



Lincoln Chapter
The American Historical Society of Germans From Russia
NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XIII, ISSUE 5

September/October, 2005

Lines from Larry...

What's going on with the Amen House and the Cottages?

For those of you who have not been down to the Heritage Center for awhile, you are in for a surprise. Our two cottages and the third cottage were for sale and have been sold to a group that is in the process of building a home for troubled youth.

We have also sold the Amen house. Since there were several restrictions on the property, it was necessary for the Society to go to court to have them lifted. The court then imposed several conditions about what the money could be used for. A new elevator is to be installed so the second floor of the Headquarters building will be accessible. The roof needs to be looked at as well. The broken concrete in the driveway and parking lot is to be replaced.

Tim Klobberdanz made a motion that \$18,500 be put aside, in a restricted fund, for museum acquisitions/activities. The motion carried.

All in all, the Society is in pretty good financial shape. The money, that had been used out of the restricted funds, has all been replaced, we have money to pay the bills, etc., and money in the bank.

Thanks to all of you for your generous donations over the years and especially for this past year. If you want more information on the houses, finances, etc. let me know. I would be glad to talk to you about them.

All in all, the Convention went very well. The Oklahoma people worked very hard to put on a "four-star" convention and they were successful. The people of Oklahoma City were extremely outgoing and friendly. The city itself has an abundance of attractions that make it an outstanding place to have a convention.

A big Nebraska "thank you" to the convention committee and workers, and the people of Oklahoma City, as well as the people of the state of Oklahoma. And, lest we forget, a huge thank you to all of the volunteers from other chapters and states that stepped up to help. I hope you are all as generous with your time next year when the Lincoln Chapter will be hosting the Convention here in Lincoln.

The part of the Convention I enjoy the most is making connections with old friends we have made from other areas. Then comes meeting people and making new friends. I also enjoy getting information about my ancestral villages.

MEMBERSHIP

Please take a look, a loooong look, at the Junior Membership Program. We are always talking about getting young people involved. What better way than Mom and Dad, Grandma or Grandpa, or some other relative giving a Junior Membership for graduation, birthday, Christmas, etc. And, after you give it, bring the new member to one of our general chapter meetings to see what's going on. Or even bring them to one of our monthly board meetings.

Giving them a membership, by itself, is probably not going to get them involved. But, showing you care by going to a function and asking them to go with you, just might.

Also, notice the International organization is sponsoring a contest for membership. This is a good way to help your local chapter, as well as the National organization. Again, this will involve you spending some time, figuring out which of your German-Russian friends aren't members and getting them to join. Notice, I did not say trying to get them to join!

There are rewards for the recruiter and the new member, but the real prize is knowing you are taking an active hand in perpetuating AHSGR!



OCTOBERFEST
Saturday,
October 22
11:00-3:00

You are all invited to come to the Heritage Center on Saturday, October 22nd, from 11am to 3pm.

You will be able to tour the museum buildings and listen (or dance, if you want) to a five-piece polka band that will be there.

Children will be able to get their faces painted, be creative with driveway chalk, learn how to play Bannock, and, maybe, if the Halloween Bunny lays any pumpkins, we can have a decorating contest. Sorry, we won't be carving them, just decorating.

We will have Volga Boatmen sandwiches for sale, complete with chips and a soda, for \$5.00.

There will also be a bake sale, which will hopefully have some bierocks (remember, we can't use the "R" word), butterballs, homemade noodles, rye bread, and other G-R delicacies, as well as the traditional bake sale items of pies, cakes, cookies, brownies, etc.

We haven't had an Octoberfest for a while so we hope you will come in large enough numbers to make it worth having every year.

The bookstore and gift shop will be open, but the research areas will not, nor will the library.

Hope to see all of you there.



From the September 1999 Lincoln Chapter Newsletter

Submitted by our Historian, Pam Wurst

Looking Back...

Satchel Paige once said, "Don't look back; something might be gaining on you." That's good advice, but sometimes it's fun to reminisce a little. So, let's look back at some events in the Lincoln chapter's past.

MEMORIES OF THE GRIDIRON

There are always memories of high school days. One of my fondest memories is my time I spend as student manager of the Lincoln High football team. During the 40's, Lincoln High was a perennial football power. I was fortunate in being associated with the 1946 and 1947 teams.

