



Lincoln Chapter

The American Historical Society of Germans From Russia

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XVIII, ISSUE 4

July/August 2009

Convention 2009

Another convention has come and gone and old friendships were rekindled while new friendships were being forged. I can't begin to tell you how kind our Canadian cousins were to us. We really felt at home.

Many, many thanks to Mabel Kiessling, Leona Mann, and all of the hard-working volunteers who made this convention another great one. Again, all of these people did everything they could to make us feel welcome and comfortable.

Frank McLean, from Washington, was in attendance again, even though his lovely wife, Delma, was not. Frank is the GR in their family. Another familiar face was Ed Babitski from Arizona. Ed was not there for research, he was there to see old friends, make new ones, and to work

as a volunteer for the convention. These two men, and a lot of other people, are why Norma and I keep going to the conventions year after year.

I know that a lot of people go to the conventions to do research but, for me, it's the people I've met. Some of them are D. B. Schwartzkopf from Kansas, Sol Ruff from Calgary, John Althouse from Edmonton, Anne Stang from Calgary, Jene Goldhammer from Portland (a new Board member) and Jim Philbert from Wisconsin.

Does it sound like I had a good time? I did, even though a lot of my time was spent in meetings for the Board of Directors. This won't be a problem for me in the future as I have had to resign from the Board because of health issues. I had another year left to serve and Judy Runion, bless her heart,

allowed her name to be nominated from the floor and was elected to fill my vacancy.

Some more people who deserve recognition for their dedication to AHSGR during this convention are the spouses of the Board members. They don't just sit around or go shopping - they volunteer! They are: Barb Bretz, Charlotte Hoak, Gary Sellenrick, Jan Siebert, Betty Weibert, Deanna Zitterkopf, Mary Kate Schenk, Wilann Sefton, and Bob and Leona Janke (one on each Board).

Drop in during the fall Board Meeting at the Heritage Center and thank these folks. The meetings will be held October 8, 9, and 10.

2009 Calendar Lincoln Chapter American Historical Society of Germans from Russia

August 11, 2009	Coffee Club	9:00AM	Stauffer's	48th & Hwy 2
August 17, 2009	Board Meeting	7:00PM		631 "D" St.
September 8, 2009	Coffee Club	9:00AM	Stauffer's	48th & Hwy 2
September 20, 2009	Gen'l Membership Meeting	2:00PM (Refreshments following)		631 "D" St.
September 21, 2009	Board Meeting	7:00 PM		631 "D" Street
October 13, 2009	Coffee Club	9:00AM	Stauffer's	48th & Hwy 2
October 19, 2009	Board Meeting	7:00PM		631 "D" St.
November 6, 2009	Broda Dinner	5:00-7:00PM	WSI Hall	1430 N 10th St.
November 10, 2009	Coffee Club	9:00AM	Stauffer's	48th & Hwy 2
November 16, 2009	Board Meeting	7:00PM		631 "D" St.
December 5, 2009	Christmas Festival	11:30AM-3:00PM		631 "D" St.
December 8, 2009	Coffee Club	9:00AM	Stauffer's	48th & Hwy 2
December, 2009	Board Member's Christmas Dinner		(Date, time and location TBA)	
January 10, 2010	Annual Membership Meeting (Potluck Dinner & Election of Officers)	1:00PM	Immanuel Church Fellowship Hall (10th & Charleston Sts)	



And So It Began...

On December 20, 1968, Articles of Incorporation were duly signed under the Colorado Non-profit Corporation Act.

They were duly signed and acknowledged by Byron Anderson, Secretary of State for Colorado. The names on the Articles of Incorporation were: Mrs. Marie Gilbert, Chester G. Krieger, Jerry Lehr, David J. Miller, Mrs. Theodosia F. Urbach, and Mrs. Gerda S., Walker.

