



Sunflower Chapter NEWSLETTER

Hays, Kansas

Summer 2016



Vol. 20 Issue 3



Chapter Meetings



Aug. 14

The Sunflower Chapter of AHSGR, Hays, Kansas group meets four - five times a year at Munjor, Kansas in the St. Francis of Assisi Parish Hall, unless otherwise noted in the Chapter Newsletter. Munjor, Kansas was one of the six original Volga- German villages that was founded in August of 1876 from a group of settlers that came from the Volga River seeking a new life on the Kansas prairie.

Social Time

11:30pm - 12:30pm

Refreshments or Pot Luck Meal depending on the Event

12:30pm - 1:30pm

Chapter Meeting

~ 1:30 pm

Program

2:00 - 3:30pm (roughly)

Program and Important Dates

Sunday, February 7, 2016

Fasnacht Meeting

Members are asked to bring

Soup/Bread/Desert or Crackers to share

Sunday, April 10th, 2016

Chapter Meeting

Sunday, August 14th

Chapter Summer Picnic

Sunday, September 11th

VFW Breakfast Chapter Fund-raiser

7:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Saturday, October 1st, 2016

Kansas Round-Up of Chapters

Hays, Ks. - (Hosted by Hays Chapter)

Chapter Website

www.sunflowerchapterofahsgr.net

Sunflower Chapter Hosts Kansas Round-Up

Kevin Rupp

The Hays Sunflower Chapter will once again host the annual Kansas Round-Up of Chapters on Saturday, October 1, 2016 at Whiskey Creek in Hays. An official letter and registration information will go out in August. As Ed Sullivan would say. "We (will) have a Really Good 'Shoe' for you (tonight)".

Our special guest speaker for the banquet will be Tatjana Schell. She will also give a presentation in the morning and one in the afternoon.

The day will begin at 8:00am with coffee, Kuchen, and registration followed by the flag ceremony, singing of 'God Bless America', memorial service, business meeting, and report from Sherry Pawelko, AHSGR Executive Director. AHSGR Annual Reports will be provided at the meeting. After a period to let everyone stretch and mingle we will start the days events. Programs and speakers include:

Morning Sessions:

1. "Getting the Most from the AHSGR Website" - Hannah Witt, Administrative Assistant.
2. "Norka: Passage in Time" DVD on a German Russian Village.
3. "Powerful Voices on the Margins: A Presentation on Family, Oral, and Archival History" - Tanja Schell.

Afternoon Sessions:

4. "Weihnachtzeit im Oktober" - Presentation by the Sunflower Chapter.
5. "Digitization of Volga German Text - Haberkorn Letters" - Yuri Yerastove.
6. "Dear Children, Jakob and Amalie: Analyzing Personal Letters Sent from a Volga-German Village" - Tanja Schell.
7. "Volga-German Use of Natural Resources: Limestone on the Treeless Great Plains" - Guy Windholz
8. Music by Galen Schmidtberger

Tanja Schell will be our banquet speaker. Although the title of the talk is not yet available, it will be about her trip to the Volga & Buedigen area, foods and dialect of Unser Leute.

The day will be a mix of music, heritage, food, and friendship. Registration for the day is \$10.00 for members and \$15.00 for non-members. The meal ticket is \$25.00 for the lunch and banquet.

In order to keep this annual event going we need to have at least 75+ attendees registered to break even and pay the Round-Up bills. The more we have registered the more we can do for AHSGR and our Chapters. So, mark your calendar, spread the word, listen for the radio announcements and most of all bring a friend to our Round-Up and help us to preserve our heritage!

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.....

It is hard to believe that summer is almost over. We were surly blessed this summer with all the rain that we received, but we could have easily done without that 85mph wind this past month in July.

August starts off with our annual "picnic" on **Sunday, August 14, 2016**. Please be sure to give me a call, **785-656-0329, before August 8th** for the meal. I will need to call this in on Monday, August 8th by 5:00pm. **PLEASE DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE!** We will continue our viewing of "Born in Karaganda". I will also have the September VFW "All You Can Eat Breakfast" tickets to sell at the meeting and for those who want to take some to sell. And on that note....

Our annual "All You Can Eat Breakfast" will be on **Sunday, September 11, 2016**. We need as many of you to please help sell tickets and be host and hostess. I will have a sign-up sheet at the August 14th meeting. This is our main fundraiser and this helps us to provide you with a no cost Chicken dinner each summer. This fundraiser also helps us to do some project that saves our heritage for years to come, whether is be professionally recording special speakers, prodicing CD's and even giving a donation to AHSGR to do the same.

