



NEWSLETTER

“Spring is when you feel like whistling even with a shoe full of slush.” — Doug Larson

From Your Editor...

Well, here we go again, time for the newsletter and I'm saying, "What will we write for the newsletter, Norma?" "Are you kidding, I don't even know what I'm going to fix for supper!" Oops, looks like I asked the wrong person. Can't ask the dog, friends and relatives are sick and tired of me calling them asking for ideas so guess I'll have to wing it.

As you will see, there's another story from Becky Schenamen. She has answered the call from your befuddled editor. Is Becky the only one out there, or is she the only one proud enough of their German-Russian heritage to share it?

Strike that last question, of course you're proud or you wouldn't be getting this newsletter. What I'm trying to say is, how about showing some of that pride with some stories about your family. If you think you're not a writer, then give us some details and guidelines and we will do it for you.

Okay, here's the deal; after making it sound like we are the only ones helping the Chapter and the AHSGR organization, I think I'd better let you all know we are not.

There were two mailings in January. As is my usual practice, I feel it's necessary to include the names of those who volunteered with those mailings. As usual, if your name was omitted, please let me know and I will correct it in the next newsletter (402-438-3814). If we don't answer, please leave a message.

January 8

Norma Somerheiser
Don Weber
Judy Runion
Karen Johnson
Sharon Buckner
Susan Stoehr
Ruby Weber
John Weber
Barbara Schmidt
Ed Barthule

January 22

Norma Somerheiser
Don Weber

Karen Johnson
Sharon Buckner

Ruby Weber
John Weber

Ed Barthule
Dick Holdren
Delores Schwartz
Judy Lawson
Donna Day
Becky Schenaman
Nancy Borrell
Rebecca Hansen
Staff members:
Yulia Tsybmal
Christine Hunt
Diane Wilson

I set this up this way so you could see those who volunteered for both mailings. That happens a lot.

Another Beautiful Quilt

If you have ever given any thought to quilting, come down to the Heritage Center on any Monday morning and get acquainted with the Lincoln Quilters.

The quilters are a great bunch of ladies and they have made many beautiful quilts for our local chapter as well as the International organization. These quilts are used for fundraisers and are raffled off at our chapter dinners as well as the conventions. I'm

sure the quilters would welcome you and answer any questions you might have.

Product Plug

I was going through stuff on my desk looking for ideas for this newsletter when I came across the spring issue of the Norka Newsletter. I glanced through it and thought I'd give Jerry a plug.

The Norka Newsletter is published by Krieger's Root Cellar, 652 Eighth Street N.E., Mason City, Iowa 50301 and is edited by Jerry Krieger. I have usually found the newsletter interesting. If you are at all interested in receiving it, send a check for \$11 made out to Jerry Kreiger. [No, I'm not getting a commission, just passing along another place for genealogy.] □

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.

Convention Report – “Keeping Our Legacy Alive”

from Paul Loos, Convention Chairman

Plans are moving along as the 2014 Convention draws closer.

Date : July 7 – July 13 , 2014

Place : Cornhusker Hotel , Lincoln , Nebraska

Theme : “Keeping Our Legacy Alive”

Tours at this time :

- 1) Lauritzen Gardens in Omaha
- 2) The Museum of American Speed in Lincoln

Food Demonstrations :

- Kuchen
- Blinna
- German Sausage

Some of the Speakers and Presentations:

- Paul Siebert - History of His Family 's Immigration to USA.
- Ed Zimmer – Emmigrant House in North Lincoln
- Dr. Earl Underwood – Basic Research in German Church Records
- Bruce Pauley – Putting Your Family History in Historical Context

Some of the Entertainment:

- Paul Siebert – Folk singer and instrumentalist – Master of several traditional instruments, including the hammered dulcimer.
- Pippa White – Theatrical talent incorporating history in her presentations. Pippa is from Lincoln. Her presentation is “Voices from Ellis Island.”
- Heimat Tanzer–German Folk Dancers from the German American Society in Omaha

Standard opportunities at the convention are as always:

Genealogy, Bookstore, Research Center, Storytelling, Heritage Hall, Folklore, and Sing-Alongs. More details will follow in the next newsletter. Hope to see you all at the convention. On behalf of the Convention Planning Committee, I would like to thank you all for your support and to ask you to volunteer where and when you can.

