



Lincoln Chapter  
The American Historical Society of Germans From Russia  
**NEWSLETTER**

VOLUME IX, ISSUE 4

AUGUST 2001

## Notes from Ruth

by Ruth White, President

Well, summer is here with a bang. The convention in Denver was a success. Des Moines is the site of the 2002 convention.

Our garage sale is August 17 and 18. Hours Friday are 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Saturday 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. See elsewhere in the newsletter for details.

Oh, guess what? The next general membership meeting is Sunday, September 9, at Friedens Lutheran Church at 6th and D Streets. The time is 1:00 p.m. and bring your table service. Come for fellowship, pot luck, bingo and whatever.

The Broda is November 1st at the Shrine on Yolande. We will need many volunteers as usual. Last but not least we still need a Centerpiece Committee. Come on, we need you!

A beautiful quilt will be raffled. A book of tickets is included with the newsletter. Please support and purchase. Door prizes will be available also. See details elsewhere in the newsletter.

There will be no Christmas festival this year.

Our Board is committed. They are faithful volunteers and give of their time to meet and work when needed. In the future, we will profile these members. Also in the chapter we have many who give faithfully and endlessly of their time. We will also profile these angels in the future.

Remember at the soup supper we had advance sales of the cookbook. This is our cooperation with another AHSGR chapter. Who knows, in the future we may need the cooperation of another chapter. If you

ordered a book, they are here. Please call and I will deliver. Those of you who are sitting on the fence, I encourage you to purchase. Perhaps you already have one SO purchase one for a gift of two or more. Whatever.

All of us must remember that a strong organization requires time

and commitment. If you have yearly dues, please renew early!! We received a certificate at the convention for early renewals. Worked really hard for this. Let's do it again. What about new members? Let's give this a try. Who knows...we may surprise ourselves. WE ARE THE LINCOLN CHAPTER AND PROUD OF

**Garage Sale**

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 17**  
**8:30a.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 18**  
**8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

**631 D Street**

**Items can be taken to Henry Sader's for storage until the week of the sale. Call before going to Henry's. Do not take anything to 631 D Street until the week of the sale. You may bring items starting on Tuesday, August 14. Please mark the price on the item as this will help the volunteers. No clothing, please.**





## FROM YOUR EDITOR'S DESK... A FAMILY REUNION IN GERMANY

by Jerry McInnis, Editor

Six children were born in Neu Walter of the Volga area to George Gies. Three of them—Henry, Marie Elizabeth, and John—came to America. Three of them, Lena, George, and Katharina, stayed in Russia. The last contact between them ended in 1961.

We had been trying to make contacts for years. We went to Russia, to Walter and Neu Walter, in 1993 looking for relatives. We advertised in *Neues Leben*. We wrote letters to old addresses that were never answered.

Then it happened! The letter to us began: "I am an American of German-Russian descent working with German-Russian immigrants in Germany..." The writer then described a 91-year-old woman, Lydia Geis Klippert, who might be a relative of my wife, Jolene. Her description contained names and dates that could only be known within the family, so we responded right away. The results: a happy reunion of a family separated for eighty years!

Three cousins from Nebraska and their spouses, traveled to Jena, Germany, in June to visit their only surviving first cousin, Lydia Gies Klippert. We also met about thirty other cousins we didn't know we had, and got the names of another thirty-five living in Germany, Russia, Kazakhstan and Siberia.

What a story she had to tell! Both her father and mother died of starvation the same week in 1933. In 1937, her oldest brother Jacob was denounced for being a Christian and was taken away and never was heard from again. We met the son of Jacob who was only 10 when his father disappeared.

When the Germans in the Volga area were deported in September 1941, the Klippert family was shipped to Siberia. Mr. Klippert was immediately put in the Labor Army, cutting timber and making railroad ties.

Mrs. Klippert, because she had three children, was exempt from the Labor Army but was forced to live with a Russian family that only had one room and a kitchen. She and her three children lived in one corner of the kitchen. She had to pay rent for that corner so she milked cows at the local collective to earn rent money.

One of the children died but she never reported the death because she would have had to abandon the other two children and go into the Labor Army. She took tree roots and wove them into mats, then dobed mud onto the mats to build a little hut outside the house. There she cooked and lived with her children for four more years.

It was two years after the war ended before the whole family was reunited, but they were moved to Kazakhstan. Another daughter was born there, but their eight-year-old son who had survived the deportation was hit by a car and died.

They lived in Kazakhstan until 1992 when some of them were resettled in Germany. Now, Lydia and George are living in a huge Soviet-style apartment house in Jena, with their two surviving daughters and four grandsons. Three grandchildren and the great-grandchildren had intermarried with non-Germans so they had to stay in Kazakhstan.

Lydia's brother, George, had ten children, and five of them and their

descendants are scattered throughout Germany. We met quite a few of them.