No sooner does September finish off and we head right for the Kansas Round-Up of Chapters. Our Sunflower Chapter is the host this year and we need your help and presence on **Saturday, October 1, 2016**. We will need people to help with the bake sale, raffle tickets, and especially the BINGO. I will have a list at our August meeting for sign-up. You will see a few articles in this newsletter about the Round-Up and also about the history of the Round-Up. We are going to have a "open house", **Friday, September 30th** for those early birds who are coming to the Round-Up. Be sure to join us! You should receive your registration packet toward the and of August with raffle tickets for a quilt and a number of cash prizes. Leonard has also offered another rolling pin, cook-book and cookie cutters as a special raffle.

MEMBERSHIP is something that we should all be thinking of for our chapter and our Society. If we don't get in new members our Chapter will actually and literally die out. 2017 Membership will be coming up soon. How about buying a membership for a family member or a friend, just to give them a taste of the organization. Actually, our Chapter won \$25.00 this year as having a number of new members join the organization.

Membership renewals for 2017 will be mailed out in November to current members and some past members. IF YOU RECEIVE A MEMBERSHIP NOTIFICICATION FROM AHSGR HEADQUARTERS PLEASE DO NOT PAY IT! SEND YOUR RENEWALS TO OUR MEMBERSHIP CHAIR. By doindg this you help remove any confussion on what was paid. At this time I have taken up the role as membership chair until we get a volunteer to take this over.

I hope to see many of you not only at the dinner, but for our meeting on Sunday, August 14th in Munjor!

Macht Gut - Kevin Rupp

HAYS OKTOBERFEST
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30TH
FRONTIER PARK - SOUTH SIDE

SUNFLOWER CHAPTER ANNUAL "PICNIC"

Sunflower chapter is hosting the annual "Picnic" and program on Sunday, August 14th at the Munjor Parish Hall.

A chicken meal will be provided. Members are asked to bring desserts.

THOSE ATTENDING THE MEAL MUST RSVP NO LATER THEN MONDAY, AUGUST 8TH BY 5:00PM

NO RSVP'S WILL BE TAKEN FOR THE MEAL AFTER THAT TIME.

Please call Kevin at 785-656-0329 to RSVP with number attending.

PROGRAM

We will continue our program of the DVD "Born in Karaganda" the story of Bishop Joseph Werth and the Volga Germans in Siberia.

Social: 11:30am - 12:30pm
Meal: 12:30pm - 1:15pm
Meeting: 1:15-1:30pm
Program: 1:30pm - ?

Hope to see you for the meal and the program!!!

SUNFLOWER CHAPTER OF AHSGR VFW BREAKFAST

Sunday, September 11, 2015
7:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

"ALL YOU CAN EAT BREAKFAST"

Tickets will be available at the August 14th meeting and at St. Joseph Parish Office

CHAPTEER MEMBERS, we need Your help to be host and hostess. Please sign up at the August 9th meeting.

The History of the Kansas Round-Up

By Kevin Rupp

This fall, the Hays Sunflower Chapter will once again host the Kansas Round-Up of Chapters on Saturday, October 1, 2016 at Whiskey Creek in Hays. Festivities will begin the day before with the Hays Oktoberfest down at the Frontier Park on the north side of the bank. Later that evening, we will have a time to all gather with our friends from all over Kansas for an evening social in the meeting room of Whiskey Creek.

The Kansas Round-Up of Chapters started roughly 33 years ago and was organized to bring the Kansas Chapter membership in closer contact and to provide a fuller understanding of AHSGR and to hopefully introduce new members to AHSGR and gain knowledge of our Volga German history. The small group of people who started this yearly event found that Chapter presidents often fail to convey the policies that came from headquarters to their membership which at times created confusion in regard to what was expected of the relationship with AHSGR. In the early beginnings before the Round-Up Martha Issinghoff, who was on the AHSGR Board at the time, would invite the Chapter Presidents to her home so that she could share the goings-on with the Society. At the meeting it was decided to experiment with a general meeting for the whole Kansas Chapter membership in Salina.

That first meeting was overwhelming. The membership then voted to hold an annual meeting, especially since the national conventions prohibited many to attend them because of distance or cost. Those who did attend the International AHSGR Conventions would continue to do so, but now would bring all that information back to Kansas to the Round-Up to share with its membership. This way, the membership felt that they were more part of the overall Society.

