

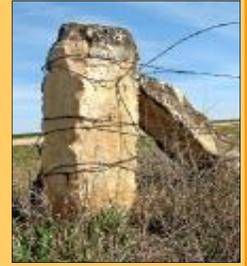


Sunflower Chapter  
Hays, KS

# Sunflower Chapter NEWSLETTER

Fall 2011

Vol. 15, Issue 4



On August 28, 2011 we are reminded that it was 70 years to the day when our people "Unserer Leute" we departed from the Volga area of Russia.



**On August 28, 1941, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR approved the following decree:**

"According to trustworthy information received by the military authorities, there are among the German population living in the Volga area thousands and tens of thousands of diversionists and spies, who on a signal being from Germany, are to carry out sabotage in the area inhabited by the Germans of the Volga.

None of the Germans living in the Volga area has reported to the Soviet authorities the existence of such a large number of diversionists and spies among the Volga Germans; consequently the German population of the Volga area conceals enemies of the Soviet people and of Soviet authority in its midst.

In case of diversionist acts being carried out at a signal from Germany by German diversionists and spies in the Volga German Republic or in the adjacent areas, and bloodshed taking place, the Soviet Government will be obliged, according to the laws in force during the war period, to take punitive measures against the whole of the German population of the Volga.

In order to avoid undesirable events of this nature and to prevent serious bloodshed, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR have found it neces-

sary to transfer the whole of the German population living in the Volga area into other areas, with the promise, however, that the migrants shall be allotted land and that they should be given assistance by the State in settling in the new areas.

For the purpose of resettlement, areas having much arable land in the Novosibirsk and Omsk provinces, the Altai territory, Kazakhstan and other neighboring localities have been allotted.

In connection herewith the State Committee of Defense has been instructed to carry out urgently the transfer of all Germans of the Volga and to allot to the Germans of the Volga who are being transferred lands and domains in the new areas."

Resettle all Germans from the Republic of Volga Germans and oblasts of Saratov and Stalingrad to the following krajs and oblasts:

Krasnojiarsk Krai - 70,000  
Altai Krai - 91,000  
Omsk Oblast - 80,000  
Novosibirsk Oblast - 92,000  
K[azkah]SSR - 100,000

of these

Semipalitinsk Oblast - 10,000  
Akmola Oblast - 20,000  
North Kazakhstan Oblast - 20,000  
Kustanai Oblast - 16,000  
Pavlodor Oblast - 18,000  
East Kazakhstan Oblast - 16,000

Resettlement is to be applied to all without exception to Germans residing in cities, and also rural areas.



Gottfried Schuvie, C1912  
From Graf, Russia



INTERNATIONAL

**8th Annual AHSGR New Membership Campaign started at the Salt Lake City, Utah Convention**

New Members are Critical to the Continued Success of AHSGR  
Every Member Counts - Talk to Family and Friends  
Buy a Gift Membership

### ABOVE AND BEYOND

This Membership Campaign is designed to reward AHSGR members (individuals) and chapters who recruit a sufficient number of new members for AHSGR or purchase gift memberships for new members. The campaign began August 6, 2011 and ends May 15, 2012. Cash prizes will be awarded at the 2012 Portland, Oregon Convention to be held June 12-17. Membership Data Forms are available at Chapters or on-line at <http://www.ahsgr.org/membership.htm>

- \$100 to the AHSGR member AND \$200 to the AHSGR Chapter who recruits the highest number of new members
- \$75 to the AHSGR member AND \$150 to the AHSGR Chapter who recruits the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest number of new members
- \$50 to the AHSGR member AND \$100 to the AHSGR Chapter who recruits the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest number of new members
- All New Members who join during the campaign period will have their name placed "in the hat" for a drawing. A \$25 cash prize will be awarded at Convention to 3 lucky new members.

79% of New Members Join Because Someone Asked Them

With Your Help, We Will Move Our Membership "Above and Beyond" to Assure the Future of AHSGR

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

## Next Meeting

Oct. 9



**Social & Open Library.....12:00**  
**Meeting ..... 1:00**  
**Program ..... 1:15**  
**Open Library .....2:30**

### FALL PROGRAM

Our guest speaker will be Olga Renner who was born in Germany. She will speak to the chapter about her parents. Her mother was born in Engels and her father was born in the Ukraine. Her parents were deported to Siberia and eventually immigrated back to Germany.

### REFRESHMENTS

Please bring your favorite finger foods to share with the chapter!

### MUSIC

German sing-a-long.

### CHAPTER LIBRARY

This will be the first meeting which we will be able to use our new library cabinet. The library will be open one hour before the meeting begins and roughly 1/2 hour after the program ends. Because the library cabinet needs to remain upstairs, we will have a listing of the books that our library currently holds at each meeting. Books may be checked out at the meeting and need to be returned at the following meeting. Shirley Brungardt, our Chapter Librarian, will be glad to help you with any of your questions. Donations are being taken for any books that you might like to see added to our library.