Thank you, Paul Loos

Wanted

The Convention Committee is asking for contributions from you for a Silent Auction which will be held during the AHSGR Convention.

There are endless possibilities of what you can give. Some ideas are: hand-crafted items, such as embroidered tea-towels or pillow cases, crocheted or knitted items, i.e afghans, lap blankets, baby sweaters, layette sets, booties, place mats, dish-clothes etc., fabric bowls, small wooden items, wine, gift cards to nationally known stores, home-made jellies, or soaps. This is not limited to one item so let your imagination soar!

If you need your contribution picked up, please call one of the Lincoln Chapter Board members or Norma and me. Or better yet, bring it with you when you come to the Convention.

This is a simple and easy way to help your Chapter host a great convention,

☐

HERZLICHEN GLUCKWUNSCH ZUM GEBURSTAGL “Happy Birthday”

March

Ronald Bridegam
Dale Dinges
Carol Sommers
John Weber

April

Amy Frohn
Norman Helzer
Corinne Jacox



FROHLICH JUHRESTAG “Happy Anniversary”

March

Bill and Sandra Gettman

April

Jim and Carol Sommers

Unsere Leute Erinnyng “Our People in Memory”

Marilyn Oltman
Olinda Swanson
Wesley W. Schafer
Albert Klein

Albert E. Schleiger, Jr.
Donald R. Everett, Sr.
Darryl J. Gross

Judy Lawson, corresponding secretary for the Chapter, would like to have you call her when you become aware of the death of a member of our German-Russian heritage. She would like to honor them and doesn't want to omit anyone. Her phone number is 402-420-9580.



AHSGR CONVENTION — July 7-13, 2014

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The AHSGR Convention will be here sooner than we think. The Planning Committee is busy working on the event. We will need volunteers to fill roles and assist staff with many activities. Below you will find some of the events that will need volunteers to assist. This list is a general over-view of the events being planned. Further details will be provided as we move along with changes as they become known. This is meant to be informative and give you an idea of the many opportunities to volunteer at the convention.

Some of the things planned so far are tours to Lauritzen Gardens in Omaha, and Museum of American Speed here in Lincoln. There will also be food demonstrations.

The music for the dance that is scheduled for Friday night will be provided by The Volga River Boys. The Heritage Center will be open throughout the convention with transportation available. As you can see it will be a busy week and we need your help.

If you are interested in volunteering, please sign below and return the bottom portion to AHSGR Headquarters and we will contact you.

Opportunities available:

Bookstore
Luncheons
Registration
Hospitality
Genealogy & Research Library

Quilt Raffle
Banquets
Membership
Tours
Information Booth

Workshops
Opening Night
Youth Program
Food Demonstration

VOLUNTEER SIGN-UP

I wish to sign-up as a volunteer for the AHSGR Convention 2014. I will be happy to assist with any event either chosen or designated.

NAME _____

PHONE _____

Return to:
American Society of Germans from
Russia
631 "D" Street
Lincoln, NE 68502

Thank you for volunteering.
AHSGR Planning Committee 2014

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Russian Bottoms home to Germans from Russia

by George Round

[Editor's note: I discovered the following article recently and decided to include it in this newsletter. I'm not sure when or where it was published.]

I have a good friend, Henry Reifschneider of Lincoln, who recalls vividly the early days of the North Russian Bottoms in Lincoln and how many Germans living there went to western Nebraska in the early days to work in the sugar beet fields.

