

# THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF GERMANS FROM RUSSIA

## Lincoln Chapter

Volume III

November 1995

Issue XI

### Chapter Officers

President - Larry Schenkel

Secretary - Ann Reitz

Corresponding Secretary - Gladys Herstein

Program Chairman - Dale Dinges

1st Vice President - Dale Dinges

2nd Vice President - John Stuertz

Treasurer - Lois Sorensen

Historian - Delores Schwartz

Membership Chairman - John Stuertz

Genealogy Chairman - Shirley Robertson

Newsletter - Hugh Dobler

Publicity - Dale Dinges - John Stuertz

### Scheduled Coming Events

**November 3, 1995 Annual Broda Dinner with Speaker**

5:30 P.M. Family Style Dinner

WSI HALL 1430 N. 10th St.

**(BE AWARE THAT TIME FOR SERVING HAS BEEN CHANGED. DINNER IS AT 5:30 P.M.. IT IS A SIT DOWN, FAMILY STYLED DINNER!)**

**November 13, 1995 AHSGR Board Meeting**

7:00 P.M. Conference Room

AHSGR Headquarters Building

**December 3, 1995 Christmas Sing Fest**

2 P.M.

Zion United Church of Christ

9th and "D" St.

**December 12, 1995 LLCGS (Lincoln Lancaster County Genealogical Society)**

7:00 P.M.

Dick Administration Building (Lower Level) Union College Campus

**December 16, 1995 PAF-LUG (Personal Ancestral File-Lincoln User's Group)**

7:00 P.M.

Family Service Center 3100 Old Cheney Road

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**December 18, 1995 AHSGR Board Meeting and Dinner**

7:00 P.M.

Garden Cafe 70th and "A" St.

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**Editor's Notes:** Be sure that you are aware of the time change for the Broda Dinner, which will be served at the WSI Hall on November 3. There has been a change made in the way the meal will be served. This will be a family style dinner, with all attendees seated and the food is passed to you. There is only one time... 5:30 P.M.

**From the Executive Director:** Headquarters is extremely busy with video refunds and donations. The 1996 renewal information will be mailed out shortly, and this requires additional time. We need help typing, stuffing, and affixing labels on envelopes. If you have a couple of hours you can volunteer, please call Kay at headquarters at 402/474-3363. Thanks!

The Board of Directors, Board of Trustees, and I would like to thank those people who made the Dedication and Open house of the *Jake Sinner Headquarter's Building* a Success. Special thanks to Dale Dinges, Hermann Reifschneider, John Schneider, Delores Schwartz, and Norma Somerheiser, who generously donated their time to cleaning the Heritage Center Buildings. They looked great! Harold Bauer, "Lefty" Grenemeier, Hermann Reifschneider, Larry and Norma Schenkel,

John Schleicher, Delores Schwartz, Norma Somerheiser, and Lois Sorensen, for spending part of their Sunday to provide the manpower necessary for the Open House. Thanks!

On your next visit to headquarters please take a few minutes to view the *Jake Sinner Headquarters' Building* plaque. Jake donated his own time to hang it for AHSGR. Thanks Jake! You will also want to see the many changes John Schleicher has made. He has been busy rearranging displays and pictures in the Headquarters Building, as well as, the Heritage Center buildings. These changes comply with the 1994 CAP Grant recommendations and suggestions.

Jake also has a new title - Admiral Jake Sinner. Governor Ben Nelson (who could not attend the ceremony) awarded Jake with the title and a certificate proclaiming Jake as Admiral in the Nebraska Navy.

The Foundation Board of Trustees voted unanimously, at their recent board meeting, to name the board room located in the lower level of the Headquarter's Building, the *Ruth M. Amen Board Room*. Ruth's picture, plaque, and biography will be displayed on the outer wall of the room. Congratulations Ruth!

Ed and Dorothy Schwartzkopf recently donated approximately one-fourth acre of land located at Southwest First and "L" Street to the City of Lincoln. A Community Development Block Grant enabled the city and the South Salt Creek Community Organization to equip the park. *Schwartzkopf Park* was dedicated October 17, 1995. This is just another example of the Schwartzkopf's generously to the community, as well as, AHSGR.

If you haven't had the opportunity to travel to the Treasures of the Czars exhibit in Topeka, Kansas, you should make plans now. Some of the members of the International Board of Directors, Board of Trustees, Chapter members, guests, and I made the trip on October 4, 1995. Word can't describe the beauty of the many item of display. Don't miss this unique opportunity!

Thanks to all the Lincoln Chapter members who help make Headquarters a success.  
Enjoy the Fall weather.

