



Lincoln Chapter
The American Historical Society of Germans From Russia
NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XXIII, ISSUE 4

July/August, 2014

It's That Time Again...

Here we are into summer and it's time for another newsletter. As they say, "Time flies when you're having fun!"

It's also preparation time for the upcoming convention. Norma and I recently attended one of the planning sessions and I am in awe of the dedication of members of our organization.

I didn't count the number of attendees but there were at least a dozen. Among them were Sherry Pawelko, the new office manager; Bob Wagner, president of the International Board of Directors; Paul Loos, president of the Lincoln Chapter and chairman of the Convention Planning Committee.

Two other members of the committee, who also were there, are Becky Schenaman and Donna Day. They happen to be sisters and are fairly new to the Lincoln Chapter board but that didn't keep them from jumping right into active participation. I think they are having a good time and enjoying being on the board.

Becky sent me a note in response to my questions about my heritage. Her Dad was Henry Bridegam, so we must be cousins. I agree. My grandmother was a Loos, so that make Sherry and Paul my cousins as well. As my Norma's grandmother was known to say, we're closely related because,

"Their dog ran through our potato patch."

Several years ago I wrote in the newsletter about Wilbur "Bill" Amen. I had several pictures of Bill when he was stationed in the Philippines during WWII. Bill survived the battles with the Japanese but Father Time took him from us in April.

Bill was on the Chapter Board when I first became active in AHSGR. We became good friends over the years and I will miss him. AHSGR has lost a treasured member.

Another treasured member who was on the board was Helen Schwartz. Helen passed away early in June. As with Bill, Helen and I became good friends and I will miss her, too. Besides working for every volunteer activity she also was one of the Lincoln Quilters. I have no idea how many quilts she helped with but I know they quilt at least two every year, one for the Convention raffle and one for the Broda raffle. Those quilts over the years have represented thousands of dollars for AHSGR's general fund. As much as I will miss her, the Quilters will probably miss her more.

That is not to say I won't miss others who have gone, it's just that some were closer to me than others.

For instance, I don't know how many

times I went to Klein's Bakery for Runza dough or to have the noodle dough mixed for our soup suppers. Also, when I was stationed at fire station #3, I bought a lot of German sausage for the meals at the station, as well as for myself.

Well, as my dad reportedly said when I was born, "Das ist alles!" □

A Prayer for Genealogists from the NE Panhandle Chapter

Lord, help me dig into the past
And sift the sands of time
That I might find the roots that made
This family tree of mine.

Lord, help me trace the ancient roads
On which my fathers trod,
And led them through so many lands,
To find our present sod.

Lord, help me find an ancient book
Or dusty manuscript,
That's safely hidden now away
In some forgotten crypt.

Lord, let it bridge the gap that haunts
My soul when I can't find,
The missing link between some
name
That ends the same as mine.

By Curtis Woods

MISSION STATEMENT

The American Historical Society of Germans from Russia is an international organization dedicated to the discovery, collection, preservation, and the dissemination of information related to the history, cultural heritage, and genealogy of Germanic settlers in the Russian Empire and their descendants. The International foundation of American Historical Society of Germans from Russia is responsible for exercising financial stewardship to generate, manage, and allocate resources which advance the mission and assist in securing the future of AHSGR.



Clarence Kissler's Corner

We'd like to thank Clarence Kissler, member of the Denver Metro Chapter, for this article which was titled "The Village Frank Newsletter." It was printed in the Denver Metro Chapter newsletter.

One evening, a number of years ago (July 12, 1971), my nephew Gary Kissler asked his grandfather (my father) to relate his recollections from his boyhood days in Frank. Hence, we now have a collection of short stories, and the author is Jacob Kissler, born and raised in Frank, Russia until the age of 19, when he came to America. Jacob and Analis Kissler immigrated from Frank to Grand Island, Nebraska, then to LaSalle, Colorado in 1914. The port of entry was Baltimore, Maryland on the ship "Koln." The time of this story was about the year 1910.

It is interesting how our immigrant ancestors referred to their homeland as "the old country." What courage it must have taken, to leave your homeland, your parents, brothers, sisters, friends and lifestyle, etc. and venture into a totally unknown new country called America. No money, no language, just a strong faith and optimism for a better life!

(The following are excerpts from the tape recording of Jacob Kissler, describing his travel experiences from Frank to Baltimore in 1913.)