In looking at these teams, I was struck by the fact that the majority of the players were from the North and South Bottoms. These were hard-nosed young men who were totally dedicated to the game of football.

The names that immediately come to mind are Mel Knopp, Bob Becker, Milton Schmidt, John Dietz, Don Ruby, Gordon Hegel, Merle Debus, Stan Gerlach, Don Lorenz and Bob George. These are but just a few of many that played the game of football for the "Black and Red." The list of football players from the "Bottoms" easily could fill many pages.

Bob George and I developed a close friendship. It was through Bob that I became acquainted with many of these players. Most of them had nicknames. Bob George was "Root Beer," Don Ruby was "Pete" and Merle Debus was "Shadow," to mention a few.

At practices and in the locker room, German was frequently the spoken word. It was their way of communicating, and most of the time it was used as a form of jest. Those of us who didn't speak German stood there with a dazed expression on our faces, occasionally smiling as if we understood what was being said. There were many instances

February, 1969

The Lincoln Chapter had five members. Three years later, February 1972, there were 329 members, and they set a goal to have 500 members by convention time. The convention was held in June in Boulder, CO that year and they nearly reached their goal.

when the joke involved us.

The use of German particularly came in handy when addressing players on opposing teams. Not understanding the language, officials found it difficult to penalize a player for unsportsmanlike conduct.

As I commented earlier, Lincoln High was a football power. There was never any need to motivate the players. Playing hard was the rule of the day. In looking back, this can be traced to the traditional work ethic of those who lived in the "Bottoms."

There is one particular incident that comes to mind with respect to playing hard. Lincoln High was in a close game with Scottsbluff High. Scottsbluff had a good football team. One of their players was a tackle by the name of Gerry DeMerinville. He was considered big in those days weighing well over 225 pounds.

Scottsbluff had just scored a touchdown and was going for the extra point. The ball was given to DeMerinville and this large young man moved toward the goal line. John Dietz, who was smaller in physical stature, rose to the occasion and tackled DeMerinville with such force that the impact could be heard on the sidelines. Needless to say, the try for the extra point failed. This was the way John and the players from the "Bottoms" played the game of football.

(Submitted by Roger Runion)

1973

A house at 615 D Street officially became the International Headquarters for AHSGR.

All records were transferred from Greeley, CO to Lincoln. Ruth Amen was elected International President at the Convention in Portland, OR and Delores Schwartz, Jake Sinner, and Katherine Weber, were elected to the International Board. Ed Schwartzkopf was also serving on that board, having been previously elected.

A Broda dinner was held at the National Guard Armory. Ticket prices were \$3.00 for adults, \$1.50 for children.

1983

The headquarters building at 631 D Street was dedicated. Staff moved in on January 17 and 18 and enjoyed the space, space, and more space, after the cramped quarters at 615 D.

AHSGR members provided the funds to construct this facility as well as the museum buildings, and volunteers donated countless hours to build it. A large corps of volunteers aided staff, doing clerical work, conducting tours, cleaning and yard work, and more.

By the end of 1983, the Lincoln Chapter had contributed \$38,792.64 to the International organization. This money was raised by selling Volga Boatman sandwiches, runzas, noodles, home-baked breads, kuchen, and cook books at the State Fair, and festivals in downtown Lincoln. Prices charged ranged from \$1.00 for a runza, \$1.25 for a one-pound bag of noodles, to \$1.75 for a Volga Boatman sandwich. A lot of hard work and many jobs well done.

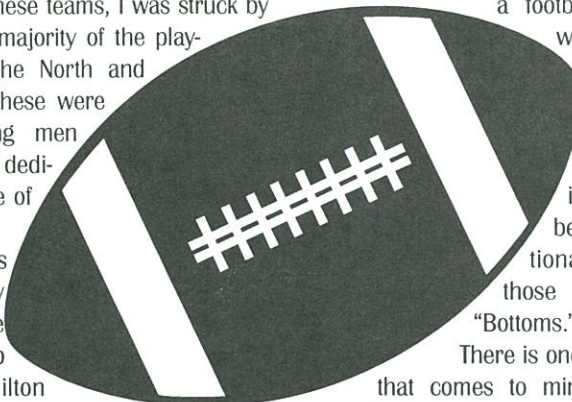
1993

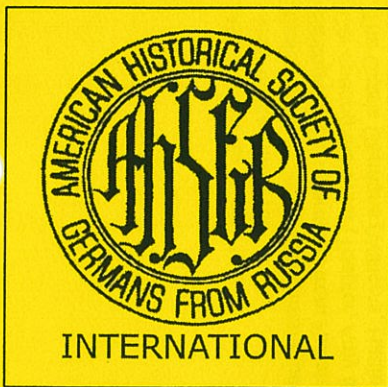
Most of this year was devoted to fund-raisers and planning and preparing to host the 1994 Convention.

