

A big thank you as well to one of the few folks here who are still around and who were there for us in 1953 and onward. I am referring to **Leona Pfeifer** of the Wasinger family, who has also contributed so much to German Russian causes and is still exerting her wise influence on the Volga German descendants. She was a true and steady friend to our refugee immigrant family.

Finally, a sincere thank you to **Kevin Rupp, Leorand Schoenberger** and the other folks who invited us to be here today. It so happens that Kevin is the latest in a line of organists at St. Joseph’s Parish in Hays, where my father was hired to that position, which he quit after a short while following a dispute with the paator, Fr. Alfred, thereby opening up the position for others, including my friend Ray Wicher, and now Kevin.

After I retired from IBM, I got heavily involved in reading and translating hundreds of articles and several books on the history of the Germans in and from Russia. It became apparent that not all descendants of Germans from Russia are fully aware of the *overall* history of this ethnic group, that is, how and why they went to not only one part of Russia, but several rather diverse regions of that country, how they fared in those different places and climates, and especially what happened to the major groupings of them before and after significant political changes, especially after World War II.

This is a story that needs to be completed. Therefore I am going to provide you with a high-level summary of what happened to the various groups of Germans who immigrated to Russia and later left Russia, and particularly those who never left Russia, until much, much later.

To draw this complete picture, it is convenient to distinguish five or even six distinct major groups of German Russians at various times in history and in different parts of the world ...And as you’ll see, most Germans from Russia, or most descendants thereof will find themselves in at least one of these major historical groups!

To be sure, there were other, but relatively small groups of Germans in and from Rus-

sia as well, such as the original German establishment in St. Petersburg, and the Germans in the Baltic region, but I prefer to concentrate on the larger, very significant groups who first populated extensive tracts of land in RUSSIA and who emigrated from there in several major phases during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, but, in what is sometimes ignored by some American descendant, plus, also those groups who actually stayed “behind” Russia for a very long time, who did not leave Russia until much later, some as late as the end of the 1900s.

To help in following the progression of all the groups to be mentioned, please refer to the illustration below.

The first, and historically most significant grouping is the major number of Germans who came to Russia in the first place, that is, the original settlers. In fact, all the other groups that I have identified descend from this major original one. For simplicity, let’s call this **GROUP A**.

You probably already know what caused all those Germans to leave their motherland.

We know that during the latter part of the 1700s, political, religious and societal pressures and situations and, perhaps most importantly, an overwhelming *lack* of opportunities, plus some promise of *better* situations *somewhere*, almost *anywhere* else, prompted many in what was not even a united Germany yet, to answer the calls of recruiters sent out, first by Catherine the Great in 1763 and, later by her grandson,



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Alexander the First, in the very early 1800s, to leave their homes and to settle in and cultivate various and strange parts of what we generally (and a times inaccurately) call Russia.

What the recruiters promised on behalf of the Tsars, most of all, were cheap or free land, local self-administration, no taxes for a while, and exemption from military service, IN PERPETUITY.

This initial group, of course, includes, most significantly, first, the original Volga Germans, who emigrated from Germany to Russia between 1764 and, some say, as late as 1849, secondly, the Germans in the Ukrainian Black Sea area, and the Bessarabia Germans next door to the west, who began moving there beginning in 1804, and in addition, over somewhat the same time periods, special groups such as the Mennonites and smaller groups such as the Volhynia and Bukovina Germans.

We also know very well that despite the unexpectedly and incredibly terrible and difficult initial conditions they encountered, but also thanks to a few elements of serendipity, such as the wonderfully deep, black soil in parts of Russia, this very large group *did* make the best of things and eventually reached a measure of prosperity which their indigenous neighbors would come to envy and even curse.

It is a historical fact that these first German immigrants to Russia all inevitably went through that all-too well-known cycle of “Tod, Not, und Brot,” that is, for the first generation it was death and illness, for the second, mostly poverty and deprivation, and for the third it finally meant bread, or relative prosperity. We also know that despite all, and through decades, they maintained their faith and their culture to the hilt, even in the face of many obstacles of a societal, political and even religious nature.

It can truly be said that without the pioneering work, the very resilience, and the significant accomplishments of this initial group of Germans in Russia, there simply would be no other group to follow. BUT ... THERE WOULD INDEED BE other successor groups – in and out of Russia!