No special by-laws were drawn up because they felt that the Chapter by-laws would suffice. This annual meeting was not to be in competitions with AHSGR's Conventions. The yearly Round-Up was not supposed to be labeled as a mini-convention, only as the Kansas Round-Up of Chapters, although now we use that lightly as a way to bring in new people to create and interest in the local area.



Round-Up Presidents: Kevin Rupp, current president, Martha Issinghoff, founder and first president, and Leonard Schoenberger, past president.

In the years since we have held our annual meetings, we have been able to contribute as a unit to AHSGR, more than most of the Kansas Chapters were able to do on their own at the time. Martha Issinghoff was elected as its first president. Those who served as presidents have been Carol Riffel, Leonard Schoenberger and currently myself.

At the time of its founding, in the late 1980s, there were at least six chapters who would, on rotation, host the Round-Up, now there are only three: Hays, Topeka, and Wichita.



NEW WEBSITES for Sunflower Chapter & Volgagerman.net

This past month two website received a whole new makeover, Sunflower Chapter - www.sunflowerchapterofahsgr.net and www.volgagerman.net. Both sites are beneficial to the Chapter and to people who are interested in the Germans from Russia.

The Sunflower Chapter site does have a tab for the Kansas Round-Up of Chapters with information on the 2016 meeting including registration and raffle forms. As of this writing the registration and raffle forms have not been added. The Sunflower Chapter site will hold pdfs of a number of the Chapter's back newsletters. Those newsletters from the past 5+ years are not added to the site.

The Round-Up site's address is: <http://www.sunflowerchapterofahsgr.net/kansas-roundup-of-chapters>.

There are still a lot of pages that need to be added and updated. Check back often!



www.volgagerman.net



www.sunflowerchapterofahsgr.net



Lui (Louis, Otrogovka, Ostrogovka, Mechetnaya)

Today: the *Rayon* Center Stepnoye of the *Rayon* Sovietski, Saratov region
Geographical Location and Administrative-Territorial Situation in the 19th
and 20th Centuries

Researched and Written by Olga Litzenberger, Russia
Translated from Russian to German by Johannes Herzog, Germany
and German into English by Alex Herzog, Boulder, Colorado



We continue the history of the colony of Louis, Russia.....

Population Numbers

In 1767 Louis counted 193 foreign colonists,

237 in 1773,	227 in 1788,	307 in 1798,
533 in 1816,	1,589 in 1834,	1,714 in 1850,
2,091 in 1859,	2,647 in 1883.	2,792 persons in 1889.

According to figures from the general census of 1897, 3,209 persons were living in Louis. Of these, 3,193 were German. By 1905 the population had increased to 4,759 persons, and by 1910 the town had 4,856 residents.

After 1917 the number of residents steadily declined under the influence of Bolshevik policies, as a result of the famines in the 1920s and 1930s, de-kulakization, repressions, and emigration. A census of 1920 counted 4,315 persons, exclusively Germans, living in Louis.

The population in the Volga colonies was strongly affected by the early-1920s famine. According to the Statistical Administration of the Volga German Autonomy, on January 1, 1922 Louis had only 1,823 residents, and by 1923 the number had moved back up to 1,976 persons. According to an All-Russia census of 1926, the village had 545 households (541 of them being German), with a total population of 2,744 persons (1,328 men and 1,416 women), of whom 2,740 were German (1,324 men and 1,416 women). By 1931, there were 4,246 persons living in Louis, a total of 4,240 of them being Germans.

Excerpts from the History of the Church Community and the Parish

In January, 1862, Aloisius Kessler (1862 – 1933) the future bishop of the Tiraspol Roman Catholic diocese, was born in Louis.

The colony was surrounded by German Lutheran and Russian villages which is why various contacts and even marriages between Catholics from Louis and members of other faiths became unavoidable. For example, in 1885 A.M. Paulson, who had married a Catholic of Louis, converted to the Roman Catholic faith, and in 1906 two women from Louis, the Russian Orthodox P. Ja and the Mennonite M. Futt converted to Catholicism. The ecclesiastical archive contained a circular of 1893 entitled “Regarding the ban on to allow any Russian Orthodox to participate in Confession and Communion in Catholic churches,” in which was also written that clerics of other faiths [e.g., Catholics – Tr.] who consciously permit Russian Orthodox to participate in Confession and Communion according to their rite should lose their position in the first instance for six months to a year, and lost their clerical status for a second instance.