Our quilters held a very successful quilt show and bake sale in October. The beautiful quilts displayed in the chapel included some old, some new, and some original design quilts. Net profit from the bake sale was \$320. They also sold 100 raffle tickets on the quilt they made for the Broda dinner raffle, and two AHSGR memberships.

Each year, these ladies have earned and donated approximately \$1,000 to AHSGR and the International Foundation.

(Source: 1969-1993 Lincoln Chapter minutes of board meetings.)





*2nd Annual AHSGR Membership
Campaign starts with a Cowboy
“Hoot and Holler” at the
Oklahoma City Convention!*

**New members are critical to the continued success of AHSGR!
You can make a difference - talk to family and friends!
Buy a gift membership!**

This campaign is designed to reward both new, and referring members who recommend new members or purchase gift memberships. It will begin August 15, 2005 and will end with the Grand Prize drawing at the 2006 Lincoln Convention. Pick up an application at convention or on-line at <http://www.ahsgr.org>

As an additional benefit, both new and referring members will receive discounts on a vast array of books from the AHSGR Bookstore. A Membership Campaign Booklist will be posted in the Convention Bookstore or will be attached to your Discount Certificate.

- **The first 25 people who join AHSGR will receive a 50% discount on any one book on the Membership Campaign Booklist. (The referring member for the first 25 people who join will receive the same discount.)**
- **Thereafter, new members will receive a 25% discount on one book on the Membership Campaign Booklist. (The referring member will receive the same discount.)**

For AHSGR members who take up the challenge to refer family and friends to AHSGR membership, the rewards can be even greater. For 10 new member referrals, you will receive one free book on the Membership Campaign Booklist.

“GEWALTIG PREIS” (Grand Prize)

All New and Referring Members will be entered in the drawing for the grand prize - a one-week vacation at one of the 22 available Fairfield Resorts. The 2 bedroom deluxe condo sleeps 6-8, includes full kitchen and many other luxury amenities. Your only cost would be food and transportation.

As the old adage says in ten, two letter words:
IF IT IS TO BE, IT IS UP TO ME!