### PROGRAM IDEAS.....

If you are wanting to see a certain type of program at our meetings please let a board member know. We welcome your ideas!!!

## *2011 Kansas Round-Up of Chapters* *Hosted by the* *Golden Wheat Chapter - Wichita, Kansas* *October 22, 2011*



The Kansas Round-Up of Chapters will be held on October 22, 2011 at the Best Western Motel, I-135 & 53rd St. North intersection (915 E. 53rd Street North), in Wichita hosted by the Golden Wheat Chapter. Registration begins at 8:00 a.m. with the mornings activities starting at 9:00 a.m.

Our guest speaker and banquet speaker this year will be Tanja Schell, whose full name is Tatjana Schell. She was born and grew up in the city of Volgograd, Russia. Her family, who were originally from the Volga German village of Seewald, were sent off to western Siberia in September 1941 during the Deportation of the ethnic Germans from the Volga region. This occasion will have its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and Tanja has still quite a few relatives who have witnessed and were part of those deported to Siberia, including a great-aunt who is 96 years old. It was not until 1966 that her family decided to try and go back home to Volga. Since their ancestral village of Seewald no longer existed, they settled in yet another old Volga German village - Frank - where they lived until their immigration to Germany in the late 1990s.

Tanja had finished a high school in Russia before her family left the country for Germany; however, as most other fellow young Germans from Russia, she had to get another high school diploma in Germany in order to attend a university there. In 2010, she graduated with a Master's degree in English from the Ludwigs-Maximilians-University in Munich and then went on to pursue a PhD degree in the United States. She currently studies and teaches first-year composition classes at the English Department of North Dakota State University in Fargo, ND.

Her interest for genealogy research was supported by her grandparents, who had been great storytellers and remembered a lot about the time at home on the Volga before the Deportation of 1941. She first established contact to the AHSGR in late 2003 and has since been involved in the research concerning the Volga German villages of Seewald, Rothammel, Frank, Kolb and Walter. Tanja has been awarded a Lifetime membership in 2008 at the AHSGR Convention in Casper, Wyoming.

Tanja should have an extremely interesting talk for us both in the afternoon and at the Banquet. Please don't miss this event.

The quilt raffle this year is pictured to the right and was made and donated by Joyce Rupp. It is a piece quilt and fits a twin size bed or makes a perfect lap blanket. Be sure to buy some chances when you receive your invitation in the mail.

Invitations will be mailed out soon to all Kansas AHSGR Members. Please be sure to look it over and return your registration no later than October 16. Room reservation can be made by calling the Best Western Motel at 1-316-832-9354 and be sure to tell them that you are with the Kansas Round-Up of Chapters or AHSGR to receive the discounted room rate of \$63.99 +tax.



## SUNFLOWER CHAPTER BOARD



### President/Newsletter

Kevin Rupp  
2301 Canal Blvd.  
Hays, Ks. 67601  
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### Vice-President

LeRoy L. Herrman  
2011 MacArthur Rd.  
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### Secretary

Judy Hoffman

### Treasurer

Jerry Braun  
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### Membership

Juliet Honas  
1206 Woodbury Street  
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### Librarian / Historian

Shirley Brungardt  
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Leona Pfeifer  
2700 Elm  
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785-625-6162

AHSGR is now on  
"Facebook"

Go to the AHSGR Website,  
[www.ahsgr.org](http://www.ahsgr.org), go down to the  
bottom of the page and click on this  
symbol and look for  
"Become a Member"!

## *From the President...*

*I don't know about all of you but I am ready for fall and with the start of September our Chapter starts off running with many events to promote our heritage through our local chapter.*

*As I write this there is still time to buy some breakfast tickets for our annual "All You Can Eat" breakfast with the VFW on Sunday, September 11th from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. If you have not bought your tickets please stop by the St. Joseph Parish Service Center or give me a call at 656-0329, please leave a message if I don't answer. We also need your help that day to serve coffee, welcome the people, sit at the raffle and information table and help to clean the tables. It goes fast!*

*On Friday, September 16 our Chapter along with the Fox Pavilion will be sponsoring a Traditional Volga German Dinner and the video, "Eine Hochzeit in Ellis County - 1881". Some of you have seen this video and some have not. Our board thought this is another way of promoting our Chapter as well as showing those in our community the marriage customs of the Volga Germans. So, please consider buying a ticket and supporting this event. Tickets are \$15.00 a plate and include the meal and video. A cash bar will also be provided. The meal consists of: galushkies, wedding roast beef, creamed potatoes and dumplings, chicken and noodles, green beans/corn, German chocolate cake and tea or coffee. It would be nice to have many of our chapter members there to talk about our chapter and help raise up our membership! (see page 9 for more info).*

*Sunday, October 9, will be our Fall meeting with a pot luck so please bring your favorite finger foods. We will have a special guest who will be presenting our program. He name is Olga Renner and was born in 1987 in Uzbekistan. Her family is Volga German on both sides, having lived in the Volga German Republic and in Siberia. Her parents were both raised in Siberia. I think her talk will be most interesting to our chapter.*