There were sixteen original directors on the initial Board of Directors. Those first directors were: Mrs. Rachel Amen, Loveland, CO; Jerry Lehr, Denver, CO; Arthur E. Flegel, Menlo Park, CA; David J. Miller, Greeley, CO; Prof. Adam Gresinger, Winnipeg, Canada; W. C. Raugust, Odessa, WA; Mrs. Marie Gilbert, Aurora, CO; Harold Stoll, Burley, ID; Victor C. Leikem, Atlantic Highlands, NJ; Mrs. Emma S. Haynes, 503 Admin. Co., SJA Section, 3rd Armored Division, APO NY 09039; Mrs. Theodosia Urbach and William F. Urbach, Denver, CO; Prof. Joseph S. Height, Franklin, IN; Mrs. Gerda S. Walker, Denver, CO; Judge Ray R. Friederich, Rugby, ND; Chester G. Krieger, Denver, CO.

It was at this meeting that the Board of Directors asked those present from Lincoln to organize a Chapter.

(Delores Schwartz submitted the following note as well as the letter from Ruth Amen.)

In the beginning, Mother and I left by train from the Lincoln depot late on a Saturday night for Denver, Colorado to attend a meeting of AHSGR.

We arrived in Denver the next morning and were greeted to a heavy, wet snow with about four inches of slush on the ground.

A cousin of Mother's took us to the church where the meeting was to take place. We were greeted with warmth and gladness. The meeting was interesting and we enjoyed meeting all the GR's from that area. This was the first time that I had met Ruth Amen who was very gracious to Mother and I and this was also her first time attending any AHSGR meetings. David Miller, the President at that time, gave Ruth, Mother and I the job of forming the first chapter of AHSGR in

Lincoln.

We deeply appreciated the ride to the depot from Jerry and Pauline Lehr, just making it on time.

SO YOU PLAN TO ORGANIZE AN AHSGR CHAPTER

How we did it in Lincoln, NE

In our files there is a memo from David J. Miller, National President of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia. It is dated February 6, 1969, and it lists the names of the members in Lincoln, Nebraska, as of that date—three individual members and one family membership. A letter of the same date suggests that Mrs. Delores K. Schwartz and Ruth M. Amen plan an organization meeting in Lincoln. The suggestion became a charge when the two of us, and Delores' mother, Mrs. Katherine Giebelhaus, attended a meeting in Denver on March 2. The International Board asked us to organize a Chapter in Lincoln.

Our own enthusiasm was great. The program in Denver and the opportunity to visit with others who were interested in their heritage indicated to us that there must be many more Lincolniters who would want to share in the excitement of learning more about the history and achievements of Germans from Russia.

How should we begin? This was the question which Delores, her mother and I discussed on March 12. We decided to invite several friends and relatives to a "talk it over" session to acquaint them with the goals and purposes of AHSGR. On May 15, there were seven of us at a meeting held at the American Forward Association. Our four recruits listened and questioned and thought this organization was long overdue. They wanted to join and they would help spread the word. Again each person present agreed to invite several others to help us get a Chapter started and on June 13 we met again. There were several new faces, but we were still seven. Patiently we again described AHSGR, its goals and hopes and with enthusiasm running high, we decided to work individually during the

summer months lining up recruits to bring to a meeting on September 12. Others who had joined in the meantime were also invited. When ten showed up we took a giant step. We, Edward Schwartzkopf, Mrs. Magdalene Lebsack Novak, Mrs. Marie Willis, Miss Clara Wertz, Mrs. Marie Collins, Ralph Giebelhaus, Roger L. Welsch, Miss Frances D. Amen, Mrs. Delores K. Schwartz, and Miss Ruth M. Amen, would be the Committee. Boldly we set Sunday afternoon, November 18, 1969, as the date for a "come one, come all" meeting.

We had three more planning sessions on October 2 and 22 and November 5 to suggest names of people to invite, to plan the program, and to just plain keep our planning group excited about the project we had undertaken. Then we kept our fingers crossed. By this time we had about 22 national members in Lincoln and we hoped at least all of these would appear.