Kathy Schultz

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**UNSURE LEUTE**  
**DER JAHRSTAG (**  
**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY**

Congratulations to:

- December 19, 1943 Ruth Irene and Conrad Giebelhaus
- December 27, 1947 Esther and Melvin Rohleder
- December 31, 1934 Clara and Edward Deines

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**GEBURTSAG**  
**(HAPPY BIRTHDAY)**

- |                                |                                |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| December 1 Hilde Schwabauer    | December 2 Katherine Strasheim |
| December 3 Marie Rejka         | December 4 Henry H. Grasmick   |
| December 5 Wilbur Amen         | December 7 Raymond Becker      |
| December 9 Dorothy Gruenemeier | December 11 Ruth Kruse         |
| December 14 Edward Deines      | December 14 Dennis Fiedler     |
| December 15 Alex Schwabauer    | December 18 Irwin Ulmer        |
| December 23 Gerald Schleich    | December 26 Gerald Grauer      |
| December 29 Rose Mandeville    | December 31 Darlene Bauer      |

December 31 Clara Deines

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

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

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Continuing our thumb nail sketch of persons with members of The American Historical Society of Germans from Russia  
(We have finished with sketches of Staff Personnel, and are continuing with local members and also members of the International Board of AHSGR)

## DELORES SCHWARTZ

Delores Schwartz was born October 20, 1931, in Lincoln, Nebraska to Jacob and Katherine Giebelhaus. From the age of three, her family lived in Havelock ( a suburb of Lincoln). She graduated from Lincoln Northeast High School.

Shortly afterwards she was married. From this union two children were born, Terry, born March 12, 1951 and Debra, born March 17, 1952.

Terry was married just 5 months in 1975 when he was severely burned in an auto accident and passed away from his wounds.

Debra has been married twice. From the first marriage she has one son, Dan. Now age 25 Her second marriage was to Mike Jiskra. They have two children, Toby age 9 and Cami, age 6.

According to Delores, " I, then married one of my own kind", when she married Donald Schwartz on September 22, 1956. They have one child Eric, who was born May 20, 1958. Eric has one son, Corey age 10.

For years, Delores has been interested in genealogy.

First she had grandmother Giebelhaus, who was very knowledgeable about events in Norka, on the Volga in Russia. This lady was 104 when she passed on.

Secondly, Delores mother also had some personal experiences with stories.

The interesting tales told by these two women intrigued Delores. While doing some researching on her family at the Nebraska Historical Society's Museum, she was given the name of William Urbach, who was a professor in Camden, New Jersey. He had written several articles for the Nebraska State Historical Museum about Germans from Russia.

In his correspondence with Delores, he mentioned that hoped that some day there would be an organization that would collect and preserve information about the Germans from Russia. She wrote back that if that ever that should happen, she wanted to become a member.

A couple of years passed, when a letter came from David Miller ( the original person, who was largely responsible for the creation of the Society) from Greeley, Colorado, telling her that an organization was being formed. Included were names of people who were interested in the creation which included William Urbach, now living in Colorado. She sent in her dues.

The following year in March, she and her mother took a train to Denver, to a membership meeting and also met with the existing board. This was the first time she met Ruth Amen, who was at that meeting. David Miller, one of the original men who organized AHSGR, suggested in Ruth and Delores presence, that it might be a good time to start a chapter in Lincoln. With Ruth's ability to recruit, and Delores help with phone calls, helping with the, letters that were sent out to prospective members. Thus the first chapter for AHSGR was organized.( amusingly Delores said, " I think the only one I recruited was Ralph Giebelhaus, my cousin". In the early years of AHSGR, Delores served on the International Board for three years.

In regard to the stories she had heard from her mother, one in particular, was the story about an uncle and aunt (whose last name was Kaiser) of Delores' mother, who came to the United States, but in 1914, decided to return to Russia, with his wife and 5 children, 3 girls and 2 boys. ( In her research, she had discovered that the two boys had been baptized in the local church, the youngest one in 1914).

In 1914, after their arrival in Russia, the husband was drafted into the Army, and was never heard from again. At first letters were written, and money, plus food was sent over to the family, but after

receiving a letter asking them not to send any more money, as it was automatically removed from the letters, all communication ceased. Over the years, while Delores worked at AHSGR letters were sent to Russia, trying to locate the family, but to no avail.

Periodically, Jo Ann ,Kuhr, has sent letters to German Russian Societies for Delores in both Russia and Germany but nothing was heard from them.

About a year ago, a local attorney, John Klein, who has been sponsoring trips to Russia, was given a letter in Russia to take to Germany. This letter was delivered and the recipient, in turn forwarded the letter to Jo Ann Kuhr, who is the Genealogical Researcher at AHSGR. The letter was from a lady who was seeking information about people in Doenhoff . Jo Ann responded to the lady with information she had and in turn inserted in the body of the letter questions about the family from Lincoln.(It was known that when the family returned to Russia they were nicknamed as the "American Kaisers".)

The lady replied that she knew the family and would forward the information. It was through this letter, Delores was able to get in touch with the family.