For marriages between a Protestant and a Catholic the extant canonical rules allowed the wedding to be either only at a Catholic church or in the churches of both faiths. The marriage would otherwise be invalid. The church archive of Louis contains an example of assigned responsibility for the Catholic broom, J.J. Bollig, and his Lutheran bride, A.Chr. Völker, to have the children baptized Roman Catholic and to raise the children according to the laws of the Roman Catholic religion. Another interesting case is the correspon-

dence during November 1917 between the administrator of Louis, E. Bader, the local committee of the people, Verchasovski, and the Bishop of Tiraspol in the case of the abduction of Katharina Abt, a Catholic from Louis, by the Mohammedan [archaic German word for Muslim – Tr.] family with the aim to have her marry Murtasu Shashkin. Marriages with non-Christians were forbidden by the canonical rules, which were in fact abolished by the Soviets and thus led to conflicts of that kind.

The Bolsheviks’ grab of power brought about a basic break from the lifestyle of the colonists and their societal consciousness. Bishop Kessler wrote about his memories of an ultimate visit to his home village: “I visited the Louis colony, my place of birth, when I gave the sacraments to around 1,000 people and preached two times... In one of the sermons I concentrated on the inalienable right to private property and the godlessness of Communism. During the sermon I noticed that some of the farmers demonstratively left church. One of them let out a comment in my direction, “That one I would shoot!”

In the Soviet Union the inhumane methods of the anti-church policy were accompanied by repressions of the clergy. In 1921, 270 residents of the villages Louis, Graf, Raskaty and Mariental were shot for their participation in counter-revolutionary actions against the Soviet power. And on April 18, 1921 the priest Gottlieb Beratz from Herzog, a town neighboring Louis, was condemned to death by the military field tribunal of the Workers’ Committee of the Autonomous Republic of Volga Germans as the “malicious organizer of an uprising, a beating, and killing of Communists.” The judgement was carried out immediately, and the priest’s belongings were confiscated even before he was killed.

The record of the process against Beratz reads: "I asked the bandits whether I could hear the confessions of the Communists, Otherwise I exchanged no words with the gang. I spoke neither with the people nor with individuals about the Communists or the uprising. On March 26 Brungardt came to the church and asked about when the corpses could be buried. Before I entered the barn where the corpses were stored, a terrible fear came over me. When I saw them I began to cry with great sadness. I am not able to make any further statements"

In a much later summary written by the judiciary of the Saratov region dated February 6, 2006 one reads, "Analysis of the documents reveal that that the judgement was unjustified because Beratz' guilt was not ascertained. As a basis of the judgement, only his statements were used, in which he also stated that during the uprising some villagers had turned to him and pleaded with him to set a date for the Mass of death for the murdered Communists, whose corpses had been fished out of the water, and they wished that they be buried.... He had not given the rebels any advice or directions."

From these statements it was deemed that one cannot ascertain that a crime was committed. For this reason, on the basis of the law of the RSFSR [Russian Federation] "regarding the rehabilitation of victims of political repression," G. Beratz was rehabilitated on October 18, 1999 by the state attorney of the Saratov region.

In those earlier times of turmoil, the clergy were among the first to be suspected of counter-revolutionary activities and were placed under strict surveillance by the NKVD. Eduard Dittler, a clergyman from Louis, who had had been assistant pastor between November 15, 1897 and 1902, then had become full pastor on February 18, 1902 and had remained in that position until 1914, in 1930 was taken to court and condemned as part of an [alleged] group offense by the German Catholic clergy in the Volga region.

After October, 1917, all religious institutions, churches and pastorates, orphan homes and schools were nationalized. Religious communities lost all their financial means by the confiscation of their bank accounts. The churches, all built with the private means of parishioners, immediately became property of a faceless state. On February 8, 1921, the church council of Louis was forced to pay the village *soviet* [Communist village council] 1,100 rubles "for use of the pastorate, in which the clergyman" Emmanuel Bader was residing.

The climax of anti-religious policies came in 1929 with the enactment of an order from the Central Penal Committee of the Soviet Union and by the Council of the People's Commissars, entitled "Regarding Religious Organizations," which introduced a series of restrictions on the activities of religious communities. Day to day, the number of clergy decreased relentlessly, and the activities of the community came under constant control of the state organs. In 1931 the Presidium of the Central Penal Committee of the ASSR of Volga Germans was given secret instructions on examining religious questions. Louis still numbered 1,900 faithful, of whom 35 were designated as deprived of their rights (loss of all political rights).

According to information from the German Embassy in Moscow, by March of 1932 there were only four priests left in the territory of the Tiraspol Diocese, among whom the 41-year-old Emmanuel Bader was explicitly named and who lived in Louis and was Deacon of the Mariental Diocese. What happened to him thereafter is not known.