*Our annual fund-raiser banquet will be at our Christmas meeting on December*

*11th this year. Dolores Pfannenstiel and Betty Pfannenstiel have been preparing the menu for some time. I think we need to thank these two ladies and their helpers for the meals they prepare for our chapter. Next time you see them, please tell them thank you!*

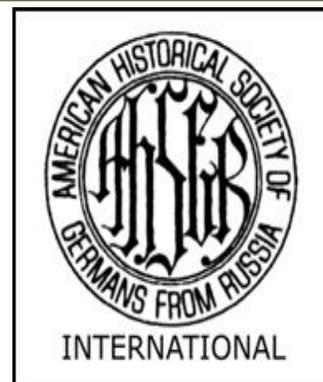
*This year's Kansas Round-Up of Chapters will be hosted by the Golden Wheat Chapter on October 22nd in Wichita, Kansas at the Best Western Motel. We are very fortunate this year to have Tanja Schell as our speaker for programs, one being the banquet. (See page 2).*

*I was not able to attend the 2011 Convention this year in Salt Lake City, Utah, but a few of our chapter members did attend, perhaps they can give us a revue of the events. Our Chapter did receive a number of awards at the convention for financial support and for support of the 'Above and Beyond' AHSGR Membership Recruitment Campaign for which we received a \$150.00 check for our Chapter. We as a Chapter need to continue to recruit new members to keep our organization alive, chapter AND international.*

*October 13 - 15 I will be heading for Headquarters for our Fall Board meetings. A busy, but exciting Fall!!!!*

*One final note, before you know it, it will be December and once again time to pay your dues. To avoid any confusion, PLEASE send your renewals for the local and international dues to Jerry Braun or Juliet Honas before the end of the year. And while you are at it, buy a membership for you children or grandchildren. Let's keep our heritage alive!*

*Sincerely,  
Kevin Rupp, President*



## Years of Persecution and War: Reports from Contemporary Witnesses

Ida Bender, Volk auf dem Weg, July, 2011, pgs. 43-44

*This article is continued from similar reports in Volk auf dem Weg, 06/2011 and before. It contains an excerpt on the events during the 1941 deportation of the Volga Germans, from Ida Bender's recently published book Schoen ist die Jugend - bei frohen Zeiten [Lovely is our Youth - in Good Times]*

*Translation from the original German-language text to American English is provided by Alex Herzog, Boulder Colorado.*

*Ida Bender, nee Hollmann was born on June 18, 1922 in Rothammel in the Volga region. She is a daughter of the well-known author, journalist and man of literature Dominik Hollmann (1899-1990).*

Printed with permission of the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection,  
NDSU Libraries, Fargo, ND

I was nineteen, had just completed a year's studies in foreign languages at an Institute in Leningrad, when World War II entered the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941. How fortunate that I was in Engels to spend vacation with my parents and siblings. City officials were reminding the residents to be watchful because various spies and subversives might surface in Engels. This was cause for astonishment for us: why here, far removed from the nation's borders, where we have no armaments or military operations? What would spies be looking for here?

Then, on August 30, when the newspaper "Nachrichten [The News]" published the August 28 decree by the Soviet government, we Germans understood that those rumors had been spread to justify our deportation. And it now dawned on us why the upper-classmen of the German School Number 10 and the German students of the Pedagogical Institute, along with their teachers, had not been released on summer vacation and had instead been sent out to the kolchoses [collective farms] to help with this year's abundant grain harvest.

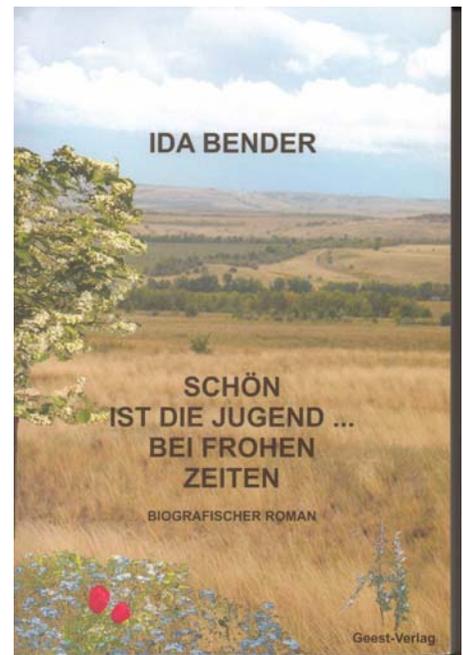
My younger brother and my father had also been ordered to participate in this harvesting effort in the German villages. So it was only mother, I, and my under-age siblings who were at home when the Commandant came to announce the date of our leaving. The transport to take place in three days. Without our father and brother? What a terrible, tense situation! The family torn apart in strange lands!? By order of the city authorities, the buildings of the Pedagogical Institute were to be vacated as quickly as possible to make room for newly arriving naval students.