As we also know very well, during the last three decades of the 1800s, conditions changed drastically for that *first* strand who had come to especially the the Volga and the Black Sea areas, particularly because the Tsars, for various reasons, began to go rescind those earlier “iron-clad” promises, and when the qualifier “perpetuity” or “forever and ever” for some of the early promises suddenly hit a term limit.

So when the very promises that had lured our people there in the first place were broken, a *large, a very large* number of this first group, most probably the third and fourth generations, decided to pull up stakes once again and to seek their fortunes elsewhere, largely in land-rich and promising North America and even in our southern hemisphere.

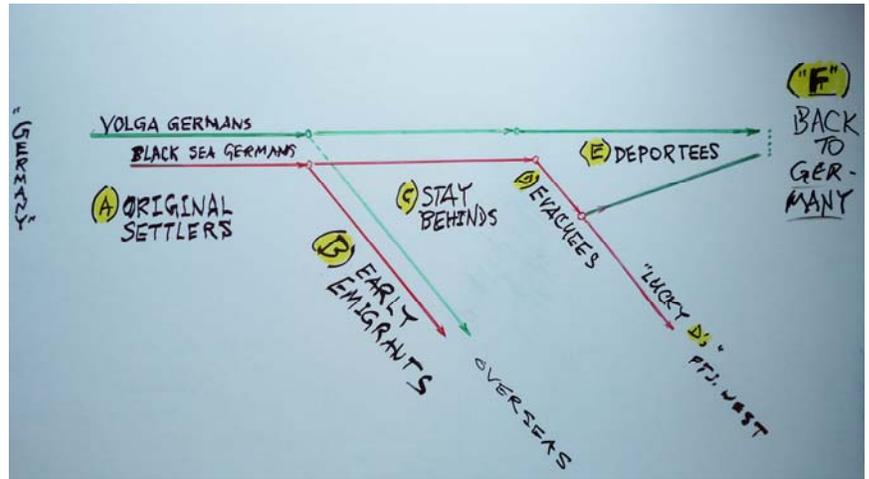
This process lasted anywhere from forty to fifty years. It is this group of German Russians, the ones who left Russia in droves, which I’ll call our second major strand of GRs, or **GROUP B**. (See the illustration.) Curiously and ironically, in strange and new environments, they would be forced to repeat having to face nearly the same kind of primitive conditions their Ukrainian and Volga German pioneers had faced and fought through.

But it was entirely due to their inherited strength and legendary resilience, too, that they once again seized new opportunities and coped with and through all sorts of familiar and unfamiliar problems. They especially seized on their new freedoms, new lands,

unique homesteading conditions, new and similar climate conditions, even sometimes poor soil, and so on.

It was those new freedoms that would become very plain and very dear to them after a while, the same freedoms which would eventually be denied to the large group that they had left behind in Russia.

The area in the US they covered includes NE Colorado, the Midwest from the Dakotas to Nebraska, and on down to Kansas! Also California, Texas, and other states!



Not unexpectedly, given their forefathers’ history and accomplishments, **GROUP B** became one of the most productive and contributive elements to Canadian, American and South American society and economy.

And as long as they were able, these *Germans from Russia* also maintained their German customs and culture, even their own schools and churches, just as the original settler generations had done in Russia.

However, eventually they, too, had to yield at least *some* of those things, even to the point of losing their original language – but we know that they, too, knew how to make the best of things, serving their new country with distinction and providing it with new and productive citizens.

Today the descendants of **GROUP B** number in the millions throughout the Americas. Now to complete the picture of historical German Russian groups. In all of

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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

their history, we must never forget what I would call **GROUP C**, a third group of German Russians, namely, the descendants of the settlers from Russia who for various reasons decided to, or had to decide to stay behind in Russia as **GROUP B** was leaving for points overseas.

This stay-behind **GROUP C** consisted of none other than the siblings, parents, cousins, aunts, uncles, and grandparents of the immigrants, or **GROUP B**, who were leaving in droves.

For a while, things were not all that bad for **GROUP C**. In fact, some historians have said that the mid-to-late-19th-century may have been the best times for Germans in Russia.

HOWEVER, increasingly their *German ethnicity* became a burden to the members of this stay-behind strand, and after those “in perpetuity” promises ceased to be honored, these people would eventually go through unbelievable deprivations and suffering, such as compulsory military service in the dreaded Tsarist army, two revolutions, civil wars, dispossession, economic and industrial experimentation, including farm collectivization in particular, famines, religious and ethnic repression, and the unmitigated terror of Stalin’s political and class-warfare cleansings, and later, evacuations and deportation.