How do you estimate the turnout for your first meeting? We had sent out about 80 flyers to Lincoln people and told them to bring their friends. We also mailed notices to every AHSGR member in Nebraska in case any of them would be in Lincoln at that time. We placed flyers in stores and on church bulletin boards. We decided to plan on 60 to 70 and told ourselves that we should not be discouraged if at least 35 appeared. The Committee arrived an hour ahead of the meeting time and soon there were others. As people came, they signed a register and received a name tag. Imagine our delight! When Ed Schwartzkopf, our Master of Ceremonies, said, "Guten Tag" to the group, there were 126 assembled in the Community Room of the National Bank of Commerce.

Our program? It was very simple. We "played it by ear" for the most part. We had an invocation by Paul J. Amen and heard special greetings from our Mayor, Sam Schwartzkopf, one of our own people. We told them about the organization. Each person present introduced himself and as they told which colony in Russia they or their parents came from, we tallied the reports. Some told interesting stories about their early days in this country. The oldest person present was 92, the youngest under 10. Rev. Benjamin



Rieger told about the dulcimer and how he builds them. There was much interest in the maps showing the German-Russian colonies and we were sold out much too soon. We told the group about Dr. Karl Stump's book "The German-Russian," which has been translated by Dr. Joseph S. Height. Led by Mrs. Victor Maul, we sang some old favorites in German—"Jesu Geh Voran," "Oh Du Frohliche," "Gott Ist Die Liebe," "Stille Nacht," and "So Nim Den Meine Hande."

We allowed lots of time for visiting, renewing friendships, getting re-acquainted with kinfolk, and looking at exhibits of memorabilia brought by those who came. Coffee and cookies furnished by the bank were served. All of us were aglow. One person wrote, "I came away feeling filled with pride and enthusiasm." "Did they want to meet again?" we asked. The answer was a resounding "yes," and 44 new members paid their dues that afternoon.

Encouraged by this beginning our Committee has moved forward. From the meeting roster and the national membership list we made a card file in three sections: Lincoln members, out-state Nebraska members, and prospective members. We now had a better mailing list to which we keep adding.

Our second meeting, held in the same location on March 8, 1970, attracted 176. Mr. & Mrs. David J. Miller and Mrs. Gerda Walker came from Colorado. The

Millers showed their pictures taken in Russia. There were 23 out-of-towners including the Herman Amets from Sioux City, Iowa. We enrolled 21 new members. A dinner meeting for the committee members, our Colorado visitors, Senator and Mrs. Ted Wenzlaff, Dr. and Mrs. Donald Herzog, and others who had helped with our meetings the night before gave us the opportunity to discuss many things related to the organization and its future.

A welcome problem now confronted us. We had outgrown our meeting place. When the welfare society invited us to use their facilities for a meeting, we accepted gladly. Our May 24, 1970 meeting flyer announced that we would feature German-Russian food "prepared by the best cooks this side of heaven." There were grebel, runza, coffeecake, rye bread, home made sausage and lots of coffee. Our oldest members provided the program. Mr. John Strauch and Mr. Henry J. Amen told about their early days in Lincoln and Mr. Gottfried Schumacher played several selections on the dulcimer. We always sing, and this time we were led by Henry Hohnstein. The First International Convention to be held in Greeley, Colorado, in June was promoted. Most important of all, the group unanimously agreed that they wanted a permanent organization in Lincoln. Our approach had been to get them to join the national organization first by offering interesting programs, involving lots of peo-

ple and by giving all a sense of participation. We are ready to enroll new AHSGR members at every meeting. Each program is planned so they leave asking when we will meet again. By this time that canary yellow flyer in the mail means a good time ahead.

Excitement over the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia continues to ride high in Lincoln. Fourteen of us attended the Greeley convention where the announcement was made that we had been granted the first Chapter Charter on June 4, 1970. What we gleaned from that convention we tried to pass on to our other members at a Chapter dinner on October 8, 1970, with 212 present. The authentic "Broda" menu was prepared and served by members of the Chapter Board and their wives. The Directors that were added to the original committee were Conrad Gabelhaus, G. Scotty Kaufman, and Jake Sinner. Mrs. Gabelhaus, Mrs. Skinner, Mrs. Schwartz and Mrs. Marie Gannon were chief cooks.

