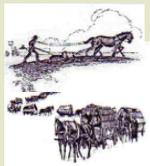


HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF GERMANS FROM POLAND & VOLHYNIA



*A Society dedicated to preserving and promoting the historical heritage of
Ethnic Germans—highlighting those from Poland & Volhynia.*

Plowing Scene –Brücke zur Heimat (1957) + Der grosse Treck –Jahrbuch Weichsel-Warthe 1993]

Room 11, Trinity Lutheran Church, 10014-81 Avenue, Edmonton, AB T6E 1W8

Editor: Sandra Tober

HSGPV 2014 AGM Saturday May 31

2:00 – 4:00 p.m. in the Luther Centre
Trinity Lutheran Church 10014 – 81 Ave.



Kaffee und Kuchen served!

Come join us for an entertaining program & to help build your historical society. Members and friends welcome.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY PASTOR FRED TOBER

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All of us, I am sure, are happy that spring is finally here. It was a long and, at times, a harsh, dark winter.

New life is springing forth in nature and we can bask in its warmth and beauty. Likewise, spiritually speaking, with Christ rising from the dead, which we celebrated a few short weeks ago, new life springs forth in each of us.

We are an Easter people, raised by God to newness of life. The love that drove Christ to the cross, will not let us go, not even in death.

In spite of the turmoil of the world, there is light, hope and joy for all who are in Christ.

I would like to remind you of our Annual Meeting, Sat. May 31, 2:00 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church. The business part such as elections, should not take too long.

Lorraine Yackulic will make a power point presentation on her work. She has done an enormous amount of research re the German pioneer roots in Alberta. So far she has published 2 volumes "Step Back in Time". Vol. 3 will be available this fall. The first two volumes are in our library already. We also have several copies of Vol. 2 available for sale.

There will be entertainment, Kaffee und Kuchen,

and lots of good fellowship.

Please note that we have received a large amount of historical publications from the Julius Brenner estate. These materials deal with the history of German settlers in Volhynia, Galicia, and Poland.

There is a wealth of history to be discovered. Check out these resources in our library.

We thank the Brenner family for their generosity.

Also, all who attend the AGM will receive a free HSGPV pin that hopefully you will wear with pride.

See you on Saturday May 31, 2:00 p. m. at Trinity!



THE FOUNDING OF BORKI AND TROSCHIN

by F. Tober

Borki and Deutsch Troschin (German Troszyn) are the ancestral villages of the Tober family. These villages are located approximately 80 km NW of Warsaw, or 17 km south of Plock on the south bank of the Vistula river.

These two settlements were established simultaneously with the signing of the settlement agreement on May 12, 1759 between the starost of Dobrzykow, Ignaci Chickocki, and the "honourable Dutch community" consisting of about 100 evangelical (Lutheran) families.

The settlers came from a number of different areas downstream (north) of Dobrzykow. Thus Borki and Troschin are daughter settlements of older settlements along the Vistula. People married young, had large families and older settlements soon had a surplus population that was looking for new opportunities upstream (south) along the Vistula. Borki and Troschin was such an opportunity.

As the children came to the stage where they established their own families, they needed their own farm since farming was virtually the only way of making a living. Land in a settled community was hard to come by, and so the only solution all too often was to subdivide the parental farm among the children. If the parents were ready to retire, pension arrangements were part of the deal. That is, aged parents were guaranteed a small suite, usually a kitchen-sitting room, as well as a bedroom, plus a stated amount of potatoes, wheat and rye for flour, a cow, etc. for them to live on with one of the children. In most cases parents also had cash saved up over the years. Some of the children might get their share of their inheritance in cash.

The result was smaller and smaller farms to the point where they could no longer adequately support a family. There was not enough land for everyone. The only real option was to look elsewhere for new wasteland to make arable and to settle, or to emigrate.

Establishing a new settlement was not an individual undertaking, but always a community endeavour. Those interested had probably organized themselves as a group. With a call for settlers by the owner, the group sent representatives to negotiate a deal.

My sister Elsa, in her writings, states that grandmother Elenore Ratz recounted what she had heard from her grandmother: "The first settlers moved upstream along the Vistula to Troschin and Borki with horses and wagons, on foot, with their cattle. The land they settled on belonged to a Polish Count (starost) who, along with his underlings (serfs) were drunks. Everything was neglected and run down, and they even had to go hungry. They had no idea what to do with the swampy land, and they were glad that finally someone was there who knew what to do."

