



THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF GERMANS FROM RUSSIA

Lincoln Chapter

Volume IV

January 1996

Issue I

Chapter Officers

President - Larry Schenkel
Secretary - Ann Reitz
Corresponding Secretary - Gladys Herstein
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2nd Vice President - John Stuert
Treasurer - Lois Sorensen
Historian - Delores Schwartz
Membership Chairman - John Stuert

Genealogy Chairman - Shirley Robertson

Newsletter Editor - Hugh Dobler

Publicity - Dale Dinges - John Stuert

Scheduled Coming Events

January 7, 1996 AHSGR Chapter Meeting and Elections

1:00 p.m. Pot Luck Dinner
Bring your own place settings (Drinks furnished)
Frieden's Lutheran Church
6th & "D" St.

January 9, 1996 LLCGS (Lincoln Lancaster County Genealogical Society)

7 p.m.
Dick Administration Building (Lower Level) Union College Campus

January 15, 1996 AHSGR Board Meeting

6:30 p.m.
Old and New Board Meeting
Pot Luck Dinner
Bring your own place settings (Drinks furnished)
AHSGR Headquarters Building
631 "D" St.

January 20, 1996 PAF-Lug (Personal Ancestral File Lincoln User's Group)

7: p.m.
Family Service Center, 3100 Old Cheney Road

January 23, 1996
7:00 P.M.
AHSGR Board meeting

Editor's Notes: HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Let's all hope that 1996 will fulfill all our hopes and expectations! We had a good year, and hope it continues into the New Year.

I begin my fourth year as editor with this issue. I hope you have enjoyed reading this newsletter as much as I have enjoyed getting it "camera ready" and mailing it to you.

With this issue the officers remain the same, however, as of January 7th, is the yearly election of officers. The format at the top of this newsletter will change after that date. Please attend the annual "pot luck dinner" and election day for 1996 officers.

GEBURTSTAG (HAPPY BIRTHDAY)

February 1 Edward Loos
February 3 Hilda Schmidt
February 5 Ronald Bauer
February 17 Donald Burbach
February 20 Dorothy E. Gruenemeyer
February 24 Irene Gabelhaus
February 25 Alex Kruse

February 3 Victor Gruenemeyer
February 4 Marie Bauer
February 16 Philomena Lebsock
February 18 John G. Bauer
February 20 Richard Stauffer
February 24 Carl Strasheim
February 26 Diane Butherus
February 27 Esther Stuert

DER JAHRSTAG (HAPPY ANNIVERSARY)

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

February 2, 1935 Minnie and Wendell F Groth
February 2, 1946 Gladys and Edward Herstein
February 14, 1935 Alex and Katherine Strasheim
February 14, 1948 Leata and Adam Schwindt
February 23, 1947 Shirley and Victor Michel
February 26, 1948 Jewell and Kenneth Hardt -----

Don't forget to send in your names for inclusion of the birthdays and anniversary section each month
Send all communications to Hugh Dobler 3747 Woods Ave. Lincoln, NE. 68510

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Mr. Roberts was known as a hard-nosed boss who watched over his company like a hawk. On one of his regular rounds of the factory, he noticed a young man, leaning against a stack of boxes to the left of the foreman Harry's office. Since the boss did not know where Harry was at that moment, he hid by the post and watched to see just how long the young man would stand around doing nothing.

Roberts noticed the young fellow yawning, scratching his head, and looking at his watch. He sat down on the floor. He took out his nail file, and proceeded to clean his nails. After a short time, he got up from the floor and leaned back on the stack of boxes.

Well, Roberts had seen enough and approached the fellow. In a harsh voice Roberts asked, "How much do you make a week?"

The young fellow looked surprised, but stated, "A hundred and forty-five dollars a week."

Roberts rushed to the cashier's office, took \$145.00 from the cash box, and returned. "Take it," he said, "and get out!! Don't let me see you around here again!"

The young fellow took the cash and left the building without saying a word. Roberts was annoyed at the fellow's lack of attitude, and by the time Roberts found Harry, he was even more furious.

Roberts told Harry he saw the young fellow loafing; gave him a week's pay, and fired him. But what really irked Roberts was that Harry allowed the fellow to stand around as though he had nothing to do.

Harry said, "You mean the kid in the blue shirt?"

"Yes!! The kid in the blue shirt!"

"He was waiting for the ten dollars we owe him for lunch" Harry said. "He works for the coffee shop in the next block."