In the fall of 1935, when the village no longer had a priest, the Commission for Cultural Question produced a list of signatures of those faithful of Louis who had agreed to the closure of the church in Louis. 536 of 570 of community members remaining in Louis had voted for the liquidation of the church. For that reason, the Presidium of the Central Penal Committee and the Supreme Soviet of the ASSR of Volga Germans decided on November 1, 1936, to close the church in Louis (Document #36 of December 1, 1936). The Penal Committee of the Canton was strongly advised to utilize the church building for cultural purposes.

List of Clergy of the Louis Parish

1883 – 1884	Konrad Keller
1894 – 1897	Alexander Staab
1895 – 1897	Alexander Stang
1897 – 1914	Eduard Dittler
1914 – 1916	Joseph Paul sr
1928 -- 1932	Deacon Emmanuel Bader.

A 250th Anniversary Celebration Held in Hays, Kansas - Saturday, 4 June 2016

On June 4, 2016, Hays was the location of a 250th anniversary celebration of nine Roman Catholic colonies founded in 1766 along the Volga River in Russia: Degott (July 18), Graf (June 10), Herzog (July 14), Katharinenstadt (June 27), Louis (June 14), Mariental (June 16), Rohleder (June 14), Schuck (July 18), and Volmer (July 18).

Dr. Brent Mai, from the Center for Volga German Studies at Concordia University, hosted a seminar series. An authentic Volga German lunch was served consisting of Bierocks, Galushkies, bean and noodles, green bean dumpling soup, coffee/tea/water, and dessert were served. This was a sold out event with the room filled to capacity. Below is a list of sessions that Dr. Mai presented to the group.

Session 1: Introduction to the Volga Germans and their Heritage.

Everyone starts on a different page when it comes to their knowledge of who the Volga Germans are and how they came to be in Russia. This session will bring all attendees to the same place in that understanding.

Session 2: The Geography of the Volga Germans.

The trek of the Volga Germans around the world creates an interesting study in geographic adaptability. We'll study that journey as well as the changing topography of the Volga Region itself.

Session 3: A 250th Anniversary Celebration

We'll look at the history of the nine Roman Catholic colonies that were founded in 1766 along the Volga River.

Session 4: The Volga Germans of South America

Volga German immigration to South America began in 1873. Today, it is estimated that there are 1.5 million Volga German descendants living in Argentina and another 400,000 in Brazil.

Session 5: A Day-in-the Life of the Volga Germans.

What was it like to live in the Volga German colonies?

Session 6: The Deportation of the Volga Germans in 1941

We'll take a first hand look at how the 177-year long geographic history of the Volga Germans came so abruptly to an end in September 1941.

Session 7: The Volga Germans Today

In the final session of the day we will look at today's descendants of the Volga Germans. How many are there? Where are they? How did they get there?



2016 AHSGR-SUNFLOWER CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP FORM

Membership renewals are due by January 1, 2016



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 (Self) _____

Spouses Name _____ Spouses Maiden Name _____

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

Ancestral Names (Spouse) _____

Ancestral Villages (Spouse) _____

Newsletter: By e-mail ___ By Postal Mail ___

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.

_____ **\$110.00 Premium Annual Membership** (\$100.00 International/\$10.00 Local)- Includes all benefits, voting rights, notices including AHSGR Journal, AHSGR Newsletter, Clues, Premium Membership Only section to the AHSGR Website once it is available (possibly spring 2016) & Local Sunflower Chapter Newsletter

_____ **\$60.00 Standard Annual Membership** (\$50.00 International/\$10.00 Local)- Includes all benefits, voting rights, notices including Journal, AHSGR Newsletter & Local Sunflower Chapter Newsletter, except **NO Clues**.

_____ **\$45.00 Basic Annual Membership** (\$35.00 International/\$10.00 Local)- Includes all benefits, voting rights & notices and local Sunflower Chapter Newsletter except, **NO AHSGR Journal**, AHSGR Newsletter or Clues

_____ **\$10.00 Local Dues Only** (International Dues have already been paid to headquarters **or** I am a Life Member)

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 _____
Clean-up _____	
Genealogy _____	
Folklore _____	

Make your check payable to:
SUNFLOWER CHAPTER
 SUBMIT ALL RENEWALS FOR
LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL
 TO OUR Membership Chair:

Kevin Rupp
 2301 Canal Blvd
 Hays, Ks. 67601

If new member, how did you hear about AHSGR?
 Website ___ Facebook ___ Magazine Ad ___ Society Visit ___ Other ___

Name of referring Chapter or Member: _____

Comments: _____



SUNFLOWER CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

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