

A black recycling symbol consisting of three chasing arrows forming a triangle.

----- Lincoln Chapter Newsletter - Issue XI November, 1994

Chapter Officers

[illegible]

6:00 P.M. Gateway Manor

The following people helped prepare and serve the food (plus clean up the kitchen):

no longer 2nd ed. 1980
1st ed. 1980

Ed and Mary Wunder, Esther Stuert, John, Ardith and John Jr. Stuert, Helen and Mary Schwartz, Bud Dietrich, Harry Kolb, Phil Schenkel, Larry and Norma Schenkel, Don Burbach, Phil and Irene Dinges, Dale Dinges, Jake Sinner, Norma Somerheiser, Hermann and Helen Reifschneider, John Schneider, Hal Bauer, Ann Reitz, Ann Meier, Frances Amen, Bill and Elsa Amen, Al and Ruth Kruse, Ed and Gladys Herstein, Henry and Esther Heckman.

UNSERE LEUTE

GEBURTSTAG (HAPPY BIRTHDAY)

<u>November 14 - Tom Mandeville</u>	<u>December 1 - Hilde Schwabauer</u>
<u>November 17 - Henry Niederhaus</u>	<u>December 3 - Marie Rejka</u>
<u>November 19 - Dorothy Sinner</u>	<u>December 5 - Wilbur Amen</u>
<u>November 19 - Harold Heidenreich</u>	<u>December 6 - Katherine Strasheim</u>
<u>November 21 - Adam Schwindt</u>	<u>December 8 - Dorothy Gruenemeier</u>
<u>November 23 - Elsa Amen</u>	<u>December 11 - Ruth Kruse</u>
<u>November 24 - Ann Reitz</u>	<u>December 12 - Alex Schwabauer</u>
<u>November 27 - Marjorie Nagel</u>	<u>December 14 - Dennis Fiedler</u>
<u>November 27 - Linda Wunder</u>	<u>December 14 - Edward Deines</u>
<u>November 27 - Richard Pearce</u>	<u>December 23 - Rose Mandeville</u>
<u>November 27 - Ardith Stuert</u>	<u>December 23 - Donald Wunder</u>

DER JARSTAG (HAPPY ANNIVERSARY)

A Special 43rd Anniversary To:

November 23rd - Norma Jean and Richard Stauffer

A Special 47th Anniversary to:

Esther and Melvin Rohleder

Don't forget to send in your names for inclusion of the birthdays and anniversary's each month!

Name _____ Birth Date _____
Spouse _____ Birth Date _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip Code _____

Name _____
Your Wedding Anniversary _____
Special Occasions such as:
A Wedding Anniversary (such as a 25th or 30th) Or a "Remembrance To A Loved One" _____

Send your requests to: Hugh Dobler 3747 Woods Ave. Lincoln, Ne. 68510

+++++

At the 1994 Broda Dinner, Jo Ann Kuhr related her experiences about her trip to Russia this past fall. Here is a full transcript of her adventures:

When Dr. Johann Windholz (featured speaker at the 25th Jubilee Convention held in Lincoln this past June, 1994) attended our convention, he invited me to attend an International Festival of German Culture on the Volga. This was sponsored by the Landsmannschaft der Wolgadeutschen in Saratov, Russia.

I left Lincoln August 31 and returned on September 22. Leona Pfeifer, AHSGR Board member from Kansas, was also a guest on the festival ship. We boarded the ship in Samara on September 4 and left it in Saratov on September 11.

The trip was terrific! Definitely a highlight of my life! Leona and I had a most enjoyable stay in Russia. We were well looked after by Wally Medvedeva (another speaker at the Convention in June) and Johann (and I was well looked after during my week in Engels/Saratov by the people from the Landsmannschaft der Wolgadeutschen.).

We soon discovered that the most important thing to take along to Russia was patience and a good sense of humor. The Russians do things differently, and the Germans have lived there so long that the vast majority of them have the same attitudes. It was very difficult to obtain from them answers to, "when are we going to do what?" Their schedules vary from day to day. One time they would tell us one thing, the next hour or day something else.