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AUSSIEDLERS IN GERMANY

Taken from, "This Week In Germany" October, 13, 1995)

One group of foreign born individuals seeking to resettle in Germany need not, in contrast to asylum applicants, demonstrate that they have suffered political persecution. Ethnic Germans living in eastern Europe and in the nations that once belonged to the Soviet Union are regarded as "resettlers" (*Aussiedler*) in German law and are entitled to German citizenship. Through the end of August 1995, Federal Commissioner for Resettlers, Horst Waffenschmidt(CDU), recently announced that approximately 100,000 ethnic Germans from the East had arrived in the Federal republic. In both 1989 and 1990, some 400,000 *Aussiedler* took advantage of their right to German citizenship; since 1991, the figure has been about 200,000 annually.

"Winter, a lingering season, is a time to gather golden moments, embark upon a sentimental journey and enjoy every idle hour."

John Boswell

DESCENDANTS OF VOLGA GERMANS OPENED KEY DOOR FOR RESEARCHERS

By Warren King, Seattle Times (from the Yellowstone Valley Chapter)

Ralph Reiswig, an Oklahoma rancher, was only 38 when he began to experience the first bewildering symptoms of Alzheimer's Disease.

For the first time, he figured he couldn't plow the wheat stubble alone. So he hired a high school boy to help, then made him sit in the pickup. The same thing happened when he built a new pigpen. Not long after, he lost his way to church and had to be lead there by some kids. And within a few years, he was so befuddled and easily frustrated, he couldn't work the ranch or even understand how to care for himself.

"It was hell living with him, and we couldn't figure it out... I figured we needed to get him to a research doctor," recalls his widow, Ester Reiswig.

Ralph Reiswig died at the age of 63, after an unusually long siege of the ravages of Alzheimer's. ...But because of him.. and dozens of other affected Volga German descendants and healthy relatives.- scientists have taken another big step in understanding Alzheimer's.

All the Alzheimer's patients were descendants of German families that migrated in the late 1700s to the southern Volga River Valley in Russia. The affected families were two villages, Frank and Walter and scientists think they descended from a single ancestor with a defective gene.

During the period around World War I, thousands of Volga Germans settled mostly in the Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado and along the West Coast. Many became wheat and sugar beet farmers, including some farmers in eastern Washington.

Experts estimate there are now more than 500,000 Volga Germans living in North America. Tom Bird, a VA Medical Center neurologist and the University of Washington professor of medicine remembers how he began finding families affected by Alzheimer's among them.

Members of a former Seattle family with several Alzheimer's patients told Dr. Bird more than 10 years ago, "We're German, but our ancestors lived in Russia". A few years later, he heard the same thing from family members of a patient in Alaska.

Then in 1987, he heard it again from Ester Reiswig. "I was sitting in the living room of her farmhouse in Oklahoma and this light bulb went on", Bird said. He checked back with the other families and found they had all originated in the villages of Frank and Walter.

The search for more families began. Dr. Bird enlisted the aid of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, headquartered in Lincoln, Nebraska. He emphasized that Volga Germans as a whole didn't have any more Alzheimer's than any other ethnic group.... just some families with links to Frank and Walter.

Several more families were found. Like Ester Reiswig, they usually were eager to help. Reiswig, a retired school teacher, helped researchers make out a family "pedigree" showing how 10 of her husband Ralph's 13 brothers and sisters had developed Alzheimer's. By talking to other family members, she determined that it affected 21 relatives in four generations. "It was really hard", she said, recalling how her husband and then his siblings deteriorated through the cruel course of the disease. Now she worries about her two middle-aged sons, although they have shown no signs of the disease.

Ester Reiswig still counsels families affected by Alzheimer's. She still hopes for a treatment to halt the disease. She is very pleased that the search with Volga Germans has made such a contribution. "I just kept praying, and the Lord's doing is a good job for me", she says. "I asked him to let me live until someone has the answer, and how we got it".

"Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless"

Mother Teresa

LARRY SCHENKEL

"I don't know if being born in the "Bulldog Ring" is any claim to fame or not, but that's where I was born, August 11, 1938, in a house on 7th and Vine Street", Larry stated when I interviewed him.

According to Larry, "the 'Bull Dog Ring' was considered an area of the North Bottoms that was the toughest area within the entire state border".

His father was Philip Schenkel, who was born in Greeley, Colorado, and his mother was Rose Luft, born in Helena, Montana. They met when their respective families returned to Lincoln.

Larry's father's mother was Christina Loos, born in Norka, Russia where she grew up and met and married her first husband, Joseph Schreiber. The union produced two sons, John and Alexander, both born in Russia.

Larry's grandmother Schreiber lost her first husband and later married Jacob Schenkel, who was born and raised in Doenhoff. Larry wasn't sure if they were married in Russia or America, but the offspring of this union was one son, his father Philip Schenkel, who was born in America.

Grandfather Schenkel died before Larry was born, so he never knew him. The man he does remember was Grandmother's third husband, Conrad Kreick. He particularly remembers his big schnauzer (mustache) tickling us. Larry says, "He was one of the most gentle men I have ever known. He had also been married to Grandma's sister, Anna Maria (Loos) Kildow. Grandma outlived Grandpa Krieck too.

