



Lincoln Chapter

The American Historical Society of Germans From Russia

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XXIII, ISSUE 5

September/October, 2014

From Larry's desk ...

(actually it's the kitchen table)

In this issue of the newsletter we not only have Becky Schenaman's memories of the North Bottoms, we also have a story from Richard Geier about softball in the South Bottoms, a story from Jay Jacox about "F" Street Park, which is now known as Cooper Park.

As I read these stories, I recalled many of the same kinds of memories. As I look back, I wonder how we ever survived. According to today's standards, all of our parents would have been in jail and we kids dead or at least in foster homes. Maybe we were just better able to take care of ourselves.

Believe it or not, we talked about teaching "hockey" at the first convention I was involved in. The only difference I can see is we called it "ticky" and would say, "ticky-one, ticky-two and then go after the peg. The decision was made not to have this activity as part of the convention, not because of a shortage of broom handles but because of the liability. Like I said, we lived in a different time back when we were kids.

Another story we have in this issue is about the special citation which was awarded to Delores Schwartz by the

International Board of Directors. Well done, Delores. Congratulations!

Do you know someone who is deserving of recognition? If so, let's reward them before time gets away and it becomes too late.

You know, we have Admiralships for the Great Volga Navy, don't you? I, myself, as a duty of being President of the Chapter, presented three of them. I felt the recipients were touched by receiving them.

My hope is, that as you read this newsletter and enjoy the stories from the three contributors, they may spark a memory for you and cause you to share those memories with a story for the newsletter.

Until next time, God Bless. □

Touching Base with Old Friends

I always read the "Celebrate" section of the Sunday *Lincoln Journal*, looking for someone I know. The August 3rd issue had a picture of an old friend, Elizabeth "Lillian" Weber. Lillian was about to turn 90 and there was an open house planned to honor her.

I got to know Lillian in the 1980s when I was active in the AHSGR. Lillian was one of the stalwarts when it came to helping with anything AHSGR had going on. She was there, volunteering to help. Lillian helped me learn what AHSGR was all about. Thank you, Lillian, for all you have done to make AHSGR what it is today.

Reminiscing about old friends made me think of others I hadn't

touched base with for a while so I picked up the phone and made some calls.

I talked to Virginia Dietrich for a few minutes. She's doing well and sounded like she was glad to get the call. I also called Gladys Herstein and enjoyed a visit with her. I was unsuccessful in reaching Ruth White but will keep trying.

Another good friend I used to call once in a while is Martha Schleicher. I'm not sure where she is living now, but will make an attempt to locate her.

I'm sorry this happens, but sometimes life gets in the way and we forget to "touch base" with folks we used to know. Let's all do it while we still can. □

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

Submitted by Sherry Pawelka, Office Manager

Convention 2014 is now "in the books" and what a convention it was! 2014 marked the 45th annual AHSGR convention and the 10th time the convention has been hosted in Lincoln.

Over 300 people registered for our convention held at The Cornhusker Hotel—July 7th through 13th. International participants came as far as Russia and as close as Canada. Attendees came from throughout the US as well.

The Lincoln Chapter did a terrific job of hosting the convention. Volunteer Coordinator Karen Johnson reported that 71 people volunteered, working a total of 805 volunteer hours. Fantastic job, Lincoln! I would like to extend a huge thank you to Karen and her crews for a wonderful job.

Volunteers staffed both the hotel and headquarters. Jobs included: hosting the hospitality rooms at The Cornhusker and Headquarters, staffing the library, bookstore, reception desk at Headquarters, leading tours of our campus buildings at Headquarters, and staffing the

Registration Desk, Quilt Raffle, and Silent Auction at the hotel. Shuttle drivers transported convention attendees between the sites and were great ambassadors for AHSGR.

Lincoln volunteers also conducted and helped with the food demonstrations at Friedens Church. Attendees saw how to make German sausage, blinas, and grebel. And what was even better, they got to sample these tasty treats. Yum!!

Volunteers also staffed the Youth Program. The kids were able to tour Memorial Stadium, the State Capitol, and a Runza Restaurant. They watched and helped out at the food demonstrations, and, of course, they got to taste the delicious results of their hard work. In addition, they learned some basic German vocabulary while touring headquarters.