One of the daughters of the original young girls who had lived in Lincoln responded. She related that the family had all died except one girl, who was now 90 years of age. Yes, it was true that the father had disappeared. He had come home one time because he was ill, but as soon as he was well, he was returned to his unit, and was never heard from again. During World War II, the family had been sent to the Altai area, then later sent to Krygyzstan. The young lady who wrote related she has a brother now living in Germany, and a sister who still resides in the Altai area, and is planning to move soon to Germany.

These letters were in Russian. Delores brought them to Headquarters to have Rick Rye translate them. When they were finished, she called her mother telling her, " We found your cousins in Russia". Her mother was so excited, she insisted that Delores repeat what she had just said. This was the first word they had had from this family in over 70 years!

In her early years of marriage Delores was a housewife, during the time the children were still at home. After the youngest son went into the first grade, she went to work in the school lunch room, working in the kitchen. This way she was able to see all the children off to school in the morning, and be home before they came home.

Later she began to work in some of the local grocery stores. Her first job was with the Warehouse Market, a membership grocery. She left this job to go to work for Safeway Stores, working there until 1980. Safeway was starting to shut down in the Midwest, partially because the United Meat Cutters were threatening to strike throughout the Midwest system and a depressed economy gripped this part of the nation. Work became scarce, with her allowed only about 4 hours a week.

Delores decided to seek an office job. Going to a seminar that the Nebraska Job Services was sponsoring she learned that any work she had done as a volunteer could be included as experience. As she had helped at the newly formed AHSGR, she considered that as a possible reference. She started making calls on prospective employers and as a reference, she decided to call the American Historical Society to ask Ruth Amen, the Executive Director, for a character reference. Ruth said she would. Delores then left the house, to see her prospect. When she returned, Ruth called, " Why don't you come in and talk to me, I think we can find 40 hours of work a week for you".

With that, Delores started to work for AHSGR for the next 8 years. According to Delores, "These years were the most satisfying of all my work years, I really enjoyed working there!" Her job was primarily as Secretary, typing letters for Ruth, filling book orders, operating the Addressograph, making labels for mailings, processing new memberships, answering the phone, answer questions on memberships

at AHSGR. She also gave tours and whatever else was necessary, at Convention time she took care of the registrations. She became one of three full time employees, along With Jo Ann Kuhr and Linda Lang.

During those early years, she worked in the 2 story pink house ( the house that was torn down to make room for the new AHSGR Building). While the new structure was being built, they all worked in the small stucco house on the east side of the property. The small white house was used as a museum for the Lincoln Chapter.

"When the new building was dedicated, this was to become the Convention with the most attendance ever. There were over 1500 attendees. This Convention was very well organized, and things really went smoothly, and I really enjoyed participating in the dedication", according to Delores.

Leaving AHSGR in 1987, she went to work for the State of Nebraska County Court Division. Although it was in the Lincoln Lancaster County Building, this was a State job, as all courts and sub-divisions were under the Nebraska Supreme Court Jurisdiction.

In her first weeks of work, she started at the traffic counter, which basically was waiting on people who were paying their fines, along with some filing. Within a month, they asked her if she would like to go into the civil division, still in the same building, still under the Supreme Court. This division handled small claims, civil suits and probates. Lawyers came in checking records. After being here for six months, as the assistant to the lady who handled small claims quit, and Delores took over her job, continuing until she retired in November, 1994. Since then she has returned to working in the school lunch program as a substitute only on a part time basis, and volunteering at Headquarters, where she assembles material for Jo Ann Kuhr.

Delores has been a member of the Cornhusker Ski Club of Lincoln, and try's to snow ski at least twice a season, and believes if she keeps up her Cardiovascular training she will be able to continue to ski for some years yet

Today, her life is still centered around her family. On the day of the interview, a grandson came into the house. When I asked who that was, she replied, "That's Corey, he comes over here every Saturday".

#### **WANTED TO BUY**

**A "Babushka" (old German Russian woman) Doll  
with a Halstuck (shawl), black dress, white or black apron  
Preferably one with black hair, (could have gray hair  
Will pay for doll  
Call Lillian Giebelhaus  
402/-423-4697**

**(has answering service, in case she would not be home at the time you call)**

**PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM FOR THE BRODA DINNER:**

**Return with self stamped, self addressed envelope to:**

**Lois Sorensen  
1605 S. 58th St.**

**Lincoln, Nebraska 68506**

**Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ tickets at \$7.50 each for the Broda Dinner  
(children under 10 \$3.50 each)**

**Make checks payable to Lincoln AHSGR**

**DON'T FORGET!  
ANNUAL BRODA DINNER  
WSI HALL 1430 N. 10TH ST.  
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA  
SEE INSIDE FOR YOUR ORDER FORM  
DINNER AT 5:30 P.M.**

**ANNUAL CHRISTMAS SING FEST  
ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
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JOIN IN THE CELEBRATION OF  
CHRISTMAS WITH SONGS AND  
COMMEMORATION**

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