It was an emotion-packed experience meeting this tiny, shriveled woman who had survived so much maltreatment and injustice in her lifetime. Yet her mind was clear and her spirit was warm and generous. It was an emotional moment for her as well, finally meeting her first cousins from America.

I took my tape recorder along but never got to use it. With twenty people in a room, there were usually six conversations going in Volga-German, High German, Russian, and English.

The meals we ate with the family were bountiful collections of typical German-Russian cooking that we still use in our household, plus some Russian dishes. Mercifully, the family had not adopted the Russian "vodka" habit.

We learned how important the "networks" are. The American woman who wrote the initial letter to us contacted her uncle in Oregon, who gave her the name of the AHSGR Neu Walter village representative in Denver, who sent our names to Ellen Eischen in Germany, who then wrote to us and got the whole reunion started.

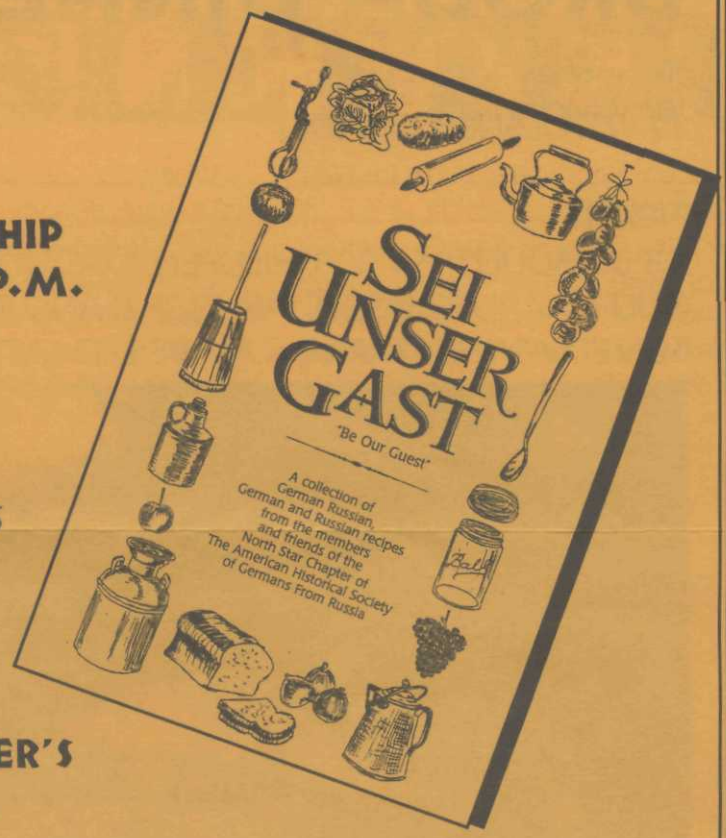
Also, thanks to our American freedom to share information, we know more about some phases of the German-Russian experience than those living in Russia. For so many years they were afraid to talk that some information passed into oblivion. We in America (and in AHSGR) are now the caretakers of some of that information. □



# GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

POTLUCK -- BINGO -- FELLOWSHIP  
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1:00 P.M.  
FRIEDENS LUTHERAN CHURCH  
6TH AND D STREETS

SEI UNSER GAST COOKBOOK IS  
AVAILABLE FOR \$12.00. THIS IS  
OUR COOPERATION WITH  
ANOTHER CHAPTER. PLEASE  
PURCHASE EITHER FOR  
YOURSELF OR FOR A GIFT. WE  
MAY NEED ANOTHER CHAPTER'S  
COOPERATION IN THE FUTURE.



American Historical Society of Germans From Russia

Acknowledges the

*Lincoln, Nebraska Chapter*

for their outstanding efforts in obtaining early renewals for 2001  
Your hard work and dedication is greatly appreciated.

*Robert W. Berman*  
AHSGR Membership Chairman  
*Jan P. Roth*  
AHSGR Executive Director

*Nicholas A. Duff*  
AHSGR President  
June 9, 2001  
Date



# BRODA DINNER

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2001  
1717 YOLANDE (SHRINE)

## TICKETS:

\$8.00/ADULTS; \$4.00/CHILDREN 12 & UNDER

YOU MAY PURCHASE A TABLE OF 8 AND RESERVE A TABLE. ALL OTHERS WILL BE SEATED AS THEY ARRIVE – AS WE DID LAST YEAR.



DONATIONS: DONATIONS FOR THE DOOR PRIZES WELCOME. PLEASE CALL A BOARD MEMBER FOR DETAILS.

**A HAND-CRAFTED QUILT DONATED BY  
GLADYS AND ED HERSTEIN WILL BE RAFFLED.**

A BOOK OF RAFFLE TICKETS IS INCLUDED. TICKETS ARE \$1.00 OR 6 FOR \$5.00  
YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE PRESENT TO WIN THE QUILT.  
DOOR PRIZE RECIPIENTS NEED TO BE PRESENT TO WIN.