At the same time the Soviet government had brought sufficient number of armed military personnel to Engels to be able to suppress any potential uprising. We obedient Germans, of course, did not realize this until later, simply because we were loyal citizens of our country, and it never occurred to us that we might contradict the government.

By the second of September, father and some students had returned, and a little later my fifteen-year-old brother had hurried home as well. The Commandant came to our house several times a day to check whether we were prepared for departure, each time repeating, "Don't take many things; you'll have to manage hundreds of kilometers on foot. Take only as much as you can carry yourselves."

On September 4 we, along with an eighty-year-old couple (who had not been allowed to reunite with their children living in a village near Saratov), were taken by truck to railroad tracks outside the city. Numerous Germans, along with their bundles, were already camped out on the grounds adjacent to the tracks. We were free to choose any group we wished to be with.

Finally, during late afternoon, a train arrived. It was pulling nothing but red cargo cars. The Commandant ordered people to enter according to a list he carried. Inside the rail-



cars were simple cots made from rough wood planks, arranged to stretch from one wall to the other. Finally, the two hinged doors were closed from the outside, and a metallic click started all - as if a trap had snapped shut.

Slowly the train began to move. Through a small, square, barred grill high on the side wall of the rail car, one could see that a light rain was coming down. Our mother homeland was quietly weeping for her diligent children, half of whom would soon see their lives end much too early.

The side I was lying on the wooden cot on was aching as I awoke. Many in our rail car were already awake, all plagued by a single thought - toilet! Our cargo cars did not have any such facilities. Finally the train stopped, the wide doors were open from the outside, and two soldiers, armed with revolvers and dagger, posted themselves on both sides of the opening. From far away came the command [announced with poor German pronunciation], "Get out! Take care of your needs!"

The train had stopped on a wide-open steppe without a bush, stone, or even a small mound, or anything else one could go behind to take care of a task that is normally not to be observed by others.

.....Continued on page 5

...continued from page 4

Old and young, women and men, girls and boys - side by side in a long row, like animals, we had to take care of our business under the alert eyes of our guards; and we had to hurry to make sure we finished by the time the command "get back in!" might come. Unbelievable humiliation! This was only the first act of soul-shattering degradation and dishonor of our human dignity. How many more such acts would we experience merely because we were born to German mothers!

For eighteen days the train moved onward to Siberia, and those of us inside the crowded rail car had been without toilet, without water, without a warm meal, with merely a daily ration of 300 grams [ca. ten ounces] of bread and a mug of water per person, and all with our dark thoughts of further humiliation. In the Decree one could read as follows "...The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR has found it necessary to resettle the entire German population residing in the Volga *rayons* [districts] to other *rayons*, that is, in a way such that those being resettled there are to be assigned land and be given government assistance." in reality, of course, we were completely dispossessed and treated like criminals, even though we were not aware of any blame.

We arrived in a small village called Miroslovka in the Tyuchet Rayon of the Krasnoyarsk region. There we found that oats had not been cut, that potatoes and beets and cabbage had not yet been harvested, and that local Russian collective workers were eager for help from diligent, helpful hands. All the while, however, they treated us with caution: "Although you don't have horns on your heads, and many of you even speak Russian, you are still our enemies, Fascists."

During January of 1942, the German men were inducted into the so-called Tru-Army [essentially a military-style slave labor troop created specifically for the resettled Germans [whom the Soviets called the "mobilized" Germans - Tr.]. This included anyone from fifteen to sixty years of age, without any selection criteria or medical control, not even excluding heart patients or those recently operated. Soon we received triangular

letters containing only this brief information: "I am doing no worse than all the others, don't worry about me." The letters were censored. But by certain code words agreed on ahead of time, families knew how to read the news, more like this way: "We are kept like criminals, behind barbed-wire fences and guard towers." "Oh God," the women moaned, "for what reason?"

During subsequent months, death took away many of those in the work camps. Reinforcements were taken - now it was the women's turn. On June 22, 1942 my mother, I, and my by then 16-year-old brother were taken into a forced-labor camp. We were transported to the northern Yennisey [River] area. There I spent even years felling trees in the Siberian Taiga. Barefoot, also towing cargo barges along the Yennisey banks and, at times, again barefoot, pulling a fishing net 130 meters in length [ca.425 feet], long enough for the sand on the banks to freeze as hard as stone

Germans were not allowed to wear occupational clothes or uniforms. "If you die, there will be one less Fascist," we were told by our overseers. Also, "You Germans need to compensate for what Hitler has destroyed in Russia." Entirely without any rights, for seven years we German girls and women spent our difficult existence near the North Polar Circle .

What happened next? There followed years of further humiliation under military-style surveillance. And after that? Disappointment and emigration to the homeland of our ancestors. About these and other events of my life, and the lives of the German Russian ethnic group, please consult the stories in my book *Schoen ist die Jugend...bei frohen Zeiten*.