The Journey Begins From Frank, Russia-1913

My wife Analis and I left Frank, Russia on May 15, 1913. My Father, Conrad Kissler, had a blacksmith shop and as soon as we were old enough, we had to work. In the old country, when a man was 40 years old he was considered to be an old man. So, when I reached the age of 19, I decided to get married and go to the United States. This was our "Honeymoon."

From Frank, we had to drive about 25 miles with a horse and buggy to the first train. My wife, Analis, also 19 years old, had never seen a train before and was afraid to get on board. But we had to get on. We traveled for four days through Russia to a border

town between Russia and Germany where our passports and papers were checked. We stayed at the border town overnight. The next morning we boarded the train again and went to Berlin. Upon entering Berlin, we went across a big bridge and saw a parade with the Kaiser and all of his soldiers all in white uniforms, riding white horses. It was interesting to see.

We left Berlin by train and went to "Ikoon" (probably Ein Kommen, meaning entry point). We went through a medical review and if there were any problems, you could not continue on the trip or stay until the problem was healed. We were located in a huge hall for the next four days. We were provided with food and a place to sleep. Along with us were a large number of Jews. They would not eat the bologna that was given to them, so it provided us with a little extra food. On the fourth evening, we all went down to the kitchen for supper. All that was left to eat was some real fat pork, a bottle of beer, and rye bread. So, we had something to eat.

Life on the Atlantic

After our supper, at about 10 pm, they took us down to the harbor in Bremerhaven. They had ladders strung and we had to climb up on the ladders to get on the ship. It was a big ship, named the "KOLN." Our journey across the Atlantic to America started from the port of Bremerhaven, Germany at about midnight. We were on our way to America.

As we went through the English Channel, many people went to sleep but soon woke up very seasick. My wife woke me up and said, "Listen to all of the sick people." My aunt told her to sleep or she would also get sick. Soon she also became very seasick. Many wondered if they would make it to America.

Soon we were in the Atlantic and

were sailing along. Along the side of the ship we could see many sea gulls and "flying fish." On the second day, we were permitted to come out to the upper deck for fresh air. We could not see any land, only the "water and heaven above." During the trip, we had only one, real bad weather day. The "KOLN" was like a bucking bronco. Many people continued to be seasick.

During the voyage, most of the people were kept in between the decks. We were all basically on the second level what was called "in-between the decks." The single men were kept separated from the families and married couples. They spent time on the upper deck near the front of the ship.

When food was served, everyone had to be in line. Each person was given a small pail for their food. As you went along the line, the cooks put food into the pail. One of the cooks wanted to know if anyone would help in the kitchen peeling potatoes and slicing onions. The other man and I volunteered to work in the kitchen and as a result, we were able to get more food. It paid to volunteer to work for the extra benefit.

We were on the ship "KOLN" for 14 or 15 days. We finally came to America coming into a port between Baltimore and Philadelphia. At the port, we climbed down a long ladder and into a lifeboat that took us to shore. There we were placed in a newly built quarantine station.

(The following are two more stories as told by Jacob Kissler and taken from Clarence Kissler's Corner.)

The Carriage was Only One-Half Painted

My first job was with the husband of my Dad's sister. One day he went away and wanted me to paint a carriage and a few other things. Well, the wife of one of the neighbors, a Russian family,



Clarence Kissler's Corner (continued)

had a child and it was common for the Russians to celebrate the birth day. They had a lot of vodka and I had an accordion. They came over to borrow my accordion, and then later wanted to do me a favor, so invited me to come over and have a drink with them. So, I went over and they had pure alcohol and I just took a good drink. I was young and didn't pay much attention to it.

A little later, I went home for dinner and I could feel it. Since I did not finish painting the carriage, I went out after dinner and started painting. Well, I upset the paint bucket with half of the carriage painted, and no more paint.

The next day, my boss wanted to know what I had done. I told him what happened and he was very upset and cussed at me. I finally jumped up and told him everything I could think of and said, "You give me my pay and I'm through with you." He would not give me any pay and said that without his permission I would never get another job in this town.

I walked down the street where a man asked me where I was going. I told him I was looking for a job. He says, "Well, I have a job for you." [Note: Are all teenagers, worldwide, the same?]

Riding the Camels in Frank, Russia

I wasn't old enough to help in the blacksmith shop but was able to help the farmers on the farm for just a few cents a day. I worked for this rich fellow who had four camels, three oxen, and

several horses. He went out to the prairie where my job was to mow the grass. The grass grew about one foot high and was used for feed.

Near the field was a small lake. The boss arrived, bringing with him some hay for the horse, some salt, and a couple sacks of oats. He unloaded the provisions by the lake and then left. We stayed by the lake for a number of days. We set up three posts with a kettle hanging on the cooking. Under the kettle we had collected a large pile of ashes.