A diverse program included topics on the Russian archives, Genealogy 101, DNA and Alzheimer's research. Also covered were Lincoln's Immigrant House, German Russian Folklore, and much, much more. We had really great speakers and sessions.

Tours of Sutton, Nebraska, the Lauritzen Gardens in Omaha, and our own North and South Bottoms received rave reviews. Those on the Bottoms tour had "Christmas in July" and enjoyed singing German carols, eating Christmas cookies, and even returned with an old-fashioned treat bag filled with fruit, candy, and nuts.

The entertainment was wonderful beginning on Welcome Night with Pippa White's fantastic one-woman show about Ellis Island immigrants. Paul Siebert's music during the Friday Foundation lunch was great, and The River Boys had everyone tapping their toes and kicking up their heels Friday night at the dance. They are outstanding!

Saturday evening's banquet was very well attended. At the banquet, attendees were treated to a viewing of the new Headquarters' video. It was a wonderful night. Sunday morning was the final event with a non-denominational church service before folks "hit the road" to return home.

Thank you Lincoln chapter for the outstanding job you did!! Vielen Dank!!

Thank you to these companies for their donations for the 2014 AHSGR Convention:



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2014 Special Citation Award Given to Delores Schwartz



Delores Schwartz attended the first organizing meeting of AHSGR in December 1968 in Denver, Colorado and was instrumental in the formation of the Lincoln

Chapter the following year. She attended the first AHAGR Convention in Greeley, Colorado in 1970.

With roots in the North Bottoms of Lincoln, she continued her commitment to the organization as the one unpaid volunteer in charge of mailing and memberships when Headquarters moved to Lincoln in 1973. In 1980, Delores was a paid full-time staff member and once again, helped move the office to make way for construction of the present building. She worked closely with Ms. Ruth Amen, AHSGR Executive Director, until Ms. Amen's resignation in 1987.

In the 1990s she answered the call to return to AHSGR as staff, to handle book orders, and worked until 2007. Always, she has been a tireless volunteer with both the Lincoln Chapter as

well as at Headquarters.

Over her 42 years as a volunteer with the Lincoln Chapter, she has served as Vice President and Secretary, as well as being active at the Broda dinners, Christmas Festivals, the Lincoln Ethnic Festival, and, in the early years, the fairgrounds and traveling skits. As a valuable volunteer at Headquarters, she has worked on conventions by helping with mailings, packing materials, registration, the book room, arranging tours, and clean-up days.

Delores is her families' historian and organizer of family reunions, and has researched her families through Russia and Germany.

Congratulations, Delores! □

From the Chapter Leaders Bulletin

I am pleased to announce that the majority of our Obituary collection that was previously available under SOAR is now available via FamilySearch. As of July 1st, over 400,000 of our Obituaries have been indexed and are available for viewing. All of the English language obituaries that were on SOAR are now available. An indexing project for the German language obituaries, (approximately 50,000), will be starting soon. You can access our obituaries on FamilySearch through our "Research your German Russian Ancestors" web page at AHSGR.ORG.

Mick Meisinger
AHSGR Technology Committee Chairman

Note: For revised "Instructions for Searching AHSGR Obituaries on FamilySearch" please view: [obituarieshowto.pdf](#) [this note and an instruction site is also available on GR-Research in the Obituaries section].

Quick Access Tip: To access GR-Research, click on <http://www.ahsgr.org/GR-Research.htm>. Also, you can save this address in your browser's "Favorites" list as a genealogy research site.

2014 BOARD MEMBER DIRECTORY – LINCOLN CHAPTER – AHSGR

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The Changing of the North Bottoms

submitted by Becky Schenaman, North Bottoms, Lincoln, Nebraska

I don't know if any of you have noticed that a whole block of "Y" Street, from 10th to 12th no longer exists in the North Bottoms neighborhood.

All of those original homes are being torn down to make room for a large apartment complex that a developer from Kansas is building.

This will change the face of my neighborhood forever. I spoke against this development along with my neighbor.

My roots run deep in this German Russian community. My grandparents, the John Dellos family, settled here in 1910, coming from Laub and Jost Russia.

I bought my own home here in the 1970s. I have a great love for this neighborhood.

We have just hosted the Germans from Russia National Convention. I volunteered every day of the convention and it was a lot of fun meeting people who were so dedicated to their heritage that they traveled from near and

far just to do research and share their life experiences with each other.