It was a distinct honor when the convention accepted our invitation to host the second International Convention, which is to be held June 17-20, 1971, here in Lincoln. We hope all of you will plan to enjoy it with us.

Ruth M. Amen, President
Lincoln, Nebraska, Chapter

The following is a list of the charter members of the Lincoln Chapter from the Lincoln area:

Mr. C. James Amen	Mrs. Conrad Amen	Miss Frances Amen	Mr. & Mrs. G. H. Amen
Mr. H. J. Amen	Mr. & Mrs. Harry Amen	Mr. & Mrs. Paul J. Amen	Mr. & Mrs. R. D. Amen
Miss Ruth M. Amen	Mr. Wilber H. Amen	Mr. & Mrs. Herman R Baker	Mr. & Mrs. Alex Bauer
Mrs. Katherine Becker	Mr. & Mrs. H. A. Beltz	Miss Elfrieda Bostron	Mrs. Ted R. Collins
Mr. & Mrs. Emil Darnauer	Mrs. Alex (Mary) Decker	Mrs. Katherine Derr	Mr. Henry Fahrenbruch
Mr. & Mrs. Alex Froscheiser	Mr. & Mrs. George Geier	Mr. Edwin George	Mr. Peter George
Mrs. Anna Giebelhaus	Mrs. Katherine Giebelhaus	Mr. Ralph L. Giebelhaus	Mrs. Pauline F. Gillies
Miss Helen S. Griess	Mr. Otto B. Griess	Mr. John Hergert	Mr. Andrew Herzog
Mr. & Mrs. Henry Herzog	Miss Helen Heuser	Mr. William Heuser	Mrs. G. S. Jourdan
Mr. Alex Kahle	Mr. & Mrs. Gottlieb Kaufman	Mr. & Mrs. Harvey Kaufman	Mr. Edward J. Klein
Rev. H. G. Knaub	Mr. & Mrs. H. J. Koehler	Mrs. John Krieger	Mr. & Mrs. Phil Kruse
Mrs. Homer L. Kyle	Mr. Edward W. Lebsack	Mr. John A. Lebsack	Mrs. Gus Lebsack
Mrs. J. Chris Loos	Mr. George Loose	Mrs. Henry Lorenz	Mr. William Lorenz
Miss Amelia Ostermiller	Mrs. Katherine E. Ostwald	Prof. Robert A. Meininger	Mrs. Stanley Novak
Mr. & Mrs. Ferdinand Nuss	Mrs. O. K. Perrin	Mr. & Mrs. Edward Piening	Mr. Jacob Reifschneider
Mr. Henry Reifschneider	Rev. Benjamin Rieger	Mrs. Martin Roh	Mr. & Mrs. Ruben Scheidt
Mr. & Mrs. G. Scott Schleicher	Mr. John Schreiber	Mr. & Mrs. Don Schwartz	Mr. Edward Schwartzkopf
Mr. John Sell	Mr. & Mrs. Jake Sinner	Mr. Paul F. Stoehr	Mr. J. George Stroh
Mr. Jacob Strackbein	Mrs. J. Howard Walters	Mr. Chris Welsch	Mr. & Mrs. Roger Welsch
Mr. & Mrs. John B. Wertz	Miss Clara Wertz	Mrs. Gerald Willis	Mr. & Mrs. Jacob Younger, Jr.
Mrs. Alvin Zichek			



A Church Celebration

Immanuel Lutheran Congregation
(formerly 8th & "D" St. - Now 11th & Plum St.)
is celebrating their 100th anniversary this year.
You are invited to come and visit at anytime.

Worship Services: Sunday 8:00AM & 10:45 AM weekly
Special Event: September 20th @ Noon

Immanuel will host a German Dinner
Sauerkraut and Bratwurst as main dish.
Members will provide salads and desserts.

Following Dinner a guest speaker will give a presentation on
"What brought the Germans from Russia
to immigrate to Nebraska."

Quilter News

The quilt that will be given away at the Broda Dinner in November, is finished and will be on display at the Heritage Center, 631 "D" Street. The quilt is called "Quilter's Scraps". As usual, our quilters have put in many hours working on this beautiful piece of art.