Still, even after two devastating famines in the 1920s and 1930s (during which they received some aid from their American relatives of the second group mentioned earlier), **GROUP C**’s numbers began to grow again, and they resumed being major contributors to Russian society, even while their government and neighbors considered them not Russian or Soviet enough, and during two wars identified the German Russians with the Reichs-German enemy.

And there even came a time when they would lose *everything German*, such as their schools and their churches and, finally, during collectivization, their homes and all other properties.

Next we can distinguish a group that might be called **GROUP D**, the evacuees.

Between 1940 and 1944, the Bessarabia Germans, most of the Ukrainian Black Sea Germans, and the Volhynia Germans were not so much deported as forcefully evacu-

ated by Nazi military to Germany proper or to German-occupied foreign territories such as western Poland.

Virtually none of these EVACUEES would ever be allowed to return to their original homes in the Soviet Union, and most of them would later, in 1945, be DEPORTED to the eastern Soviet Union.

In their new territories of displacement by evacuation, German Russians in **GROUP C** started from scratch once again, but as the Red Army pushed the German army ever westward, these Germans became refugees – in fact, a people now twice-displaced -- and many landed in East or West Germany, some emigrating just as soon as they could.

I personally am a member of this third luckier part of **GROUP C**. I was born in Ukraine, and in 1944 the German army, which had been occupying our area since its surprise attack on Russia in 1941, moved all of us ethnic Germans in SW Ukraine out to Poland. Along several stations, my family ended up in Berlin, in Baltic Northeast Germany, in West Germany and, in 1953, in Hays, Kansas, where we Black-Sea Germans joined a large number of descendants of those **GROUP B** Volga German immigrants to the Americas.

Coincidentally, the American immigration sponsors for our family happened to be my father’s Herzog cousins, descendants of earlier **GROUP B** Herzog immigrants to the US!

This country and Canada have always been known as the paradigms of what we call true lands of opportunity, and for my family this became an undisputed reality, as we have been able to make the most and best of what we were offered, and some of that, as I mentioned, with the ready assistance of members of **GROUP B**, descendants of Volga Germans in Hays, Kansas, often of whom was my guide at the Catholic high school before I learned English sufficiently well.

Some few others of my luckier part of the evacuees **GROUP D** also made it out of Europe, but the majority of the expelled and evacuees that were stranded in especially East Germany and in other parts of Europe would soon be tragically

forced to merge into the next strand I will now discuss.

As a fifth group of German Russians, or **GROUP E**, the deportees, I would classify first, those who did not get out of Russia before, during, or after World War II, by emigration or evacuation, and secondly, of course, those evacuees who would later become “thrice-displaced people” and also be deported back to Russia from places like East Germany after having been moved there by the German army earlier on.

Sadly, this is the most unfortunate group of Germans in Russia, and it includes some Crimean Germans AND, most notably, the huge number of 450,000 Volga Germans, who at one time had even enjoyed the status of having their own Autonomous Soviet Republic of Volga Germans, but suddenly, after Hitler attacked the Soviet Union in 1941, were summarily branded traitors to the Soviet system and spies for Germany, and as such they naturally “had to be deported” to the worst places in Siberia, the Urals, Kazakhstan and elsewhere, where they were strongly discriminated against as Fascist-stigators of the war, where they were not allowed to keep their language or religion, nor to advance in academics, the professions, or other serious occupations, and where the majority of them would end up dead or suffering in forced labor camps under family separation, under special restrictions to life and liberty, and under the worst conditions one can imagine.

The presentation we gave this afternoon illustrates the fate of one just of these DEPORTEES, Ida Bender.

But even this group would eventually do at least *somewhat* better. In time, they were given a limited measure of freedom, and even some freedom of movement, so, once again, yet another group of German Russians would take full advantage of an opportunity, even a terribly meager one, to make a new life in various parts of the Soviet Union.

But things for those Germans in Russia simply did not get much better, so when the German government and finally the Soviets made it possible for ethnic Germans to return to our primary land of origin, the motherland of Germany, the

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Soviet Union and then its successor states were nearly depleted of German Russians.

Specifically, as a stark example and perhaps as a genuine rebuke to the Soviet system between 1990 and 2000, more than two million Germans emigrated to Germany from the Russian Federation.