Well, one day the camels walked to the lake, knocked over our cooking utilities and then rolled in the ashes. Then went to tear open the sacks, eating the oats and hay, licking some salt, and then drank a belly full of water. When we came back from the field, we didn't have anything to eat.

The hired man who was our boss told us boys to go out and get those "devils" and ride the hell out of them. So we got on the camels and was riding around the prairie like we were jack rabbits. It was really fun!

The camels were used for field work. We would hook them in the plow and plow the fields. As you know, the fields have a thistle that is like a big rose. The camels like to eat these thistles. You know how tall and long-necked these camels were. When they saw a thistle, they would take off with the plow over the hill and out of the furrow before you could handle them. So we rode the heck out of them and really

made them sweat.

Finally, on the way home, we came upon a herd of Russian-owned horses, which were pastured near the grain fields. When we got close to them, we had one camel who was a little bit lame. When you poked him to make him walk faster, he just yelled like a steam engine. Our hired man told us to make those devils [camels] scream to scare those Russian horses.

The horses took off running through the grain fields causing damage to the grain. The next morning the Russian officials caught the horses, located the owners and had to pay a fine. [Note: These boys seemed to have a good time, and it is clear that the hired man did not care much about his Russian neighbors.]

It was common to keep the camels in the yard when not out in the fields. Many of the homes had roofs that were thatched straw. When they would get hungry, they would just eat the roofs of the homes. One day, a group of camels got out of the corral and walked over to a little Russian town. The owner asked if we, the boys, [we were kind of a rough bunch anyway] would go over and get the camels and offered a bottle of vodka. My friend, Henry Boderius, caught the one with the one-hump. He was a slim guy anyway. We caught all of them and rode them back to our village and got our pint of vodka. □

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Summertime in the North Bottoms

submitted by Becky Schenaman, North Bottoms, Lincoln, Nebraska

The heat of summer has arrived. Growing up we did not have air conditioning. But we still managed to get through the heat of the summers.

Do you remember going bare footed on those hot sidewalks? Our little feet must have been hard as leather to do that.

One of the best parts of summer was going to the swimming pool. We loved to go to Muni Pool and play under the fountains and on the slanted side of the pool.

I was the only one of my sisters and brother who could not swim. Try as I might I could not learn. I still can't to this day.

But I loved to lie in the shallow water and cool off. I can still smell the chlorine and the smell of the changing room in my mind. An afternoon at the pool meant good sleeping that night. That was if you did not get sunburned that day. We never heard of sun blocker then.

As teenagers, we girls used baby oil mixed with a little Mercurochrome to rub on for a tan. It just broiled your skin. Gosh, were we dumb!



We also spent summer mornings at the park doing supervised recreation. I was the park champ at box hockey. Remember that? All you needed was a wood box, a golf ball, two cut off broom sticks and

you would whack the ball between two holes in the center board and then out the other players hole to win. It was fast and your fingers got really sore from being hit with that broom stick. But it was fun. I do not know if kids play it today.

Summer was a time of fireflies, hide and seek, kick the can, and sticky chins

from popsicles and cold watermelon.

Heck, if we didn't have 25 cents for the pool, an old wash tub in the yard to lie in or the rubber hose to run through would do.

On really hot nights we would sleep on the porch with the front door unlocked so we could come in if we got scared. But the stars never shined brighter or the moon never seemed closer then when we giggled away on the porch. That was the magic of a warm summer night.

I hope you all have the memories of the summers of your youth and the joy of remembering the voices of your families and the love of home.

Have a great summer everyone. ☐

[Editor's note: How many of you remember Mercurochrome? According to the Internet [Wikipedia] the FDA halted its sale in 1998 because of fears of potential mercury poisoning.]

HERZLICHEN GLUCKWUNSCH ZUM GEBURSTAGL "Happy Birthday"

July

Sheryl Heidenreich
Gladys Herstein
James Jacobs
Catherine Jacobs
Cecelia Sherman
Don Weber
Henry Sader

August

Heidi Dinges
Robert Doberstein
Richard Geier
Ampone Hergenrader
Larry Schenkel
Henry Sader
(OK, Henry, your name
is in the newsletter.)