Judy Runion has told me that the quilt our quilters are going to work on for the Lincoln Convention in August 2010 is an Amish type quilt.

2009 BOARD MEMBER DIRECTORY LINCOLN CHAPTER - AHSGR

BABCOCK, Sidonia	403 Stagecoach Avenue	Hickman, NE 68372	792-2175
BILL, Leslie	3338 Glenhaven Place	Lincoln, NE 68506	486-0596
BORRELL, Nancy	2221 Devonshire Drive	Lincoln, NE 68506	489-2583
BOUWENS, Nancy	1121 N. 79th Street	Lincoln, NE 68521	435-3052
DINGES, Dale	1609 S. Cotner Blvd.	Lincoln, NE 68506	488-5154
GINGRICH, Gail	631 D Street	Lincoln, NE 68502	474-3363 x16
HERSTEIN, Gladys	520 Teakwood Drive	Lincoln, NE 68510	489-5976
LOOS, Paul	400 Fletcher	Lincoln, NE 68521	477-3978
RUNION, Judy	2848 Katelyn Circle	Lincoln, NE 68516	423-3853
SADER, Henry	Route 1	Roca, NE 68430	423-4212
WEBER, Don	6201 Normal Blvd., Apt. 322	Lincoln, NE 68506	489-4898
WEBER, John	4940 Sinclair Court	Lincoln, NE 68516	488-2313
WHITE, Ruth	3300 Serenity Circle #7	Lincoln, NE 68542	423-4345

(Mail to: PO Box 23095, Lincoln, NE 68516)

Officers are elected to the Board of Directors for a three-year term. However, if you are interested in serving for a shorter period of time, you could ask about a one-year appointment, to determine if it would be something you would enjoy doing.

2009 OFFICERS

President	none	Treasurer	Sidonia Babcock
1st Vice President	Ruth White	Corresponding Secretary ..	Gladys Herstein
2nd Vice President	Nancy Borrell	Historian	Judy Runion
Recording Secretary	Leslie Bill	Membership Chairman	Dale Dinges

Board of Directors Fall Meeting

The fall Board of Directors meetings will be held at the Heritage Center on October 8, 9, and 10. Most of the spouses listed in my convention article will also be here in Lincoln, working on projects for AHSGR while their spouses are in meetings.

I know many of our Lincoln members know these people because they met while volunteering at the Heritage Center. Those of you who do not know them, come down during the meetings and get to know them. It just might give you a whole different perspective on be an active, contributing member.

Volunteers

Thank you to the volunteers who helped with the June mailing. They are:

Bill & Elsa Amen
Ed Bartule
Nancy Borrell
Virginia Dietrich
Phil Dinges
Bill & Lois Leonhardt
Bob & Joyce Riddle
Judy Runion
Barb Schmidt
Delores Schwartz
Annie Settell
Norma Sommerheiser
Susan Stoehr
Don Weber
John and Ruby Weber

*The best thing about the
future is that it only
comes one day at a time.
~ Abraham Lincoln*

HERZLICHEN GLUCKWUNSCH ZUM GEBURSTAGL HAPPY BIRTHDAY

July

Jolene McInnis
Virginia Dietrich
Gladys Herstein
Esther Heckman
Marti Kaufman
Kathy Tichota
Mary Ann Gooding
Derald Drbal
Kathy Hill

August

Kathleen Schreiber-Svoboda
Larry Schenkel
Ed Herstein
Bernice Booth
Heidi Dinges
Lillian Bauer
Robert Settell
Sheryl Heidenreich

FROHLICH JUHRESTAG HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

July

Steve and Cheryl Kahler

August

Dale and Heidi Dinges
Kathy and Ronald Hill
J. "Scott" and Teri Nelson
Roger and Karen Trautwein

UNSERE LEUTE ERINNRYNG OUR PEOPLE IN MEMORY

Alexander "Al" Kruse
Vern Losh
Roma Hoffman
Lucille C. Steinmiller
Mary (Fischer) Long
Reuben Loos
Elaine J. Harris
Pauline Jacoby Dinges
Erma L. Hergenrader
Michael D. Kolb
Maxine Edna Spomer
Edwin D. Koehler
Shirley Ann (Will) Erickson
Mary K. "Blondie" Grasmick
Carl E. "Chubb" Rutt

Obituary

I am sure some of the long-time members of Lincoln Chapter will remember Art and Cleo Flegel. I met them at the first convention I attended which was in Denver in the late '80s. At every convention I've attended since then, I have met and chatted with Art. Unfortunately, Cleo passed away past spring. I am including the obituary from the New Mexico Chapter newsletter.