I loved meeting them and talking with them.

My favorite volunteering experiences were making grebel and sharing how I rolled mine out and how I twisted them. We sure had fun doing that and the kids really enjoyed rolling theirs and eating the results.

Also I loved working in the kitchen area of Headquarters with my sister Donna Day and Gerry Schuster. We had a good time.

Also in the kitchen were the men who volunteered doing the tours of the outbuildings. They all three are wonderful. They tried to show me how to polka; I cannot dance and am quite embarrassed by that fact.

I went to the polka dance once and watched. No one asked me to dance which I was relieved about. But at the same time it is somewhat embarrassing being a wallflower, but the music was great and it was fun watching the

dancers. I think I need to put learning to polka on my bucket list of "to-do" life experiences.

All in all it was an interesting week of being around people who loved celebrating being of German-Russian heritage.

I wonder how many of them came from cities that are lucky enough to still have old German-Russian communities. We, as an organization and a community of heritage, need to protect our ancestor's humble inner-city villages and preserve what we can of our original heritage before it is all bulldozed down to rubble.

From my home in the North Bottoms of Lincoln to yours... 'Mocks Goot.' □

HERZLICHEN GLUCKWUNSCH ZUM GEBURSTAGL

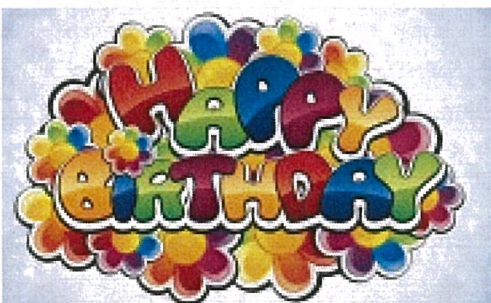
"Happy Birthday"

September

Nancy Borrell
Donna Day
Judy Runion
Jerry McInnes

October

Paul Loos



FROHLICH JUHRESTAG

"Happy Anniversary"

September

James and Catherine Jacobs

October

Leslie and Tom Bill

Unsere Leute Erinnryng

"Our People in Memory"

Bernice E. Schwindt Plock

Harrison "Harry" Fehr

Robert L. Gies

Donna R. Andrews

Richard Grasmick

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.



INTERNATIONAL

11th AH\$GR Membership Campaign *July 12, 2014 - May 15, 2015*

EACH ONE - REACH ONE

The Membership Campaign rewards AH\$GR members and chapters who recruit new members for AH\$GR or purchase gift memberships for new members. Cash prizes will be awarded at the 2015 Convention. Membership Data Forms are available through Chapters or on-line at <http://www.ahsgr.org/membership.htm>*

\$100 to the AH\$GR member AND \$200 to the AH\$GR Chapter who recruits the largest number of new members

\$75 to the AH\$GR member AND \$150 to the AH\$GR Chapter who recruits the 2nd largest number of new members

\$50 to the AH\$GR member AND \$100 to the AH\$GR Chapter who recruits the 3rd largest number of new members

A \$25 cash prize to 3 new members selected at random.

New Members are Critical to the Growth and Success of AHSGR

Every Member Counts - Talk to your Family & Friends - Tell your community about AHSGR - Buy a Gift Membership for someone

79% of New Members Join Because Someone Asked Them!

If *EACH ONE* of us strives to *REACH ONE* new member every year, we assure an AHSGR future for all generations to come

* 1st, 2nd and 3rd place Reward Winners must have recruited the following number of new members for AHSGR: AHSGR members, 3 or greater; and Chapters, 6 or greater.

Growing up GR – “F” Street Park

by Jay Jacox

It is a plot of land the same size that the Nebraska state capitol sits on yet it has been, arguably, more important to Lincoln, at least a neighborhood, than a capitol building ever could be. What could it be? Haymarket Park? Pinnacle Bank Arena? Part of Gateway Shopping Center? No—it’s Cooper Park, what I will always remember as “F” Street Park, situated on a four-block parcel of land in Lincoln’s South Bottoms neighborhood—bounded by 6th and 8th Streets, “D” and “F” Streets.