**FOR EACH OF YOU - THIS IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO ASSURE
THE FUTURE OF AHSGR!**

MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN BOOKLIST

	Member Price	Non Member Price
AHSGR Family History List	\$ 8.00	\$ 10.00
AHSGR Resource Kit	\$ 15.00	\$ 30.00
Bessarabian Knight (Weiss, Immanuel, & Wieland, George)	\$ 15.00	\$ 18.00
Bibliography on Germans from Russia (New York Public Library)	\$ 3.00	\$ 4.00
Conquering the Wind (Toepfer, Amy & Dreiling, Agnes)	\$ 15.00	\$ 20.00
The Czar's Germans (Williams, Hattie Plum)	\$ 15.00	\$ 20.00
Emigration from Germany to Russia 1763-1862 (Stumpp, Karl) 2 vol. set	\$ 50.00	\$ 65.00
Expropriation of Land from the Germans in Volhynia 1915 (Mai, Brent)	\$ 75.00	\$ 100.00
Following Mariana (Schnell, Wayne)	\$ 16.00	\$ 20.00
Frank—A German Village on the Volga (Pleve, Igor)	\$ 60.00	\$ 75.00
From Catherine to Khrushchev (Giesinger, Adam)	\$ 22.00	\$ 26.00
From Puppets of Stalin to Pawns of Hitler and Back Again (Hoffman, Stephanie)	\$ 10.00	\$ 15.00
German Colonies on the Lower Volga, Index & Bookplate (Beratz, Gottlieb)	\$ 22.50	\$ 28.50
The German Colonies on the Volga: The Second Half of the 18th Century (Pleve, Igor)	\$ 35.00	\$ 45.00
German Migration to the Russian Volga 1764-1767 (Mail/Reeves-Marquardt)	\$ 30.00	\$ 40.00
The German-Russians—Two Centuries of Pioneering (Stumpp, Karl)	\$ 25.00	\$ 30.00
Germans in the Land of the Volga (Sinner, Peter)	\$ 12.00	\$ 15.00
German Villages in the Ukraine—Key to Microfilm... (Giesinger, Adam)	\$ 3.50	\$ 4.50
Gone Without A Trace (Holland, Nancy)	\$ 27.00	\$ 32.00
Her Golden Door (Nuss, Calvin)	\$ 9.00	\$ 10.00
History of the Volga Relief Society (Haynes, Emma)	\$ 10.00	\$ 14.00
In the Far Country (Schwartz, Warren)	\$ 9.00	\$ 12.00
Index to Place Names—From Catherine to Khrushchev (Freeman, Margaret)	\$ 7.00	\$ 8.00
Kolb—A German Colony on the Volga (Pleve, Igor)	\$ 15.00	\$ 20.00
Küche Kochen (cookbook)	\$ 12.00	\$ 18.00
Letters from Hell (Samuel Sinner)	\$ 6.00	\$ 8.00
Memories of Kazakhstan (Bachman, Berta)	\$ 10.00	\$ 14.00
My Home on the Crimean Steppes (Weigum, David)	\$ 12.00	\$ 15.00
Norka—A German Village in Russia (Olson, Marie & Reisbick, Anna)	\$ 10.00	\$ 12.00
Return to Berry Meadow (Scheuerman, Richard)	\$ 20.00	\$ 25.00
Social Study of Russian Germans (Williams, Hattie Plum)	\$ 7.00	\$ 10.00
The Story of Johann, the Boy Who Longed to Come to America (Lindsay)	\$ 16.00	\$ 20.00
Stumpp Map Index	\$ 30.00	\$ 75.00
Thunder on the Steppe (Kloberdanz, Timothy)	\$ 20.00	\$ 25.00
Volga Germans in Old Russia & in North America (Kloberdanz, Timothy)	\$ 2.00	\$ 3.00
The White Lamb (Lindsay)	\$ 10.00	\$ 12.00

6/9/2005

Enclosed is payment, US funds only, for membership in AHSGR. Memberships are prorated through a calendar year, due each January 1.

Check one:

\$50 Individual

\$50 Family (husband and wife)

\$50 Institutional

\$75 Contributing

\$100 Sustaining

\$750 Life (May be paid in five annual installments)

Please fill in the correct credit card information if you are charging your payment. Signature is required to process payment.

VISA/MC/DISCOVER _____

Expiration Date: _____

Signature: _____

American Historical Society of Germans from Russia
Membership Enrollment Form

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT

NAME _____
circle one—Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms., Dr., Prof.

MAIDEN NAME _____
FIRST AND LAST

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE/PROVINCE _____ ZIP (PLUS 4) _____ COUNTRY _____

TELEPHONE—Home _____ Business _____

Email: _____ Referred By: _____

Mail to: **AHSGR International**
631 D Street
Lincoln, NE 68502-1199

**LINCOLN CHAPTER AHSGR – SYMPATHY CARDS SENT TO THE FAMILIES
OF THE FOLLOWING:**

Between September 20 and October 17, 2005:

Kathryn Schaaf (widow of Jacob)

Thomas L. Maul (widower of Connie)

Marie Sommer (widow of William)

Susan Kay (Kitchen) Burbach (Mrs. Steven)

Blanche D. Jacoby (widow of Herman)

Joan L. Hinkle (Eugene) – parents....Ralph & Martha Giebelhaus

GET WELL CARD: Ann Reitz

SOFTBALL DAZE

I grew up on North 25th Street and one of the favorite pastimes for the kids in that neighborhood was to play ball in the street. It didn't matter whether it was baseball or softball, we were just glad if somebody had a ball and a bat so there could be a game. It was always co-ed.

Later we played playground softball in a summer city rec. program, and I remember teams from Hayward, Pentzer Park, Peter Pan Park, Whittier, and F Street Park. I especially remember F Street Park, because they beat our Whittier team badly. They had one skinny little gal they called "Fatty" Weber, who could really hit that ball.