With a contract in hand, preparations started for the move, which was no small undertaking. There were legal matters to attend to, such as settling inheritance, selling some land, etc. Also, a village constitution had to be adopted by which the community would govern itself, this included the election of a mayor and jurymen. A departure date was set. The contract was signed May 12, early enough to make the move that spring, as the distance travelled by most probably was no more than a few days. Wagons were loaded with all the necessities they would need for a new start. There would have been cured and smoked ham, bacon, sausages, potatoes, sauerkraut, flour, cans of lard and fruit, clothing, household items, including a big cast iron pot and tripod (Graben, Grope), wood-working tools, including axes, saws, as well as spades. The latter would be in high demand as the settlers would be digging a lot of ditches and building a dike. Also basic farm implements such as a plough, etc had to be taken along with garden seeds and seed grain. Ac-

ording to grandmother Ratz, cattle were driven as a herd.

The settlers were mainly young families who had a lot of energy and ambition. As the distance travelled was no more than a few days, contact was maintained with the folks back home, with probably some re-supply trips.

The area of settlement was south of Dobrzykow within the 10 km wide ancient Vistula valley. The terrain was swampy, overgrown with a mix of reeds, bullrushes, alder bushes, and giant poplars and oaks. It was home to all kinds of water fowl as well as other wildlife. Further, it was subject to flooding by the Vistula at the time of the spring break-up as well as when heavy rain fell in the Carpathian mountains to the south.

When the settlers arrived, the first priority was shelter. According to Eleonora Ratz' account, some found temporary shelter in large, hollow oaks. Others made temporary shelters from the materials at hand—lean-tos of tree branches, etc. Some probably slept on the wagons. Fish from the Vistula and creeks, waterfowl, acorns, berries, and perhaps the occasional game animal supplemented their food supplies.

The landscape was undulating. Some of the higher areas were ploughed and gardens were planted, yielding vegetables before the first winter set in. According to Grandmother Ratz, the settlers apparently had a problem with wolves.

The contract stipulated that for seven years they were tax free, then they had to pay a rent of 48 guilders or florins per hufe land. They also had to perform seven days of corvée service on the starost's manor per year. For the construction of living quarters and farm buildings the settlers received free lumber from the royal forest, but in turn had to look after oaks being impregnated in the Vistula.

The task of making this swampy land arable was daunting, and the work was back-breaking, but the settlers went to work with determination. The results were astounding. What had been wasteland in a few years became highly productive farm land. There were new houses and other buildings, fields of tall grain, cattle grazing in succulent pastures, and bountiful gardens could be seen everywhere.

However, trouble soon was brewing between the starost and the settlers. The starost broke the agreement of 1759 and arbitrarily imposed unreasonably high rents and increased corvée labour, using even physical violence to impose his will. The matter slowly wound its way through the courts, with no relief. An appeal was sent to the king, with the results being slow in coming.

The settlers of the neighbouring villages of Gensemin and Sady also experienced mistreatment at the hands of the landowner who felt the rent in the original contract was too low. The harassment of the settlers by the landowners finally ended at the third partition of Poland in 1795-6 when the area came under Prussian rule.

There were a number of reasons why the settlers had difficulties finding justice, but one stands out, namely the inherent decentralizing tendencies that characterized Polish history from the High Middle Ages to the end of the 18th century. There was no effective central government due to the proud and arrogant nobility who were virtually all-powerful and acted only in their self-interest, paralyzing the whole country.

However, events were taking place that involved all of Europe that not only put an end to the settlers' desperate plight in their fight with the landlord, but also had further dramatic effects. They became the hapless victims of the ambitions and actions of powers beyond their horizon. European politics was about to wash over them like a tidal wave.

Source: F. Tober, The Tober Saga. The Story of a Family in the Ebb and Flow of History. (This is still a work in progress, hopefully coming to completion soon.)

NOW ON DVD!

Chronicles of Germans from Galicia, Poland & Volhynia

- ◆ *Stalwart Peasants in Sheepskin Coats* (German Founding Families who immigrated to the North West Territories between 1885 and 1905)
- ◆ *Tillers & Builders* (Alberta's First Families who immigrated to Alberta in the early days after it had become a province...until 1915)



You will find numerous archival photographs; family trees & stories; historical highlights; hearth & home traditions; and research references. Provided at cost of production...\$15.00 + mailing costs if they apply.

ALSO AVAILABLE NOW!

STEP BACK IN TIME!

Volume II, Central Alberta

435 pages in a softcover book

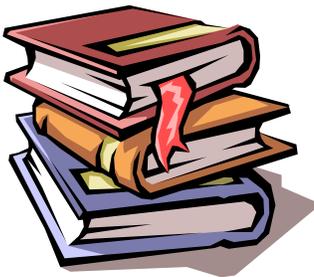
plus a DVD with over 115 pages of historical reference material

This is the second book in the series of historical travel guides for Albertans of German heritage. Volume I, Northern Alberta was printed last year. This book features historical data on the multitude of German trailblazers who passed through or settled in Central Alberta.