He recalls his experiences in operating a dairy herd in the North Bottoms neighborhood and his father's grocery store in that area. He remembers the many German customs carried out in that community when that area was settled.

Many of the immigrants to the North Bottoms came from Russia, where they had settled in the 1760's after having left Germany. They were promised free farmland, tax privileges and exemption from military conscription when they migrated to Russia from Germany.

Distribution Point

It has been estimated that some 2 million of them came to the United States. Lincoln was the distribution point for many of the Russian-Germans who settled in the prairie states.

Today the International headquarters of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia is located in Lincoln, thanks chiefly to the efforts of Ruth Amen of Lincoln. Today it is estimated that there are about 700,000 residents in Nebraska who trace all or part of their roots to Germany, according to census statistics.

Henry's father and grandfather migrated from Russia to this country. They settled at Kalamazoo, Michigan, in 1907, for a short time before coming to Nebraska. Henry's parents were married there in 1912 and an Uncle Jacob was sent to Lincoln to

look Nebraska over for a possible move westward. He found it "hot and dusty," but he sent word back that it was a place where the family could do business. So the family moved to Lincoln in the late summer of 1913.

In 1913, Henry's father opened a store in the North Russian Bottoms. Henry recalls how the store operated and how customers would tell the clerks of their wants and the manager of the store would locate their needs in the store. There was no refrigeration at the time. Groceries were delivered by horse and wagon. Staple goods were sold. In the fall months sauerkraut and dill pickles were imported in 55 gallon barrels and sold to the customers.

Henry's father owned the dairy which Henry managed for him. The herd consisted chiefly of Guernseys.

In the early days, there were a number of businesses established in the North Bottoms. There were five retail grocery stores, a filling station and a barber shop. Today there is only one grocery store, one filling station and a drug store in the area.

The North Bottoms were located just north of the viaduct on 10th Street in Lincoln. Nebraska football fans today walk over the viaduct on their way to and from the University of Nebraska stadium. The North Bottoms was the home of at least two former Cornhusker football players; George Sauer and Henry Bauer. The corresponding South Bottoms sent many more athletes to the University where they also starred for the Huskers.

Burlington Railroad

In the early 1900's, Henry recalls, special Burlington Railroad trains pulled under the 10th Street viaduct to load up the people and their possessions for the trip westward to work in the sugar beet fields. This usually hap-

pened around the middle of May because the parents did not want to release their children from school any earlier in the year. The train stopped and dropped people off in various towns in western Nebraska.

Some descendants of those folks probably still live in that area and are active in farming there today. I would be glad to hear from any of them. They can write to me here at the Nebraska Farmer about their recollections of their operations.

Henry was interested in education and graduated from Lincoln High in 1934. He married his lovely wife, Bertha, in 1939. She came from the same background as Henry. Later Henry served in the armed forces of the United States.

Upon returning from the Service to Lincoln, Henry operated the dairy business we mentioned earlier and then graduated from the University of Nebraska.

Since his University days, Henry's interest in education has led him to continue to take special courses at the University. He has been a leader in soil conservation activities and served on the board of directors of the Lower Platte South Natural Resources District and on the Nebraska Natural Resources Commission.

Customs

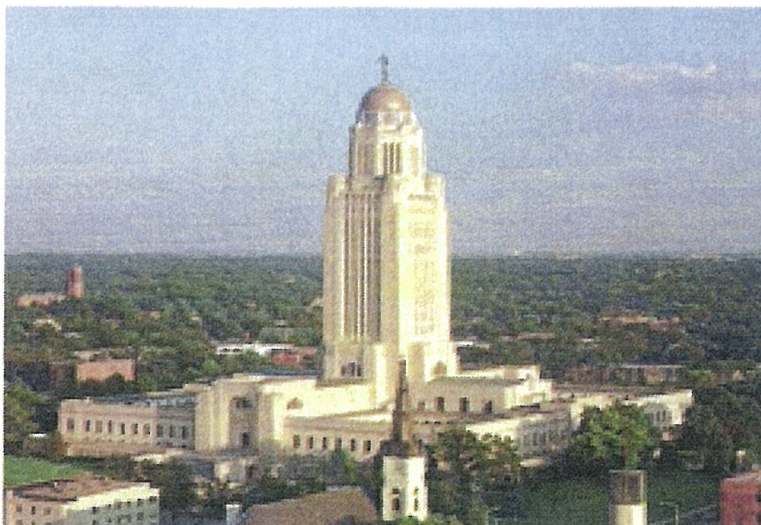
Henry related many of the customs of the Germans who lived in the North Bottoms area.