Ida Bender

## Presentation Explores German Heritage of Kansas

Wichita - The Golden Wheat Chapter of AHSGR will host *The German Heritage of Kansas*, a presentation and discussion by William D. Keel on 22 October, 2011 at 11:00 AM at The Best Western Motel, 915 East 53<sup>rd</sup> Street North, Wichita KS 67219 . Members of the community are invited to attend the presentation. Contact the Chapter President, Karen Penner, at 316-283-3129 for more information. The program is made possible by the Kansas Humanities Council. The presentation is a featured part of the program for the Kansas Round Up of Chapters with members from the Wichita, Hays, Topeka, Salina and other Kansas chapters attending,

More than a third of Kansas residents are of German ancestry. Keel's presentation explores the major German immigrant groups and their impact on Kansas agriculture, education, and Midwestern culture.

William D. Keel is professor of German and chair of the Department of Germanic Languages and Literature at the University of Kansas. His research interest is German settlement dialects in Kansas and he is the editor of the *Yearbook of German-American Studies*.

"Kansans claim German as the largest ancestry, according to the U.S. Census." Shared Keel. "Over 25 percent of Kansans have German roots."

*German Heritage of Kansas* is part of the Kansas Humanities Council's Kansas 150 Speakers Bureau commemorating the Kansas sesquicentennial. The special edition Speakers Bureau features presentations and discussions about Kansas and what it means to be a Kansan over time and across generations.

The Kansas Humanities Council conducts and supports community-based programs, serves as a financial resource through an active grant-making program, and encourages Kansans to participate in their communities. For more information about KHC programs contact the Kansas Humanities Council at 785/357-0359 or visit online at [www.kansashumanities.org](http://www.kansashumanities.org).

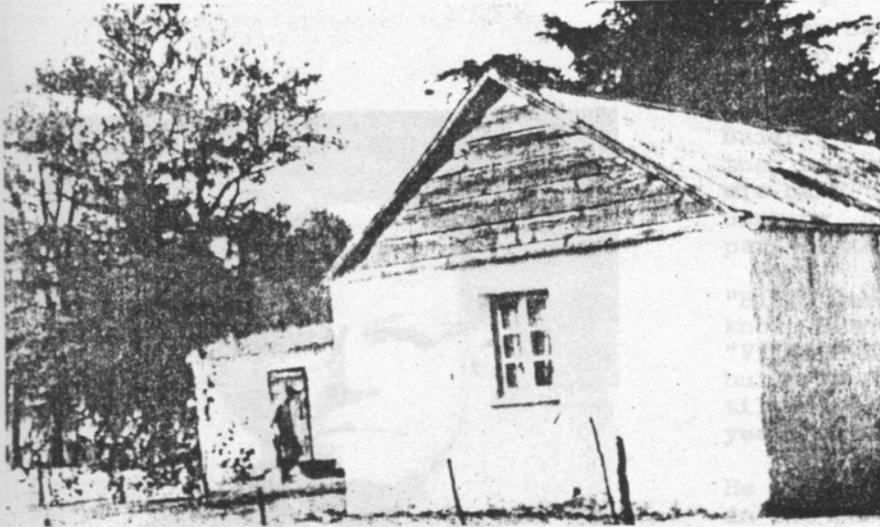
For more information about *German Heritage of Kansas* in Wichita contact the President of the Golden Wheat Chapter of AHSGR at 316-283-3129.

## GERMAN-VOLGA TRADITIONS - Lawrence Weigel

Lawrence Weigel wrote over 200 articles on the German-Volga Traditions that were printed in the Ellis County Star Newspaper from 1972-1976. Upon the death of Lawrence Weigel in 2005, his family gave the Sunflower Chapter of AHSGR of Hays permission to once again print these articles for our newsletter and to one day reprint a book of these interesting articles.

### GERMANS FROM RUSSIA IN SOUTH AMERICA

By: Lawrence Weigel



Picture of a house of a family of Germans from Russia, in the province of Buenos Aires, South America. Taken from the excellent book by Iris Barbara Graefe entitled "Zur Volkskunde der Russlanddeutschen in Argentinien".

