



Lincoln Chapter The American Historical Society of Germans From Russia NEWSLETTER

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MAY 2000

May Notes from Ruth

by Ruth White, President, Lincoln Chapter AHSGR

The General Meeting of April 30th was a hoot! The stories of childhood were very interesting and entertaining. A big THANK YOU to Norma Somerheiser who conducted as the folklore chair and the moderators for all their assistance:

- Jake Sinner, North Bottoms;
- Ed Schwartzkopf, South Bottoms,
- Jan Roth, a life member and Lincoln Chapter member.

Well, here I go again!

Remember I asked earlier for donations for the Convention?

We need...

for the Hospitality Room:

1. Canned pop
2. Baked goods
3. Monetary gifts to help defray the cost of Welcome Night.
4. A large size fryer for grebel (does anybody have one?)

Volunteer time:

1. We need to fill packets on Sunday afternoon, June 11. These are packets with material for all members of the Society who will be attending the Convention.
2. We need Convention Volunteers for different areas, such as the Bookstore, to help with sales and register purchases.
3. In the Genealogy Research area, we need help for those people who are researching their ancestry, getting the obituaries from our files, and replacing

them after the customer has finished using them.

4. We need volunteers for the festival, June 14, from 1 to 4 p.m.

5. We have a garden planted on the north side of the "KUH" Barn. We have planted a special seed of cucumbers that came from Russia, sugar beet seeds from Western Nebraska, and tomato plants from a nursery in Lincoln. Around the outer edge we have planted marigolds. We need help to maintain this garden. Anything you can help with such as hoeing, watering, etc. would be appreciated.

The Nebraska State Genealogical Society had a conference in Kearney, Nebraska, on May 5 and 6.

Norma Somerheiser, Delores Schwartz and Ruth White were in attendance. AHSGR had books, brochures, and other items at a vendor table. It was just another way to us to advertise what AHSGR is all about.

Convention Plans for June are on track.

This will be the best Convention ever with your help!

Your donations and volunteering are of the utmost importance. Please, our heritage is important to preserve for our greatest natural resource – our children. Continue to share with others and encourage them to join AHSGR. We need the younger generation for this organization to survive beyond our years.

Folklore of the North and South Bottoms Highlights General Meeting

The Spring General Meeting of the Lincoln Chapter of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia was held on Sunday, April 30, 2000, at the All Faith's Chapel on the grounds of the Society's headquarters.

The program was built around telling the stories of growing up in the German-Russian communities in the North and South Bottoms. It was a time to tell stories, laugh a lot, and get the flavor of days gone by.

Jake Sinner and Lillian Loos (speaking for Eddie Loos) reported on the North Bottoms.

Ed Schwartzkopf and LeRoy Butherus told about their memories from the South.

It was high entertainment to hear the variety of nicknames given to dozens of youngsters such as "Boom," "Biff," and "Bang" in one family. Some nicknames came from twisting their given names. Some came from how



Quick Wit: A Wise Little Girl

A certain little girl, when asked her name, would reply, "I'm Mr. Sugarbrown's daughter." Her mother told her this was wrong, she must just say, "I'm Jane Sugarbrown." The minister spoke to her in Sunday School and said, "Aren't you Mr. Sugarbrown's daughter?" She replied, "Well, I thought I was, but mother says I'm not."

From the "Clay County News" – "Under Observations" by Don Russell, Editor:

The following "Stanton" jokes came from Marlin Waechter of the Stanton Register:

Did you hear about the man who:

Took his expectant wife to the grocery store because they had free delivery?

Wore a union suit because his wife was having labor pains?

Had a wife who sat at home crying because he had gone to play craps with the boys – and she didn't know how to fry them?

Bought iodine to put on his pay check because he heard he was going to get a cut in pay?



they looked, like hair (color) or weight or height. Some earned a nickname from something they had done. And for some, there was no rational explanation.

Childhood pranks and youthful mischief were the focus of many of these memories from the "gold old days" on both sides of town. The boys raided neighbor's apple trees, watermelon patches, or changed the street signs.

(continued)



Sign Up Sheet for Donations

Sign up for all or any of the three days – whatever you wish to donate.

(Canned Pop, Baked Goods, Monetary Donation)

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14	THURSDAY, JUNE 15	FRIDAY, JUNE 16

General Membership Highlights *(continued)*

They crawled through the storm sewers, swam in Salt Creek, sometimes to their own disaster, such as when, after a rain, the water would come rushing down through the sewer where they would occasionally become injured, or have very soiled clothing (which needed to be accounted for when they arrived home) by their own pranks.

One such prank, was the releasing of sparrows. If they had some grievances against a family or member of the family, they would catch a sparrow, take the sparrow to this aggrieved person's home, open the screen door, then ring the bell. As soon as that person came

and opened the door, the sparrow would fly into the house.

They tormented and flirted with the girls. Many of the opposite sex lived in the opposite Bottoms. If you were caught going with a girl from the South Bottoms and you lived in the North, you could be expected to get into a skirmish with the South boys or vice versa.

They also entertained themselves with homemade toys, with ice skating on the Salt Creek, and with group games. In the North Bottoms, there was an area that was called the Bull Dog Ring. (As of today, this area is where the new ballpark and parking lot will be built). It was an area that if you had any differences to settle with youngsters from the South Bottoms, this is where

you exercised your rights. Many a fight took place here!

Hearing their stories, we marvel that they grew up to be responsible people in the community. How come? Because they had close-knit supportive families, where both love and discipline prevailed. They were regular in their church going. School was a place for study and learning. They respected leadership and the rights of other people. They worked hard and learned the importance of responsibility.

That sounds like a good formulation for maturity in our day, too, doesn't it?

—Jerry McInnis

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