When Larry a young boy there was a real popular song called "I'm my own Grandpa", and he recalls how Grandmother was a step-mother to many nieces and nephews.

Larry's mother was raised in the South Bottoms, so as he grew up he knew a lot of people, from both North and South Bottoms which allowed him to fit into both factions. Grandmother and Grandfather Luft lived at 125 D Street for as long as Larry can remember, and still remembers his Grandfather living there after Grandmother died. Grandfather was in his 90's when he died.

The Luft's were from Schilling, Russia . With that Larry claims he has three ancestral villages!

"I was baptized in the *Deutsche Evangelische Congregational Zion's Gemeinde* and confirmed in *Immanuel Reformed Church*. I went to *Hayward Elementary School* until the middle of the fourth grade when Mom and Dad moved to the house they bought on South 8th Street and I finished grade school at *Saratoga*", according to Larry.

Larry went on to Junior High at *Everett*, and finished 10th grade in *Lincoln High* when I dropped out of school to go to work.

Larry then enlisted in the National Guard in 1956, but after a year he resigned to go into the Army for three years .After his discharge he again enlisted in the National Guard serving just over 31 years total in the armed services.

During the time he was home on leave from the Army, he met his first wife. Shortly after that was he was discharged . They were married soon afterwards. The couple had two children, Laura and Patricia.

Laura was born in October 1960, After graduation from *Norris High School*, she attended *Chadron State College*, working her way through college as a waitress. She enjoyed this work so much that for several years afterwards she still continued to be a waitress. When she and Bill De Moulin were married, she decided they needed a more steady income. She attended *Colorado University*, got her Master's and is now teaching at *John F. Kennedy High School* in Denver, Colorado. Her husband also has his Master's, and is teaching (elementary music) in the Denver schools.

Patricia graduated from *Norris High School* as well. She decided to go into the National Guard, going on active duty for six months. Just about the time her six months was over, she broke a bone in her ankle, so she couldn't really go out and find work. She then decided to visit her former roommate in the service, who lived in Boston. The two girls took off to Vermont to see some of the other girls from her unit. While there, they met one of the instructors from Guard camp, who had taught them computer skills while they were in the service. His family worked for IBM. Patricia was asked by this family if she wanted a job, and Patricia replied, "Yes". The job they had in mind was with a company who had just purchased IBM equipment.

Today Patricia and her husband live in Longmont, Colorado. She returned to college at the age of 27, and now as a graduate, works for an firm doing advertising.

During the first years of their marriage, Larry worked as a fireman for the city for 5 1/2 years. He then decided to go to college to become a teacher. He graduated in January, 1979, and began teaching at *Norris School*, south of Hickman, where he is still teaching, 25 years later. He started teaching 5 graders; started with sixth graders the following year, and continued teaching sixth grade until they built the Middle School 8 years later. The principal then asked Larry to teach 7th grade Social Studies, and 8th grade American History. After that principal left, he returned to teaching sixth graders, which is the age level he likes to teach.

Back around 1965, Larry became active in the *Isaak Walton League*. A year or so later a national organization called the *National Shooting and Sports Foundation* (still in existence) came to town and asked the *Lincoln Journal Star* to sponsor a hunter safety clinic. Bob Munger, who was sports editor at that time, and also belonged to the *Isaak Walton League*, asked for help from Larry as he was president of the club at the time.

This was the beginning of the *Isaak Walton League* becoming active in promoting safety clinics within the State. Larry then became active with the *State Parks and Recreation Department* as a volunteer, teaching hunter safety. He teaches hunter safety at Norris to any one 11 years or older, 2 or 3 nights a week on the safety with weapons. These classes last about a month.

In addition he helps in a class with several other instructors at *Isaak Walton* for people who want to be become certified. The last class had 80 people becoming certified with the youngest person, 11 years of age and the oldest in his 40s.

Larry has three brothers, Bob in Greeley, Ricky and Jimmy in Lincoln, and a sister Phyllis who also lives in Lincoln.

A number of years after Larry and his first wife were divorced, he met and married his present wife, Norma. She had six children and Larry says, "I am as close to them as I am to my own. Between our two families we have 15 grandchildren and one great grandson"

**A VERY HAPPY
NEW YEAR
TO ALL OF YOU!!!**



**GENERAL MEETING AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS
JANUARY 7, 1996
FRIEDENS LUTHERAN CHURCH
6th and "D" St.
1: P.M. POT LUCK DINNER
BRING YOUR OWN PLACE SETTINGS
(DRINKS WILL BE FURNISHED)**

American Historical Society
of Germans From Russia
631 D Street
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