In the 1870's the government of South America made attempts to influence Europeans to come to that land and settle the uninhabited regions. At the same time, Professor Stelling, who was born in Calif. and as an adult came to Russia to teach history, geography in the seminary in Saratow, told his students about the climate, the opportunities and the vast acreage of land available in both North and South America. The students told of what they heard from the professor in their native villages. (1)

Possibly because of this, two families from Rothammel on the Bergseite decided to migrate to Brazil and seek their fortunes. Apparently the report from these two families must have been favorable, because many more colonists from the Volga chose to go to Brazil

instead of North America. Henry Rohr and Ig Sauer of Antonino, Kansas, sing a song entitled "Die Reiss die war erzogen". This song tells the story of a group who thought they were sailing to Brazil, but found they had been deceived. The ship was heading north toward North America. They were terribly upset when they discovered this, and became concerned what would happen to them. Because groups of immigrants from the Volga and other areas in Russia went to both North and South America, some confusion at the embarkation ports must have existed. We know that later on some of the ships which were headed for Brazil went to Argentina, because the ships owners were paid by that government. (1)

In 1876 a group of scouts which included Gottfried Meier of Graf sailed for Brazil to study the land and the possibilities of migrating there. Nicholas Schamne who was one of the group of scouts who had come to North America in 1874, also travelled at his own expense with this group to Brazil. Nicholas died before he could come to America, but his son Gottfried Schamne came to Victoria, Kansas. (The scout Nicholas, was my great-grandmother's brother).

Even before these men returned to Russia in 1876, a large group of Germans took off for Rio de Janeiro in that year. Conditions in Brazil were not too good however, and so many decided to move to another area in South America, namely Argentina. (1)

(1) "From Catherine to Khrushchev" - The Story of Russia's Germans, by Adam Giesinger, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Next week we will tell how Andreas Basgall and others traveled to Argentina.

## CHAPTER DRAWING

The drawing will be held at the American Society of German's from Russia - Sunflower Chapter Meeting on October 9, 2011, Munjor Parish Hall. You do not need to be present to win. For those of you who are not members, contact a Chapter Member on how to join us, or pick up a membership application from a members. Tickets are 1 - \$1.00, 6 for \$5.00 or 12 for 10.00

Cash prizes of: 1st - \$100.00, 2nd - \$75.00, 3rd - \$50.00, 4th - \$25.00. Tickets may be sent to our treasurer: Jerry Braun, 2223 Felten Drive, Hays, Ks. or dropped off at any chapter event in September or the October 9th meeting in Munjor, Kansas.

**A.H.S.G.R. Sunflower Chapter Raffle**  
drawing October 9, 2011  
at the Chapter Meeting  
Munjor Parish Hall

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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drawing October 9, 2011  
at the Chapter Meeting  
Munjor Parish Hall

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

1 - \$1.00, 6 - \$5.00, 13 - \$10.00



### **Clues: South American Version**

At the 2010 International AHSGR Convention in Lincoln, Nebraska, a variation of our *AHSGR Clues*, the South American version of our *Clues* was introduced: An Index of Names of German Russians to Argentina. The document was given to AHSGR Headquarters to be housed in the library. It was brought to the convention by Isabel Kessler, the President of the Argentina Association of Descendants of the Volga Germans (A.A.D.A.V.) It is of a completely different format than our *AHSGR Clues*.

It consists of an estimated 75 pages with the names of German Russian families that people in South America are researching. The names of a family being researched is given first, and other information listed varies. It usually include names of ancestors, from where they came in Russia, and/or the year the family immigrated. Dates of immigration vary from the nineteenth century, or early in the twentieth century, to later. This first page features the name and email address of the person researching the named family. It invites the reader to contact the submitter if additional information is known about the given family. Following page(s) will be email documentation of information the researcher has received. The entire document is in Spanish.

Many of the names are familiar German Russian names in our history. A sampling of these names (not inclusive) are Bauer, Bernhardt, Buchhammer, Dietrich, Dietz, Fuchs, Schimpf, Gruenewald, Haberkorn, Heil, Klein, Konrad, Meyer, Preiss, Reichel, Reinhardt, Rieb, Schmidt, Schneider, Schonhhals, Uhrich, Wagner, Weht, and many others.

Most of the first page of each researcher's submission was translated by Jan Siebert, and an index was transcribed and placed in the front of the South American *Clues*.

At the present time, the AHSGR Genealogy Committee has no plans to include the South American version in future issues of the *AHSGR Clues*, partly because of the different format, and also because it is in the Spanish language. At a later time when the Genealogy Committee contemplates the next issue of *Clues*, we will evaluate the two publications to see if it would be helpful and if there was a way to combine them.

Karen Suderman Penner  
Chair, Genealogy Committee of AHSGR

## SUNFLOWER CHAPTER LIBRARY



JUST ADDED TO OUR  
LIBRARY.....

- A Double Jubilee Celebration: Bishop Firmin Schmidt
- DVD - The Immigrant Woman
- Holy Cross Parish Family Register - R. Larson
- Emmeram - F. Windholz
- Genealogy Collection of Parishes from Catherine and Severin, Kansas
- Exodus to Freedom 1763 - 1976
- Our Ancestors Quest for Freedom Realized in Schoenchen, Kansas
- The Cross in the Valley - Fr. John Poell
- Cathedral of the Plains - St. Fidelis Church
- Members of St. Mary's Parish - Gorham, Ks.
- Towers of Faith and Courage
- At Home in Ellis County - 2 Vol. Set
- VHS - Prairie Crosses, Prairie Voices & Iron Crosses of the Great Plains
- VHS - Recipes from Grandma's Kitchen, Vol. 1
- VHS - Schmeckfest: Food Traditions of the Germans from Russia.
- Cookbooks: Des Schmecht Goot, Kuche Kochen, Home Made Cooking, Sei Unser Gast, Das Essen Unsrer Leute

Thank you to Alexia Brungardt (Sam Brungardt) for donating these books to our library. (not all are listed at this time)

### Genealogy

- The genealogy book from Victoria, Kansas, "**Die Herzoger**" has been updated and is available from the Ellis County Historical Society.
- **Louis 1857 Census** is now available. Contact Kevin Rupp for more information.
- "**The Right Place at the Right Time: The Volga-Germans of Michigan's Thumb**" by Bill Pickelhaupt is available from AHSGR.