To complete our numbering system, we might call this group **GROUP F**. They completed the circle begun by Group A as early as 1764!

Ironically, in Germany these Germans still experience ethnic discrimination. Having been branded “bad Fascist Germans” in the Soviet Union, many native Germans and even some of the public media, view them, with considerable and blind prejudice, as “those no-good Russians in Germany.”

Still, and despite increasingly regressive policies that Germany has come up with to gain some control over immigration, most of these Germans from Russia have seized their new opportunities and are beginning to thrive in freedom, trying to integrate into Western life and capitalism.

In conclusion, let me summarize: The first group, **GROUP A**. German Russians were the original, pioneering settler immigrants to Russia, primarily in the Volga and black Sea regions.

GROUP B consists of a branch of the first group, those waves of Germans who emigrated from Russia in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. Their descendants number in the millions, and they populate much of North and South America.

GROUP C comprises the relatives of the second strand, namely, another branch of the first strand, that is, those German Russians who stayed behind in Russia when their own cousins and families left for parts western.

Group D were the evacuees of the 1940s, many of whom would eventually morph into the following group, and only the luckier ones of this group were able to avoid deportation.

GROUP E: those who were deported from the Volga region or from Eastern Europe and had to slug it out with the Communists for decades to come before most of them, too, left Russia for their German motherland.

Let me now return briefly to that very strong second strand of Germans from Russia. Many or most of you who belong to AHSGR or GRHS are likely to be



descendants of the major early waves of immigrants to the Volga area, the Black Sea region, Bessarabia, Crimea, and other parts of then Tsarist Russia.

And here I would like to emphasize how it was not only those first late-1800s and early-1900s immigrants to America and Canada who knew how to use their opportunities and make the best of them, make an impact on their own people and society around them and, in the process, create ever more opportunities, but it has **also** been the generations who have come after them, **including today's generations**, that simply cannot help acting just like their revered ancestors.

I congratulate you and I thank you.

...Present's Message continued from page 1

meal. Tickets will be \$10.00 per plate. Chapter members are asked to bring a dessert.

It is also time to pay your dues, please do so at the meeting, in fact, help build our membership by buying one as a Christmas gift!

At our Board meeting we decided to present a motion at the December 8th meeting to donate \$1000.00 to AHSGR. We will also elect new officers at this meeting. The slate of officers includes: Kevin Rupp, President, Janelle More, Vice-President, Jerry Braun, Treasurer, and Judy Hoffman, Secretary.

Since this is our Christmas Meeting I would encourage all grandparents to bring their grandchildren so that they may learn the Christmas traditions of our people. New Year's is also just around the corner, so I ask you to please bring your favorite New Years wish to share with the group. Various village New Year's wishes will be discussed.

Macht's Gut - Kevin



INTERNATIONAL

NEWS FROM AHSGR HEADQUARTERS



- ◆ Christine Hunt is now the AHSGR Society Office Manager replacing Diane White who resigned. Candidates for a full-time Librarian are being evaluated.
- ◆ The Society will soon receive a very large collection from researcher Art Flegal. He has been collection information for many many years, so much that it will fill one room. We hope to have the collection this spring and inform our members what

is included in the collection.

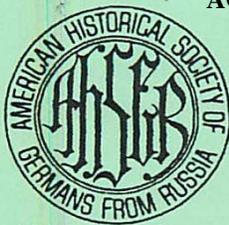
- ◆ 2014 Convention will be in Lincoln, Nebraska.
- ◆ CLUES will be coming out in 2014.
- ◆ A “Give Direct” button has been installed on the AHSGR website for anyone wishing to donate to the Society on-line.

OUR CHAPTER WON 2ND PLACE. CAN WE DO THIS
AGAIN OR REACH 1ST PLACE FOR 2014???

I THINK WE CAN!!!

10th AH\$GR Membership Campaign

July 13, 2013 - May 15, 2014



INTERNATIONAL

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 2014 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 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

MAKE PLANS NOW TO ATTEND THE

45th International AHSGR Convention
July 6-12, 2014
Lincoln, Nebraska

Catherine's Manifesto:
The Great Adventure Continues



The 2014 Convention will be held in the Cornhusker Hotel, 222 S 13th Street. It is convenient to the downtown area and the Historical Haymarket District. Research opportunity at headquarters.