Cleora (Reuscher) Flegel

Cleora (Reuscher) Flegel, wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother peacefully entered her heavenly abode on the evening of April 17, 2009 at the age of 90 years. She died in her home in Menlo Park surrounded by her adoring family the same day she had been discharged from the hospital to be under Hospice care. Mourning her passing are her husband, Arthur; sons, Robert, Mark, and John together with their wives; nine grandchildren and their spouses; eight great-grandchildren; three sisters, one brother, and nieces and nephews.

Cleora was born in Ramona, Kansas, June 5, 1919, to Emanuel and Mary (Schnell) Reuscher and moved to Lodi, California with her family in 1920 where she graduated from Lodi High School in 1936. She met Arthur and they married in Lodi on April 27, 1940. This year they would have celebrated their 69th anniversary. They settled in Menlo Park in 1954 for the purpose of opening Flegel's Home Furnishings, now under control of their son, Mark. They have been members of the Menlo Park Presbyterian Church for 55 years. They purchased their current home in Menlo Park in 1965 and lived there 44 years.

Cleora, more commonly known as Cleo, was blessed with a warm and winsome personality and easily made many friends. Among her talents was her primary hobby of still-life oil painting. It was a gift that will long keep her in the memory of her appreciative family.

With Arthur, she enjoyed membership in AHSGR. As a result of several research trips to Germany and Russia, she was able to trace her ancestry back many generations to its places of origin.

A celebration of Cleo's life was held on April 29 at Menlo Park Presbyterian Church.

ATTENTION

To the members who came to the General Meeting at Headquarters on June 28, 2009, a most heartfelt "I'm sorry."

The meeting was canceled because of the convention being that month also, and I, Leslie Bill, did not get the notice out to our members.

Again, I apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused you.

~Leslie Bill

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

Passing of a GR Church

Faith United Church of Christ at 915 Charleston Street was founded and built by the Germans from Russia immigrants in 1902. In 1901, Salem Congregational church opened on the site. By 1907, Our Evangelical St. John's Church was built on the corner of 10th and New Hampshire streets. Both churches experienced rapid growth.

In 1916, Salem Congregational replaced its original building with the church that is there today. In 1966 the two churches merged into one, Faith United Church of Christ.

In 1991 Faith United had 224 members, but 18 years later they had lost more than half of the members, either from death or to other churches. Now there are only 51 members, most of whom are elderly and only 15 members are active.

On Sunday, July 12, 2009, Faith United held its last service, which included many of the traditions that were used over the years. One of which was the symbolic ringing of the bells. In the near future, the building will become the first home of Redeemer Presbyterian Church of America which was created after the fire that destroyed the historic Zion Church at 9th and "D" streets two years ago.

AHSGR member, Susan Stoehr has attended the church for 75 years. Her grandparents used to live across the street. Susan said the church was a beloved part of the North Bottoms.

Your Help is Needed

Karen Sue (Amen) Goehe is writing a book about Paul Amen being in the Olympics in Berlin in 1936 and Hank Amen being the base commander of Rhein-Main Air Force Base in Frankfurt in 1956.

The fact that the two brothers were Germans from Russia who had a strong connection to Germany before and after WWII could be an interesting story, especially as a way of looking at how the GRs in Lincoln were perceived during both WWI and WWII.

If anyone has interesting stories about living in either the South or North Bottoms during those wars, she'd appreciate hearing them.

Karen Sue (Amen) Goehe
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Lincoln, NE 68502
Home phone: 402-423-3220
Cell phone: 402-499-7930