*The Fox Pavilion*  
and  
*Sunflower Chapter of the American Society of Germans from Russia*  
Presents:

## **“Eine Hochzeit in Ellis County - 1881”**

*A video of a traditional Volga-German Wedding in 1881*  
and  
*A Traditional Volga-German Buffet*



*September 16, 2011*  
*6:00 p.m. Buffet - 7:30 p.m. Video*  
*Tickets \$15.00 per person*

*A cash bar will be provided*

**Buffet Includes:**

Galushkis  
Wedding Roast Beef  
Creamed Potatoes and Dumplings  
Chicken and Noodles  
Green Beans/Corn  
German Chocolate Cake  
Tea/Coffee

**Tickets available by calling:**

Pam Burgardt  
Bakery Shop & Catering  
785-625-9508  
785-650-4016

**Tickets available by calling:**

St. Joseph Parish Service Center  
625-7356 or  
Kevin Rupp - 785-656-0329  
Juliet Honas - 785-623-0783

# Letters from Russia to Ellis County

by Kevin Rupp

*This letter was written in Louis, Russia and addressed Mr. Joseph Graf, Victoria,, Ellis County, Kansas.*



Katherine "Katarina" Graf (Groff) the spouse of Johannes Graf (Groff) in front of her home in Hays, Kansas, 1964.

May 16, 1907

Now a nice letter from Johannes and Katarina Graf and our two children, to you Uncle Joseph and Aunt, and my cousin Peter, his wife and eight children. We would be pleased if our letter finds you in good health. We thank the dear Lord that we are still wonderfully healthy and this health we also wish for you from our hearts as we do for ourselves.

We want you to know that we safely received your letter and saw from it that you are all still in good health and that pleases us.

You wanted to know whether or not you still had brothers and sisters in Russia. Maria and Katarina and Joseph and Nikolaus Bollig and his wife, Anton Paul and his wife Margaretha Neif, Paulina, Barbara , Margaretha and their husbands are all still in good health.

I want you to know that there is nothing more here in Russia to live for, nothing more than poverty, strife and greed and I think that here in the south it is especially bad. There is always some controversy going on and when the Vorsteher cannot solve it he calls a short recess to keep from pulling his hair out. Everyone says that everything that poverty has brought us will be put behind us. You will certainly be happy to hear who our Vorsteher is. He is Joseph Frank. His "beiname" is Hirschen Mueller and your Joseph knows him.

And now another nice greeting from Johannes Graf to you, my dear cousin. I felt very bad not having received any letters from you for so long a time and when your letter arrived I was very happy that you had remembered us. Live well until that joyous reunion with all our loved ones. Please write soon.

Now a greeting from Jakob and Susanne (Daut?) and their children and children's children to you Uncle Joseph and Aunt. We will be pleased if this letter finds you in good health. We have the dear Lord to thank because we are still in good health and wish the same for you. We want to inform you that our mother is still living but still remains ill and Peter and his people are also still healthy. We received your letter and saw from it that you were all wonderfully healthy and that things were going well for you. I want you to write more. As an Uncle and nieces and nephews you should do this and tell us if we are still able to come over there or not. Here the discussions have begun again about finding a new area to live and if it is so good over there be so good as to grant my wish that you write about it.

Now you would probably like some bits of new about how things are going for us. Things are going poorly. For two years now the Steppe has yielded little seed for bread. It is bad and we still receive a lot from Red Cross donations. Last fall in Louis four cooked cows were distributed. Another minister came to us and because he said he would take care of us we lent him two Kopeks from our "Seele Geld" (Soul Money) and he took the money and left. We had lent him the money until spring and when he returned he had brought us nothing and we were also unable to get our money back.

Now a greeting from my cousin Joseph and his wife and children. I am pleased that you are all still well. I Thank God that we are still healthy and wish the same for you. Now be again greeted and kissed until our happy reunion, please write soon.