Simply known in 1867 as “City Park,” it remains Lincoln’s oldest public park and when the city was platted was given as much space as the site for the State Capitol or the University of Nebraska—four city blocks. As we all know the University has grown quite a bit since then, but “Capitol Square” has not, and neither has “F” Street Park. In fact, in the modern area the park has shrunk in size a bit to make space for the transformation of Park Elementary School into a middle school.

Back then, as now, the park is a focal point and meeting place for the South Bottoms neighborhood. Originally, the park was just an open space, even occasionally rented out by the city to farmers. Trees initially had trouble taking root there. Then the city found the means to drill for water on the site and overnight “F” Street became a real focal point for the community. Early South Bottomites drew house water from the site and brought their horses to get a drink. With irrigation, young sapling trees were able to take root and establish themselves. A band shell was built, concerts were held, playground equipment was installed and “F” Street became a hub of the community—and a hub for generations to come.

There once was a young man of nine or ten years of age who on days out of school was looked after by his grandparents. His grandparents lived



The woman in white who’s pushing the swing is Jay’s grandmother. The Amen house is pictured on the left and Friedens Church is on the right.

only two blocks from “F” Street Park. Actually, both of his grandparents had themselves grown up only two blocks from the park. One fine summer day, this young man was allowed to go and play at the park, which was common practice for him. On that particular day, he found a summer playground program there run by the city. There he enjoyed crafts, games, social building activities and honed his skills of how to interact with others and leaders. The young man came back day after day, yearning for more. What a difference it made for him.

Now, 45 years later, I can’t remember the names of the site leaders at that summer playground program, but to this day I can still see their faces. “F” Street Park started me on a life-long journey of public service, working with children in public recreation and public schools—hoping that they feel the satisfaction and confidence that can come from caring youth program leadership. At the time of my youth I never knew what great life experiences I was receiving from “F” Street Park, as well as “growing up GR.” □

GARAGE SALE

*The annual AHSGR Lincoln Chapter
garage sale is here again!!!!
Friday and Saturday, September 19-20
9:00am-4:00pm, both days
1000 N. 81st Street*

Want to donate? We need any and all of your stuff.
Call Jay or Corinne ahead of time at (402) 327-8962
so we can work out a good time to pick your stuff up.

Memories of Softball in the South Bottoms

by Richard (Dick) Geier



ball was the better game. The contest was scheduled for Landis Field between Griswolds, the city softball champion, and Iowa-Nebraska Power (utility company), city baseball champion. A double header was to be played, one game with softball rules and one with baseball rules and both with seven innings and the highest total score would win. The scores were 14-1 win for the baseballers and a 9-0 win for the softballers. Geier allowed no hits against the baseballers in the softball game. The attendance was 1,500.

This is a unique memory I have as a "kid tag-along" to an uncle, two years older than I, (which was not uncommon in large families):

My memories of the South Bottoms neighborhood began in the middle 1930s and into the early 1940s. My parents lived in the apartment building on the southeast corner of 9th and "D" Streets when I came along in 1934. My grandparents' homes were on 7th and "B" and 1st and "E" Streets.

Those years were the hay days of organized softball in Lincoln. There were leagues ranked from AAA to every level down to at least B and lower. Games were played nightly on fields all over town. There was extensive daily newspaper coverage with scores and highlights. Landis Field, located on the corner of 1st and "P" Street, was a first class ball park with lights and stands with a wooden roof. Many games were played there and lots of "Bottoms" boys, sons of German-Russian immigrants, played there. And they were good.

Teams were sponsored by local businesses. One of them was Griswolds

Wholesale Seeds. Griswolds won the 1935 AAA city championship. One of eight teams in that league, it had names like Dietrich, Bauer, Amen, Amend, Geier (my Dad), Gettman, Wertz, Weber, Schwindt, Baker, Miller, Culthenberger, and Floth (bat boy). The games were well attended. Tickets were sold for higher rated league games. One newspaper report of a game at Muny (now Lewis) said 2,000 attended.

Besides league games, exhibitions were played. One game played in 1934 by another team with "Bottoms" boys, Duffy's Smoke House, against Sutton drew three to four thousand according to the news article. In 1935 Griswolds played Cudahy's of Omaha at Landis Field with over 2,000 in attendance. Both games were won by the Lincoln boys. George Geier pitched both.