One such custom concerns church bells. The bells were rung one hour before church services were scheduled to begin. Smaller bells were rung at the half hour before church services and the large bell and the two smaller bells were rung at the end of the services.

Apparently, medical services were meager in those early days in the area.

[continued on page 5]

International Convention of
Germans from Russia



Cornhusker Hotel
Lincoln Nebraska
July 7 – July 13, 2014

Join us as we celebrate “Keeping Our Legacy Alive”

Genealogy

Research Center

Storytelling

Tours

Bookstore

Welcome Night

Heritage Hall

Folklore

Informative Speakers

Sing-Alongs

American Historical Society of Germans from Russia

631 D Street Lincoln, Nebraska 68502-1199

Visit the convention website at www.ahsgr.org



American Historical Society of



Lincoln Chapter

Germans From Russia

A Winter Story

by Becky Schenaman

This past week was so cold and windy along with the latest snow storm.

For some reason shoveling my large driveway and patio seems like more of a challenge this year.

I remember in years past I did mine, my parents, and three of my neighbors and never thought a thing of it. Let me tell you, those days are gone.

I now just help my brother and one neighbor.

When I was about thirteen my parents bought each of us kids a pair of ice skates for Christmas. I was the worst skater of us kids. I had weak ankles and was constantly falling.

We would go to Oak Lake or Peter Pan Park to skate. There was always a line of skaters who would play crack the whip. And guess who was always on the end of the line? That's right "me," all 90 pounds of me. They would get that line going really fast and I would hang on for dear life. But by the third circle around the lake I would fly off and hope for a big snow bank to fly into.

Sometimes I flew stomach and face first across the ice. I would pick myself up and wobble into the smoky shelter house. Once inside I would take those skates off, dry my tears and hobble home. Everyone got a good laugh at the sight of me. But I would go out again after my pride healed. I never was a good skater.

The South Bottom boys I knew would pick up me, my sister and our best friend, Linda, and we would skate at Sawyer's Pond.

We would build a big bon fire and rest there after we skated. No more crack the whip just simple skating.

I wonder why the Parks Department doesn't freeze the tennis courts like they did years ago. I know we sure got our use out of those ice skates.

Winter is fun when you are young and can build snowmen and lie on the snow and make angels. Those were the days.

Now it's the joy of shoveling. I just tell myself spring is just around the corner.

Stay warm everyone. ☐

Russian Bottoms... (continued)

Henry was delivered by a midwife. He remembers one midwife who regularly made the rounds in the community. When a woman had a child, the friends and neighbors would help with the housework because the mother stayed in bed for 10 days.

Weddings in those days were observed in a special manner. In some cases, they were observed for 3 days. The ceremonies took place in the backyard of residences and a tent was pitched for the headquarters for the 3-day celebration.

In the old country, Henry relates, the first day was for the immediate family of the bride and groom and other relatives. The second day was reserved for older generations and the third day for the younger people in the community. Money was pinned to the bride's clothing. Each day there would be lunch and dancing in the afternoon and in the evening there was another big meal. Later, the ceremonies were reduced to one day.

Henry Reifschneider is rightfully proud of his heritage and the North Russian Bottoms in Lincoln; as well he should be, because he and his family contributed much to that area over a long period of time. ☐



Come one, Come all!