After playground softball, a number of the girls from the North and South Bottoms played on teams in the Lincoln City softball leagues. There were different classes, and most games were played at Muny field. There were five diamonds there, and you knew you were a good Class A team when you got to play on the main diamond where the men's AAA teams played.

Amos Coal, Blackbird Foods, Sprague-Martell, and Topaz, (later sponsored by Schmoker's IGA, and even later by Skyline Dairy). Elgin Watch Co., and Squirt, are just some of the sponsors of women's teams that I recall.

The coaches were all volunteers, and Joe Mesa coached for years. Adam Dinges helped him and they gave countless hours of their time to the Topaz, Schmoker's and Skyline teams. "Pop" Amos and John Martin each coached the teams they also sponsored.

There were some good players on those teams and I remember playing with, and against, Marie Mall Johnson, third base on

the Amos Coal team. Marie could field ground balls nearly bare handed (they called her glove "the pancake" and a runner didn't have a chance when she uncorked a throw to first base. She could also hit and she "whistled" a few line drives past my ear when I pitched.

Speaking of line drives, Kathy Dinges (Skyline Dairy) often greeted me with one of those when I pitched against her team. I later enjoyed playing on the Skyline team with Kathy. Delores "Woody" Wertz Watson also played for Skyline. She later became a teacher, business owner, and is now an ordained Lutheran Pastor.

Mezz Braun Jones caused a real buzz in the Bottoms. Her father was Rev. Braun who served Salem Congregational Church. Meta was "that preacher's kid who played ball!" Ach, ach, ach.

The Reifschneider sisters, Jeannette and Selma, also come to mind. Jeannette was a good pitcher and Selma played first base.

I played with girls who were factory workers, clerical workers, sales people, college students, including PhD candidates, business owners, college professors, and other professionals, but on the diamond we were all just a bunch of gals having fun playing a game we all loved.

On the third Monday of each month, a group of men and women, who played softball, meet for lunch at the Old Country Buffet and enjoy reminiscing. Sometimes somebody will bring a picture of a player or a team and the conversation turns to the good old days. Once a man, who is now a widower, brought a ball that had been autographed by his wife's team and was presented to her by her



teammates after she had pitched an outstanding game to win the Women's State Softball tournament. As the ball was passed around the table, each person took it, looked at it, and then put "their grip" on it. In other words, they held it the way they had held the ball when they pitched or threw many years ago. Sometimes there is an empty chair at the table, as there was when Erv Bauer passed away. These people played during the 1930's, 40's, 50's, and 60's, but all will tell you that each year in the spring, they still would like to throw a few again.

(Submitted by Norma Somerheiser)

GETTING ONE'S TAIL CHEWED

Remember my telling about getting chewed out for not having someone's name in the Happy Birthday column of our Chapter newsletter?

Well, this time it is an anniversary in June. Of course, the fact that this person didn't send the information to me was an insufficient excuse.

I do feel really bad, though, because the wife of this individual probably should be nominated for sainthood for putting up with this guy and for her sacrifices alone. I wish

I had recognized their anniversary.

Seriously, Henry and Judy Sader, Happy Anniversary.

Judy, I know how much Henry means to you and how much you need and depend on him. He is the wind beneath your wings, your Alpha and your Omega. I know this! Henry told me so! Henry would not lie! Would he??

(The opinions expressed by the editor are his and his alone and are based on nothing more than Bulldog Ring and German-Russian intelligence reports.)

Unsere Leute Erinnrung / In Memory

- Pauline Geier
- Adam "Curly" Schwindt
- Michael Andrew Gorka
- Henry Blitz, Jr.
- Lydia H. Stoehr
- Minnie G. Johnson
- Lydia Dinges
- Mary (Herman) McDowell
- Ruth L. Traudt
- Mildred G. Stutheit
- Clara Young

Lincoln Chapter AHSGR
631 D Street
Lincoln, NE 68502-1199

BRODA TICKET ORDER FORM

\$8.00 for adults \$4.00 for children under 12

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2005

5:00 to 7:00 P.M.

WSI Hall, 1430 N. 10th Street, Lincoln, NE

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Number of tickets: _____

Please include check and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

**Judy Runion
2848 Katelyn Cr.
Lincoln, NE 68516**

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me, Larry Schenkel, 438-3814. You may, also, purchase tickets from any of the Lincoln Chapter Board members, whose names are printed on page 3 of the newsletter. If you have a party of 8, you may reserve a table.