One of the most unusual contests took place in 1935 to settle a long running dispute whether baseball or soft-

Kids would make a game from anything available. One played in the streets I have never seen anywhere else. I think it was called street hockey. No equipment was required.

From a broom stick a three- or four-inch piece was cut and whittled on both ends into football shape. This was the puck. The rest of the broom stick was cut, making two pieces. The puck was laid on the street. Two players hovered over with sticks striking them together and counting: "hockey one, hockey two, hockey three," after which each tried to strike an end of the puck causing it to rise in the air. Each would try to hit it while in the air toward a goal somewhere down the street. There probably were more rules, I don't recall. Swinging those short sticks at close range usually resulted in bruised knuckles or worse, possibly ending the game.

□

Volunteers Donate Time & Talent to AHSGR

If time is money, then the 805 hours donated by 71 volunteers at the AHSGR Annual Convention held at the Cornhusker July 7-12 is worth a fortune. I realize that you don't think of it in terms of dollars and cents, but your gift will help this organization to continue for generations to come.

For the first time Headquarters remained open, members and visitors were able to do research, check out the bookstore and visit the historic buildings on site. Docents conducted tours, (we were told they worked very hard); volunteers assisted in the bookstore, library/research center and at reception desk and Hospitality.

Volunteers working at The Cornhusker Hotel helped with registration, quilt raffle, silent auction, hospitality, volunteer desk, and youth program which turned out to be very successful. The kids were entertained with a visit to Memorial Stadium, State Capitol,

Pinnacle Bank Arena & Haymarket area, Sunken Gardens, grebel and sausage demonstrations, Runza Restaurant tour and lots of food. A very big THANK YOU to: Luke, Kimberly, MaKensie and Sarah. You guys rock....

Special recognition goes out to the Lincoln Convention and Visitors Bureau for doing such a fine job of providing us with three volunteers to assist with registration. You ladies were the greatest! Thanks again.

Food demonstrations of grebel, blinna and sausage were a big hit with everyone. Thanks to our chefs, Nancy Borrell, Steve Loos, and Paul Loos. Blinna were yummy, sausage tasty, and grebel delicious.

Our transportation drivers deserve special recognition for shuttling members to and from Headquarters to the Cornhusker Hotel. Van drivers were: Dick Holden, Rick Rekart, Paul Loos, Don Weber, and Dean Pawelko. GREAT

JOB!!

Last but not least are the hospitality volunteers. The food was great and lots of it. They worked extra hours at home to prepare food, lots of heavy lifting and hauling daily to both sites. Everyone recognizes that you girls did a fabulous job. A very big THANK YOU goes to Sharon Buckner, Judy Lawson, and Gerry Shuster and the crew of volunteers who helped. Judy and Sharon were so worn out, they had to take a vacation to Alaska for ten days...oh yeah, it's true!

AHSGR wouldn't be as successful as it is today without our volunteers and the help they provide to this organization. I personally want to thank each and every volunteer for saying yes to our pleas for help. You answered our prayers with your generous time and talent. You are truly a wonderful group of people. □

Karen Johnson, Volunteer Coordinator

Special Assistants: Susan Stoehr, Ruby Weber, Norma Schenkel, and Barbara Schmidt

Take Me Out to the Ballgame



Sunday afternoon, August 24th, a good number of Lincoln Chapter members enjoyed watching the Saltdogs beat the St. Paul Saints. This picture is just one of several that can be seen on the Chapter website: www.ahsgrlincolnchapter.org

Click on **Photo of Events** to view the rest. Thanks to Jay Jacox for making this event happen.

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:
Sherry Pawelka
Officer Manager AHSGR

Raffles & Door Prizes

RSVP: northbottoms@neb.rr.com

Lincoln Chapter AHSGR
 Larry and Norma Schenkel, Editors
 9439 Benziger Drive
 Lincoln, NE 68526
 402-438-3814

OMAHA NE 680

29 AUG 2014 PM 1 L



Jay & Corinne Jacox
 1000 N. 81st St.
 Lincoln, NE 68506

68505206900



General Membership Meeting

Mark your calendars now for the General Membership Meeting and picnic to be held Sunday, September 21st, at 4:00 PM at the Antelope Park Shelter. Hot dogs and drinks will be provided and the membership is asked to bring a salad or dessert to complete the meal.

2014 Calendar of Events

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	