Annual Soup Supper

Friday, April 4, 2014

WSI Hall 1430 N. 10th Street

5:00pm to 7:00pm

**There will be vegetable beef soup,
chicken noodle soup,
chili and, hopefully, green bean soup.**

Adults \$8.00 • Children 12 and under \$4.00

**There will also be butter balls for sale for \$3.00 a dozen
or \$5.00 for 2 dozen and
homemade noodles for \$5.00 a bag.**

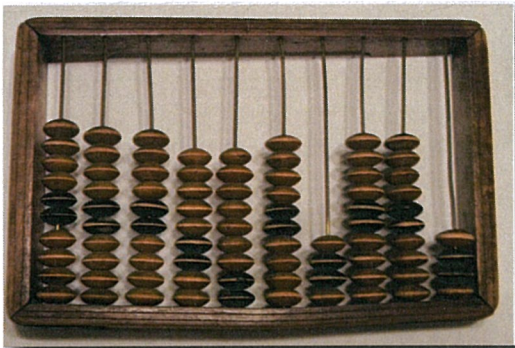
Growing up GR

by Jay Jacox

Almost three decades ago for a time I was the manager of a small grocery store in a small town. I guess it might be true what they say – the apple doesn't fall far from the tree.

I also spent much of my childhood growing up on the edge of the South Bottoms alone at any one time. Located at 402 "F" Street, Bauer and Sons was one of those. George and Mary Bauer were the patriarch and matriarch of the business with sons George, Henry, John and Jacob "Jake" Bauer as the "sons." Since people burned coal for heat and to cook with it seemed a natural for groceries and coal to be sold together. One-stop shopping, as it were.

When my ancestors immigrated to



Abacus

this county in the 19th century they settled in the "Russian Bottoms" neighborhood of this states' young capital. Soon they started their own business of "Bauer and Sons Grocery & Coal." They were not only the Hy-Vee of their day but the Black Hills Energy as well – as were many others.

The common means of transportation back then was horse and wagon, if not just simple walking. One could not jump into the horseless carriage and drive once a week to the modern supermarket for provisions like today. To get fresh meat, milk and vegetables a family visited a small local grocery store

almost every day. Therefore many small family-owned and run grocery stores sprang up around town – six in the South Bottoms alone at any one time. Located at 402 "F" Street, Bauer and Sons was one of those. George and Mary Bauer were the patriarch and matriarch of the business with sons George, Henry, John and Jacob "Jake" Bauer as the "sons." Since people burned coal for

heat and to cook

with it seemed a natural for groceries and coal to be sold together. One-stop shopping, as it were.

The store was around for some time but the years took their toll. Brothers Henry and Jake did not survive the First World War. George (the father) passed away in 1933. A son-in-law stepped in to help out and the venture was known for a while as Bauer-

Lebsock grocery but change was coming. Automobiles became more common and people drove to larger "mega-stores" for a wider variety of supplies, driving "mom and pops" out of business. Sounds familiar, doesn't it?



George Bauer and Sons Storefront 1900s

Seventy-five years later and that phenomenon continues today.

One of the things that does remain of the business is the building itself. It still stands and is now a residence. The building is the centerpiece for another family with hopes and dreams. Had it not been for that building and the family, hopes, and American dreams it contained long ago I may not be here today. Thank you, George and Mary Bauer. □