FROHLICH JUHRESTAG "Happy Anniversary"

August

Bob and Joyce Riddle

Unsere Leute Erinnyng "Our People in Memory"

Wilbur H Amen Marion L [Brown] Mueller Leonard L R Dinges
Harry Koch Jacqueline P Reichenback
Wesley D Klein Leah S Scheck
Helen Schwartz

Your Help is Needed

If you are aware of the death of someone who is a German from Russia, please give Judy Lawson, the Chapter Corresponding Secretary, a call. She would like to honor them by putting their name in the Newsletter. Judy's phone number is: 402-420-9580.

Sneaky Ways of Finding Your Long Lost Relatives

by Ginny's Genealogical Gems by Ginny Ackerson (from the InterMountain Chapter newsletter)

Are you having a hard time finding family members and proving relationships? Do you people seem to be hiding? There are some sneaky research techniques that will help you to find your family.

When using online searches find out what the wild card characters are for the site and use them liberally along with any Soundex features. For example, Adel* will find Adelle, Adele, Adeline, Adelaide, etc. You could also search of Ad*I* and get additional hits like Adaline. Remember to check for nicknames; Patsy for Martha, Ted for Theodore, etc., as you don't know how they may have been recorded. Soundex searches will get you all names that sound similar; Crittenden, Critendon, Crittinton, and any other way that someone could have misspelled it in the records. A wild card

search for this name could look like this; Cr*t*n. A good exercise is to write down every possible way to misspell a name and then check indexes for each variation.

Sometimes you have to research other relatives in order to prove your direct line. I suspected James's father was Nathan but they appeared in no documents together. In the 1850 census, an aged Nathan was living with his daughter, Patsy, to whom he left his estate when he died 2 years later. I checked to see if Patsy left a will...she had, and named her brother, James as her executor...thus proving the direct relationship. An unknown child was added to the family when James referred to his nephew, Thomas, son of his deceased brother, Thomas, in his application to administer her estate.

You may not find just one document

that defines relationships, names and places so you may have to use several documents to complete and prove family groups. Abraham was married in the 1850 census, so we needed other documents to prove his parentage. We checked the city directories and found a Thomas and an Elizabeth living at the same address as Abraham before he was married. Were these his parents? Further research in the census, directories, poorhouse, death, and cemetery records proved that Elizabeth was his mother; Thomas was his brother and they found that his father, John H., had died when the boys were young, leaving Elizabeth as the "widow of John H." in the city directories many years earlier. Two of John's grandchildren were named after him which was further proof of family relationships. □

Websites suggested by Yulia Tsybal:

(taken from the Oregon Chapter Newsletter) Thanks, Yulia. (Yulia is a member of the staff at AHSGR headquarters.)

www.rusdeutsch.ru/ (This is the official site of the German community of Russia with news, educational resources, projects, etc. The "History of the Germans of Russia" is an online version of a course book by German, Pleve, and Ilarionova. It has many pictures, maps, and links to original documents).

lists.memo.ru/ (Lists of victims of political terror in the USSR compiled by Human Rights Activists Society "Memorial").

wwwii-photos-maps.com/19thcenturyrussianmaps/ (Nice maps of the XIX century Russian gubernias [provinces]).

stadtplandienst.de/home.asp (Maps of any built-up area in Germany)

suetterlinschrift.de/Englishch/Sutterlin.htm (Help with reading Suetterlin - one of the Old German scripts).

Request for Information

(This request came via the website from De Anna Merrill.)

I grew up away from my family and did not know that my mother was born in Lincoln, NE until I moved to Kansas from Alaska.

My Grandmother, Lillian Agatha Esau, was one of the first children in her family to be born in the United States. The rest of the family was Russian Mennonites. I have always wanted to know where my roots were and why I have the characteristics that I do.

If anyone has information on the Esau family that they can share, De Anna can be contacted at ltltwty@hotmail.com or 785-556-5921. Her family tree is on Myheritage.com if you would like to look at it. □

GRs in the Community

It was a great weekend and a wonderful day to celebrate one's heritage.

And that's just what Lincoln Chapter members Paul Loos, Jay Jacox, and Corinne Jacox did on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend. The trio represented Germans from Russia at the Lincoln Children's Museum's first annual "Passport to Play" multicultural event.

The Germans from Russia were joined by groups representing Czech, Chinese, Japanese, Middle Eastern, Irish, and Native American cultures.

The Lincoln Chapter's booth was festive. The Matryoshka "nesting dolls" were quite popular with visitors and several pictures of them were taken.

An example of a GR quilt hung in exhibition while children were encouraged to design their own quilt pattern with sticky-backed foam shapes on card stock paper while "Dutch Hop" music played in the background. Children could then take home their creations.