*Johannes and Katarina Graf, Groff as the name was spelled over here, are the grandparents of Francis "Hammie" Rupp and the great-grandparents of Kevin Rupp. The two children that Johannes talks about in the beginning are their first two children of Johannes and Katarina who are Marie and Jacob. Rosa, the mother of Francis "Hammie" Rupp, would be born in December in 1907. The family left Louis, Russia on May 8, 1909 on the S.S. Prinzess Alice in Bremen, Germany and arrived at Ellis Island on May 18, 1909.*



Sunflower Chapter  
Hays, KS

## 2012 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)

January 1 - March 31: \$60.00 (AHSGR & Local)

April 1 - June 30: \$45.00 (AHSGR & Local)

July 1 - September 30: \$30.00 (AHSGR & Local)

October 1 - December 31: \$15.00 (AHSGR & Local)

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

\_\_\_\_\_ \$10.00 Local Dues Only (My 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:

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 \_\_\_\_\_ 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: \_\_\_\_\_

Send Membership (Local & AHSGR) Payment to:

**Sunflower Chapter**

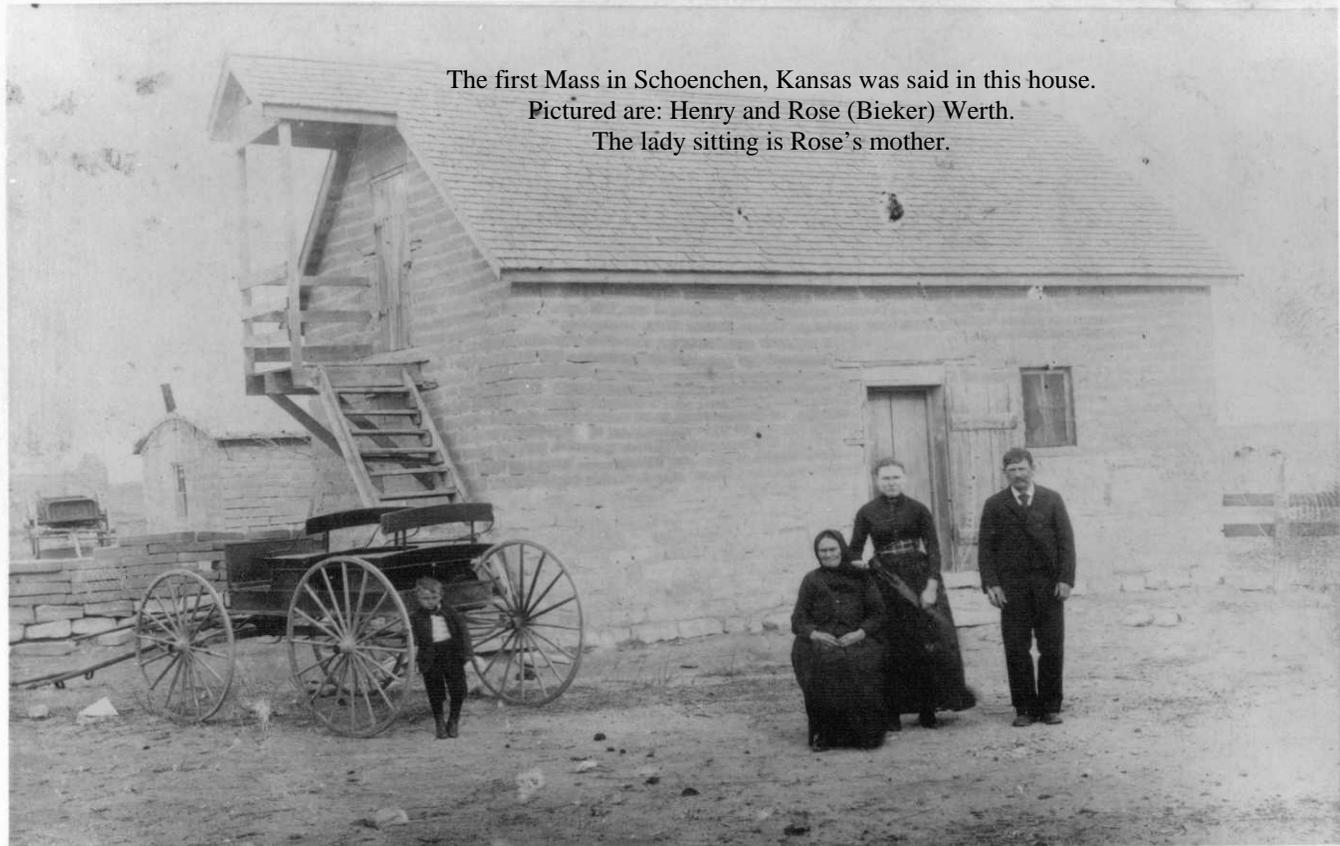
**Juliet Honas, Membership Chair**

**1206 Woodbury Str.**

**Ellis, Ks. 67637**

prairieflower@hotmail.com

## UNSERE LEUTE IM BILD



### SUNFLOWER CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

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Hays, Ks. 67601

[volgagerman@ruraltel.net](mailto:volgagerman@ruraltel.net)

[www.sunflowerchapterofahsgr.net](http://www.sunflowerchapterofahsgr.net)

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