On board the ship there were entertainers of all sorts; German folklore singers, dancers, actors, artists who performed German classical music; bass, baritone, and contralto soloists, and an excellent female singing quartet. We especially enjoyed visiting Arthur Jordan (one of the entertainers from the German colony of Hussenbach) who told excellent jokes in dialect, and Irene Stauch, a seventy year old yodeler, who was a mining engineer. There were also representatives from the German government, various German-language newspapers, and some television reporters aboard.

The gala concerts at the cities of Samara, Ulyanovsk, Volgograd and Saratov were fantastic, superb! Each concert lasted 2 1/2 to 3 hours with one intermission of about 20 or 30 minutes. Yet everything moved so quickly and smoothly that it didn't seem that long. In order to be politically correct, each concert included folklore groups of the various ethnic populations of the area. Thus we also heard and saw Russian, Kazakh, Kirghiz, Tatar, and Chuvash performers - also others I could not identify.

During the day at each of the four places the concerts were given, groups of entertainers from the ship would go to various outlying German settlements. From Ulyanovsk we went to a "container settlement" ("container settlements" are the homes the German government is building to rehabilitate those German Russians, who had been sent to the Asian Republics during the Stalin regime) called Bagdashkino. There were about sixty German families settling there from the Asiatic Republics. Most of them live in simple trailers or barracks. Eleven lucky families live in new houses, but they just can't build houses fast enough. The concert was held outside the school and included several groups of students performing as well as the ship's entertainers. They also fed us there, beginning with chicken noodle soup, kraut und brei, and ending with Riwakuiche. We spent some time talking to the director of the settlement. Two ladies from a neighboring settlement attached themselves to us. I have a recording of them singing folksongs- including "Gott ist die Liebe".

At Volgograd we went by bus to Sarepta. There is an excellent museum there, and they were trying to redevelop the area as a "living history" settlement. It is surrounded by the outskirts of Volgograd. The concert here was in the former church. All the doors and windows have been shortened or blocked off, and they are trying to relocate them. You cannot see where the windows have been from the outside, but they are very obvious from the inside. From Saratov we made an excursion to Katharinenstadt, now Marks. There was first a concert in the Lutheran Church, which had been used as a movie house. A group of Russian-German ladies with headscarves were sitting on the only bench in the building, at the back of the church. When it was announced that Isolde Schoenknecht, one of the entertainers who sang classical music, was going to sing a prayer, they all stood up immediately and remained standing until the song was over. Isolde's mother had been born in Katherinenstadt, and she dedicated her songs to her mother. It was an emotional experience for her and for us. From the church we went to the House of Culture for another concert comprised of our entertainers and local groups.

Leona and I left the ship after the closing concert in Saratov. When we came down the gang plank, we were serenaded by an ensemble called Sonnenschein from Tyumen Siberia. They sang to us for about a half hour before we finally left. We had become particularly close to this group, and it was difficult to leave them.

Actually we stayed in Engels, in an apartment rented by the Landsmannschaft der Wolgadeutschen (Leona and Wally left Engels on September 13 to return to Moscow; Leona for home, Wally to stay in Moscow). In Engels we had three meals a day, nice rooms, bath, toilet, laundry and ironing facilities. It was a quiet location and within walking distance to the Engels archives. When I went to the Saratov archives I had to wait for a car from the Landsmannschaft and my translator. Leona and Wally also went to the Engels archives. Wally and Mrs. Yerina (the archivist from Engels) have known each other for many years. Yerina made arrangements for Leona to go to one of her ancestral villages, Ober-Monjou. She even met there an older man who remembered the schoolmaster, Schumacher.

My visits at the archives were enlightening, pleasant, and yet very discouraging. The Engels archive is in such a sad state that it makes one want to cry. Their temperature control consisted of opening a door at the top of the building for air flow. Yerina brought out a map of Ober-Monjou which I thought was going to break apart as she opened it. (It did not!) There is a tremendous amount of material there, and she has done the best she could to preserve it. Only recently has she acquired a photocopy machine. She has no microfilm camera nor microfilm readers. The research room consists of one table about the size of the desk this computer is sitting on. I asked to see a specific file from a specific collection. When she found out where I had obtained that information, she was furious! On the other hand; others have asked to see something but since they could not give her the collection or file number, she couldn't find it for them.