402 "F" Street in 2013



2014 Calendar of Events

| | | | | |
|---------------|--|---|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| March 11 |Coffee Club |9:00 a.m. |Stauffer's |48th & Hwy. 2 |
| March 17 |Board Meeting |7:00 p.m. | ..... | .....631 D Street |
| April 3-5 |International Board of Directors' Meeting | ..... | ..... | .....631 D Street |
| April 4 |Soup Supper |5:00-7:00 p.m. |WSI Hall |1430 N. 10th St. |
| April 8 |Coffee Club |9:00 a.m. |Stauffer's |48th & Hwy. 2 |
| April 21 |Board Meeting |7:00 p.m. | ..... | .....631 D Street |
| April 27 |General Membership Meeting |2:00 p.m. (refreshments following) | ..... | .....631 D Street |
| May 13 |Coffee Club |9:00 a.m. |Stauffer's |48th & Hwy. 2 |
| May 19 |Board Meeting |7:00 p.m. | ..... | .....631 D Street |
| June 10 |Coffee Club |9:00 a.m. |Stauffer's |48th & Hwy. 2 |
| June 16 |Board Meeting |7:00 p.m. | ..... | .....631 D Street |
| June 30 |General Membership Meeting |2:00 p.m. (refreshments following) | ..... | .....631 D Street |
| July 7-13 |International Convention | ..... | ..... | .....Lincoln, NE |
| July 8 |Coffee Club |9:00 a.m. |Stauffer's |48th & Hwy. 2 |
| 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 |1:00 p.m. | ..... | .....Immanuel Church |
| | (Fellowship Hall, Potluck Dinner & Election of Officers) | | | 10th & Charleston |

2014 BOARD MEMBER DIRECTORY – LINCOLN CHAPTER – AHS&S

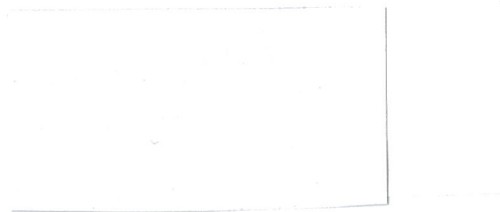
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Information Request

The following request is from Diane Erhart of Park City, MT (squarebutte@wildblue.net) and was received on the Chapter's web-site:

I am looking for any information on Mrs. Margaret (Alex) Schwindt. This is what I have found:

From the *Lincoln Star* (January 6, 1954):

Mrs. Blum died at age 80; Lincoln resident 40 years

Mrs. Katherine Blum, 80, 816 E, a Lincoln resident for 40 years, died Tuesday. Mrs. Blum was born in Russia. She was a member of Emmanuel Reformed Church. Surviving are her husband, John; daughters, Mrs. George Kechter, Mrs. Harold Brisack and Mrs. G. A. Robinson, all of Portland, Ore.; a sister Mrs. Margert Schwindt of Lincoln; brothers George Schleining of Billings, Mt. and Henry Schleining of Lincoln, 11

grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren.

This has to be the same Margaret Schwindt that was mentioned in the Billings Gazette (August 17, 1930) that came to visit my grandma:

Mr. and Mrs. Alex Schwindt and daughter of Lincoln, Neb. are visiting at the home of their relatives, Mr. and Mrs. John Nagel.

The *Nebraska State Journal* (Lincoln—September 22, 1944)

Schwindt—George Schwindt, 67, 1014 Claremont, died Thursday. He leaves his wife, Margaret, two daughters, Mrs. Fred Kubert, Lincoln and Esther, at home; five sons, Walter and Henry of Scottsbluff, Alex and John, Lincoln, and Albert, in the U.S. Army in Hawaii; 11 grandchildren; three brothers, Pete, Colorado, Henry, Lincoln, and John, Russia; and a sister in Russia.

Also, family lore said there was a

man who owned a grocery/general mercantile store in Lincoln who sponsored Germans from Russia. He had an apartment above his store where the sponsored German would stay. I was told that he did this for several people. My great-grandfather supposedly stayed there and worked in the store—Johannes Nagel left the port of Labiv May 15, 1904, I believe he came through the port of Boston and then to Lincoln, but am not sure of the date when he arrived there. His wife, Amalia, Mollie or Amelia, (passport says Amalia) was a Schleining. If there is anything on the Nagel Family while in Lincoln, I would appreciate that as well.

□