The Children's Museum tells us that about 480 people saw our booth that day, including 261 children. A fun day, well spent. □



Pencils and Genealogy

From the NE Panhandle Chapter Newsletter

Just before putting a pencil in the box, a pencil maker told the pencil five important lessons.

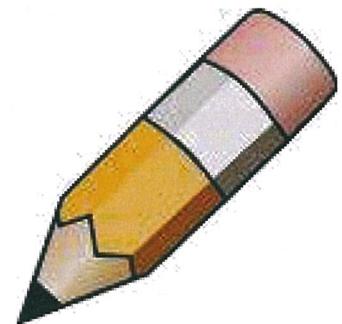
- Everything you do will always leave a mark.
- You can always correct the mistakes you make.
- What is important is what's inside you.
- In life, you will undergo painful sharp-

ening, which will only make you better.

- To be the best pencil, you must allow yourself to be held and guided by the hand that holds you.

We can all use a little sharpening, but we can leave significant records for future generations.

Mistakes, corrections, and missing links are all a part of genealogy. It is



the quest for missing data and the desire to share what is inside of us that guide us onward. □



Surnames and their Meanings

Adler (eagle)	Kloster (monastery)	Sauer (sour)
Bauder (room)	Knopf (button)	Schafer (shepherd)
Bauer (farmer)	Koch (cook)	Schlegel (drumstick)
Baum (tree)	Kramer (grocer)	Schmer (pain)
Braun (brown)	Krieger (warrior)	Schneider (cutter)
Busch (bush)	Krug (pitcher)	Schneidmiller (cutting miller)
Ehrlich (honest)	Kutscher (coachman)	Schnell (quickly)
Feuerstein (flint)	Lauer (wait)	Schreiber (scribe)
Fischer (fisherman)	Lehr (teacher)	Schreiner (carpenter)
Fuchs (fox)	Mai (may)	Schwan (swan)
Giebelhaus (gabled house)	Maurer (mason)	Steinbrecher (quarryman)
Glaser (glazier)	Metzger (butcher)	Steinmetz (stonemason)
Glockenhammer (bell hammer)	Ochsenhirt (ox)	Strauch (shrub)
Heimbuch (home book)	Ostermiller (Easter Miller)	Topfer (potter)
Henkel (handle)	Pfeifer (piper)	Trupp (troop)
Holzer (woods)	Pinnecker (tiller)	Wacker (brave)
Jager (hunter)	Rader (wheels)	Weber (weaver)
Jung (young)	Reiter (rider)	Weiss (white)
Kammerzell (chamber cell)	Richter (judge)	Zentner (hundredweight)
Kindsvater (child's father)	Ritter (knight)	Zitterkopf (shake head)
Klein (small)	Romer (Roman)	

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North Bottoms 12th Annual Reunion

Friday, September 12th 2014

5 p.m.

Welfare Society Hall
1430 North 10th Street

Volga Boatmen Dinner

5 - 7 p.m.

Keynote Speaker:

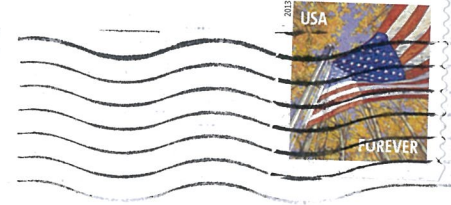
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2014 Calendar of Events

June 29	General Membership Meeting	.2:00 p.m. (refreshments following)	631 D Street
July 7-13	International Convention		Lincoln, NE
July 21	Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.	631 D Street
August 12	Coffee Club	9:00 a.m.	Stauffer's ... 48th & Hwy. 2
August 18	Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.	631 D Street
September 9	Coffee Club	9:00 a.m.	Stauffer's ... 48th & Hwy. 2
September 15	Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.	631 D Street
September 21	General Membership Meeting & Picnic	4:00 p.m.	Antelope Park Shelter
October 14	Coffee Club	9:00 a.m.	Stauffer's ... 48th & Hwy. 2
October 20	Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.	631 D Street
November 7	Broda Dinner	5:00-7:00 p.m.	WSI Hall ... 1430 N. 10th St.
November 11	Coffee Club	9:00 a.m.	Stauffer's ... 48th & Hwy. 2
November 17	Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.	631 D Street
December 9	Coffee Club	9:00 a.m.	Stauffer's ... 48th & Hwy. 2
December 15	Board Members' Christmas Dinner		location to be determined
Jan. 11, 2015	Annual Membership & Business Meeting (Fellowship Hall, Potluck Dinner & Election of Officers)	1:00 p.m.	Immanuel Church 10th & Charleston