The Saratov archives is not quite so bad. They have had a photocopy machine for some time!. They also have microfilm cameras, but they are very old, and not very good. The one used for microfilming newspapers had broken down. Their research room has several tables and two microfilm readers. Yet some of their methods are still antiquated. They were rebinding files by hand-sewing them with string. They are also having trouble

with electricity, which went out for about twenty minutes while I was there. They do seem to have better climate control in the stacks.

Neither archivist would allow me to write down lists of names for the material I asked to see. I asked Mrs. Yerina for a copy of the first three pages of a document, and she said, "No," that she did not want to be accused of selling a document to a foreigner.

Neither archive allows list of names to be written down; they want only research on a specific name or names. When they make a photocopy of a document, they blank out anything that does not refer to that specific name. They don't seem to be allowing Dr. Pleve or Soshnikov (the RAGAS connection)(both men are genealogical researchers living in Russia) to make lists anymore either. Soshnikov was there at the same time as I was, and he also was not allowed to write out lists. Both archivists think they can make more money by fulfilling individual requests. However, they don't know how we can get the money to them. They are also not consistent in the answers to my question (repeated on different days), "How should we channel these requests to you?" It was very frustrating!

My general impression of Russia is that it is a very beautiful country with many beautiful people! Russian (and Russian German) hospitality cannot be beat. It is almost embarrassing how hospitable they are. It is a country rich in natural resources, but with many poor people. The contrast between the very rich (few) and the rest of the people (especially the very poor) is quite obvious. I did not find the country as dirty as I had expected, yet Leona found it very dirty. It is a drab country. The public rest rooms are something else! On the other hand, I have seen dirtier public restrooms with more liter in one of our local stores! Every city has many green spots that could be quite beautiful, yet there is no money to hire caretakers of public parks. The people have no incentive to do it themselves. This is undoubtedly a result of seventy years of being told what to do and being punished for being able to think or to have any initiative. We frequently heard of people who had not been paid for months. When we asked how they can eat and live, the only answer was a shrug of the shoulders. It is very expensive to live in Russia, if you have only a Russian salary. For example: Wally's monthly salary is 104,000 rubles. When she starts receiving her pension soon, it will be 35,000 rubles a month. She will be able to draw both her salary and her pension. While we were in Engels, she bought a pair of winter shoes for 47,000 rubles. That constituted 44 percent of her monthly salary. If all she had were a pension, that would be 134 percent of a monthly income. Some other prices I calculated based on her present salary/pension only are: bath towel, 11,000 to 25,000 rubles; 12-23%/31-71%; soap, 2,050 rubles: 2%/5.8%; small chicken, 3 - 5000 rubles; 2-5%/9-14%. I remained in Engels until September 18. While there I visited the archives in Saratov and Engels, the home of Dr. Pleve, the Landsmannschaft der Wolgadeutschen, the Peace Corps, and a new German settlement outside Saratov, Bagayevka. We did make one rather significant observation during the ship cruise. In America, the people speak of Volga Germans culture and customs, or Black Sea German culture and customs. In Russia people talked about GERMAN culture and customs. They emphasized what we call German-German folksongs, dances, as much as we do Russian-German folksongs and dances. Their emphasis is more what the culture of their ancestors was in Germany, while the American Russian German places the emphasis on the culture of their German ancestors in Russia.

**Don't forget the Annual Christmas Song Fest
December 4, 1994
2:00 P.M.
Ebenezer Church of Christ
8th and "B" St.
Serving Christmas Cookies and Coffee
Treating you to German (and some English) Carols**

**American Historical Society
of Germans From Russia
631 D Street
Lincoln, Nebraska 68502-1199**

FORWARDING AND RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

**NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
LINCOLN, NE
PERMIT NO. 69**

**Mr. & Mrs. Richard Hedges
100 NW 126th
Lincoln NE 68528**