To Order Contact = *Lorraine Yackulic* phone 780-973-5036 e-mail lyackulic@shaw.ca

News on the HSGPV Library



Construction: Trinity Lutheran Church is expanding its nursery school to make room for a new Daycare. They will be renovating part of the basement this summer to prepare for a September start for the Daycare. The library will be open throughout construction, hopefully the noise will not be too distracting.

Donations: A big thank you to Irmgard Knoechel and Kurt Hinterleitner for their book donations, they are greatly appreciated.

We would also like to thank the Julius Brenner estate for the large donation of historical materials that include documents on Volhynia, Galicia, and Poland, as well as issues of the Heimatbote, Weg & Ziel, Wandering Volhynians, and much more.

We encourage all members and friends to visit the library to check out the new additions to the library. We also accept donations anytime.



In Loving Memory of..

Livia Cencora
1927-2014

In Memoriam

By Helga Roth (nee Hemmerling)

My sister Livia was born in Maczulki, Volhynia in 1927.

In 1940 they fled to Ostrow, Poland. Then again in 1945 they were forced to flee the advancing Russian army. They reached Vollbuetel in northern West Germany. In 1954 she immigrated to Canada with her husband Erich and two small sons. For 4-and-a-half-years she suffered from Alzheimers. It was difficult through the years to see her declining health.

She was a faithful member of the AHSGR and then the HSGPV.

Dementia

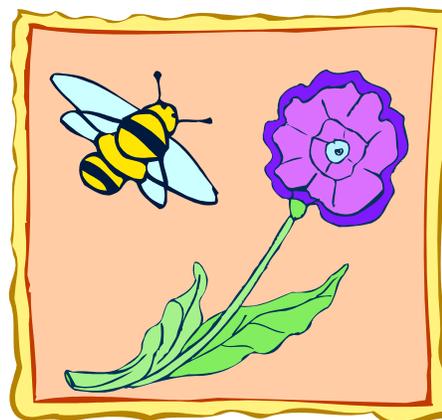
*Do not ask me to remember
Don't try to make me understand
Let me rest and know you're with me
Kiss my cheek and hold my hand
I'm confused beyond your concept
I am sad and sick and lost
All I know is that I need you
To be with me at all costs*

*Please do not lose your patience with me
Do not scold me or curse or cry
I can't help the way I'm acting
I can't be different though I try
Just remember that I need you
And that best of me is gone
Please don't fail to stand beside me
And love me 'til my life is done*

- Author Unknown

**Items for Sale through the HSGPV**

- Step Back in Time Vol I
- HSGPV German Cookbook (\$12)
- Complete set of E. Wushchke's "Wandering Volhynien Magazine" (\$100)
- Marsh Family Book (\$20)

**Call for Stories**

If you have any stories, historical research, or events you would like to share in the next HSGPV newsletter, please send them to the HSGPV office.

HSGPV


WWW.HSGPV.COM

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Ed Retzner Sandra Tober

Honorary Member: Maria Wuschke

Contacts:
Helga Roth (780) 464-4173
HSGPV Membership: \$20.00/person

HSGPV Library

Location: Room 11, Trinity Lutheran Church, 10014—81 Ave.
Hours: 10 a.m.—1 p.m. every Thursday
Librarian: Leane Evans

If you would like to visit the library outside of the regular hours, please call Leane at (780) 469-6118 to arrange access.

Library Access

To access the library, please avoid walking through the daycare in the basement. Instead, take the entrance to the basement that is past the office and down the hallway.

REMINDER: We are a registered non-profit organization and can issue tax receipts for all donations.

HSGPV German Cookbook

The Following Recipe is a sample from the HSGPV Cookbook created from recipes submitted from members and friends. Copies are still available for purchase.

OVEN-BARBECUED RIBS

Ingredients

- 1 finely chopped onion
- 1 tsp. chili powder
- 1 ½ cups Chicken/Rib barbecue sauce
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 1 tsp. paprika
- ½ tsp. each of garlic,
- ¼ tsp. ground pepper
- onion powder
- ¼ tsp. celery salt, celery salt
- ¼ cup white sugar
- 1 tsp. Montreal Steak Spice (optional)
- 3 lbs. pork back ribs

Sauce preparation

1. Place all of the sauce ingredients in a large bowl, heat in microwave. Do Not Boil.

Rib preparation

1. Cut 3 lbs. of pork back ribs into smaller servings. Sprinkle meat tenderizer on ribs.
2. Place ribs in a large roasting pan.
3. Pour on half of the sauce and turn over frequently in order to cover them well.
4. Preheat oven to 375°F. Bake them for 30 minutes.
5. Turn ribs over and add rest of the sauce. There has to be a lot of sauce with the ribs.

When the meat comes off the bone easily, then they are done!

Special Comments

These are good served with homemade baked beans, cole slaw, and fresh buns.

- submitted by Lorraine Dreger Yackulic