The following program is begin developed:

- ◆ Sessions on genealogy, history, culture, and folklore of the Germans from Russia.
- ◆ International speakers including those from Russia and South American.
- ◆ The Annual Story Telling Contest.
- ◆ Research opportunities using the full AHSGR library and archives at headquarters. A shuttle will be provided between the hotel and headquarters.
- ◆ Availability of books and other materials for purchase.
- ◆ Heritage Hall featuring village displays organized by Village Coordinators.
- ◆ Area group discussions with Village Coordinators and others sharing the similar interests.
- ◆ And much, much more...

Room reservations may be made by contacting the headquarters hotel, The Cornhusker, 333 S 13th Street, Lincoln, NE 68505 by calling 1-402-474-7474. Please ask for the AHSGR Convention Group rate when reserving your room. Reservations by attendees must be received on or before Sunday, June 22, 2014 to receive the AHSGR Convention Rate of \$104.00 Standard Rate + Taxes and Fees. Parking is included in the room fee.

Updates to Information About Family Origins in Germany

Updates have recently been made to both the AHSGR German Origins Project and also the Center for Volga German Studies (CVGS) Origins websites. You are encouraged to periodically visit both to support your family research because while there is some redundancy each includes unique information. For AHSGR, see http://ahsgr.org/Find_Your_Ancestors/German_Origins.htm and for CVGS see <http://cvgs.cu-portland.edu/origins.cfm>

Weigel/Weichel

VOLGA COLONIES

[Herzog / Wittmann / Mariental](#)
PRE-VOLGA ORIGIN

Passau / Erlangen, Bavaria

DISCUSSION & DOCUMENTATION

Thomas Weigel/Waigele was born in 1738 in Passau, Lower Bavaria. He married Barbara Bergel on 12 Oct 1765 in St. Petri Church, Lübeck, Schleswig-Holstein, which was a gathering place for people emigrating to Russia. Barbara had been born in 1744 in Erlangen, which is situated in the Middle Franconia area of Bavaria.

After their marriage they departed to Russia. During the transport to the Volga German colonies they had a daughter who was named Maria Magdalena.

Thomas and his family arrived in the **Herzog** colony on 14 Jul 1766. They are recorded there on 1767 census in Household N° 27. While living in **Herzog** they had the following new children: Valentin (1771), Joseph (1774) & Barbara (1780).

By the time of **Herzog** 1798 census Thomas Weigel had died. Only son Valentin Weigel and his family are registered on that census, living in Household N° Hr 29. Daughter Maria Magdalena had married to Johann Wittmann in 1792 and moved to **Wittmann** colony (Household N° Wm 01); son Joseph had married to Gertrude Schunk and moved to **Mariental** in 1794 (Household N° Mt 34); and daughter Barbara had married to Michael Grebing and moved to **Mariental** in 1796 (Household N° Mt 30).

Researcher

Corina Hirt

Sources

- Luebeck Marriages – DAI T81, Film 597 (E. Wise). Published by the Odessa Digital Library, 10 Jun 2000.
- Mai, Brent Alan. *1798 Census of the German Colonies along the Volga: Economy, Population, and Agriculture* (Lincoln, NE: American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, 1999).
- Pleve, Igor. *Einwanderung in das Wolgagebiet, 1764-1767* Band 2 (Der Göttinger Arbeitskreis)– 37085 Göttingen: 2001: 94.

The Sunflower Chapter of Ellis County, Kansas in conjunction with the Ellis, Kansas Bukovina Society present a NEW (sort of) DVD.

Cost of DVD \$25.00
Sold by the Bukovina Society and the
AHSGR Sunflower Chapter

To Order, Send \$25.00 to
Sunflower Chapter
c/o Kevin Rupp
2301 Canal Blvd
Hays, Ks. 67601



A great experience for younger people at Christmas this year would be the home showing DVD of *Christmas Customs of the Old Country*. Videotaped in 1997 by members of the Bukovina Society and the Sunflower Chapter of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, it features authentic costumes, songs and skits of early German Christmas traditions.

Speakers Include: Oren Windholz, Leona Pfeifer, Pastor Lyle Knuth.
Fr. Kevin Weber and a number chapter members.



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 **Genealogical Data COMMunication**. **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 LEUTE IM BILD: Kansas Round-Up of Chapters



SUNFLOWER CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

2301 Canal Blvd
Hays, Ks. 67601

volgagerman@ruraltel.net

www.sunflowerchapterofahsgr.net

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