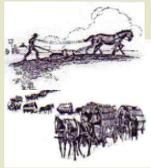


HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF GERMANS FROM POLAND & VOLHYNIA



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

POTLUCK CHRISTMAS PARTY!!

Wednesday December 10, 2014

Ritchie Hall

7727 – 98 St.

Doors open at 6:00, potluck at 6:30



This year's Christmas party is hosted by the American Society of Germans from Russia (see page 4 for more details). Please bring your favourite dish to share!

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY PASTOR FRED TOBER

November 30 is the First Sunday of Advent, the beginning of a new Church Year.

“Advent” means “coming.” We celebrate the coming of the Lord in a three-fold sense: 1) The Incarnation, his coming in the flesh. God took on our flesh and blood. This is what our Christmas celebration is all about. 2) He comes to us daily in grace through Word and Sacrament. He is present with us now. 3) His coming in glory.

The promise of his Coming is certain, but no one knows the time—neither

the Son, nor the angels, and forever.

but the Father only. Between now and his Return we are to be in watchful readiness, going about the business he has given us to do.

His Return will be a glorious day for those who belong to him. It gives hope, purpose and meaning to our lives now.

Though we have our hopes and expectation, we do not know the details of what awaits us in 2015, but we do know Jesus will be there. Christ is our future now

Turning to business matters, for some time the Board has discussed the need to up-grade our computer system. We see this as a 5-year project, and we will apply for a matching grant from the provincial Community Initiatives Program.

However, to get a grant, we will first have to raise funds ourselves. Any donations will be receipted for income tax purposes. More information will be forthcoming.

Have a joyful Christmas and a blessed New Year!



RECOLLECTIONS FROM WORLD WAR ONE

by Olga Tober

With the 100th Anniversary of the start of the First World War this past summer, I thought it might be interesting to share my mother's first-hand account of what life was like in Poland as war broke out. She lived with her family on a farm in Borki, about 80 km NW of Warsaw. The following was written in the late 1950s and has been edited and translated from German.

-- Pastor Fred Tober

I remember the start of World War I, which for us began on August 14, 1914. At that time we were still under Russia and the Czar was still alive. I was thirteen years old and everything was peaceful. My father had begun the construction of a new house. My sister, brother, and I were hoeing sugar beets intended for shipment to the factory when suddenly the village mayor came with the order to take nine head of cattle and a load of hay to Modlin because war had broken out with Germany.

We were alarmed and dropped everything. My father got ready five heifers and four steers that weighed about a thousand pounds or more each and a big hay wagon. The fortification at Modlin was about seventy kilometers from Borki. My father and my brothers Michael and Robert took the cattle and were gone about three days. Other farmers had to do the same. When they arrived at Modlin, there were huge numbers of cattle that farmers had brought from all over the countryside; it was terrible.

It appears the government minister in charge of food supplies had embezzled the funds for storing up meat supplies. With war having broken out so suddenly, he now had to meet his obligations so the people had to supply the cattle without remuneration. Had we known then that Russia would lose the war we would not have delivered the cattle.

We were left alone for a while till the Russian military moved through our area on their way to the German border, "to Berlin", as they said. The Russians plundered the village of Borki which lay in the colony. We lived in the Lowlands in the so-called "scatter-settlement" (*Streusiedlung*). They did not plunder us, except that they did not pay for chickens and eggs which they took.

The farmers had to supply free of charge wagons and horses to haul supplies—food and other materials—for the Russian army. Often these supplies were delayed, then both the men and the horses were starving. My brother Robert also had to do this hauling but he was able to speak Russian and he bribed himself free. He gave a Russian officer three rubles who then gave him a certificate stating that the horses were sick and so he was able to come home. When he returned three weeks later, the horses were so starved they barely could get into the barn and immediately lay down in their stalls. Others who were unable to speak Russian were beaten with rifle butts and had to stay on, and many were deported to Russia by the retreating Russian army. Some returned after the war, others did not.

About the middle of November the Russian army returned "from Berlin". This time they also came to our scatter-settlement searching everywhere for food, taking whatever was edible.

When we heard how they were plundering, we hid our food supplies in the barn and *Scheune*. We dug a number of pits and placed wooden chests and boxes into them. In one chest we put dried prunes, in another flour, in the third smoked meat, in still another our home-made plum jam and syrup, and so on. Everything was then covered with straw and dirt. We had to rush head-over-heels to get everything hidden.

We were barely finished when the Russians arrived and were they ever hungry! For example, as we sat at the table eating, they each took out a huge wooden spoon the size of a small bowl, reached across our heads in their large over-

coats and ate along with us. At this we all disappeared from the table. They then sat down and finished eating everything. Others came and searched through the cupboards and whatever they found they took. Still others went into the pantry and upstairs looking for food. They even looked for salt and took everything without pity. This went on for about a week.

Later, still others kept coming, but could not find anything anymore. Being desperately hungry, they started begging that we should at least make some tea for them. We got a loaf of bread weighing about twenty pounds which we had hidden in the hay and gave it to them. We baked several ovens full of bread and distributed it among the Russians. In addition my father gave them plum jam for the bread as well as syrup. The latter they used to sweeten their tea. Eventually our supplies began to run out, except for potatoes.

Soldiers were coming and going, and some were in such a hurry that they could not stay long enough to finish drinking a cup of tea. As their unit moved on, they took the cup of tea and piece of bread and ate while they walked. Some cups we found later stuck on fence posts.

Wounded also came who had sustained relatively minor injuries to their fingers, hands and faces. Some were exhausted. All the rooms were filled with sleeping Russian soldiers lying all over the floor. We had to get through these rooms. I as a little girl had to pick my way carefully through the sleeping soldiers. I always had to look for an empty space to step—near one's arm, near the face of the next one, or behind the back of another—but they did not do anything to me.

The soldiers butchered pigs if they could find them and took the meat along. However, we had our pigs well hidden in an old cellar which was out of the way in the old yard and was overgrown with elder bushes. It was virtually unnoticeable and no path led to it. They did not take any pigs from us.

For us this life with Russian soldiers soon came to an end, except that every now and then for a while Cossacks came looking for horses. Some of them my father could bribe, with others he had to beg. The result was that we could keep our horses also.

I still remember one night in November. All at once someone was knocking at my bedroom window. It was about 2:00 a. m. My sister and I shared a bedroom on the front side of the house. We were startled and scared. We called our brothers and they went and asked who was knocking. A Russian soldier answered and asked to be let in. He had been sent to find out where the German army was. It was however, a pitch-dark night so that you could not see the hand in front of your eyes. His horse had slipped and fallen into the canal and was stuck in the mud. He himself had managed to get out, but he was wet through and through. My brothers let him in. My mother gave him dry underwear for sleeping, and my father got up and let the soldier lie in his warm bed. They hung up his clothing to dry. He was hungry, and mother made coffee for him yet. Then he went to bed and slept till noon next day. When he got up, he handed over his ammunition and carbine and said that he would give himself up to the Germans. He stayed with us till evening. Did he ever infest our place with lice!

Many of the ethnic Germans in the area controlled by the Russians were deported to Russia with only a few belongings which they were able to carry with them. This took place in December 1914. They were put on trains and taken to the regions of the Black Sea and the Volga. Their farms, cattle, horses, furniture, potatoes and grain were taken over by the Poles. Some Poles even robbed them of their clothing and food while they were still at home. In our area the front moved through so rapidly that the Russians did not have time to deport any one. We all were able to remain in our homeland.

News from the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia

By Walter Epp, President AHSGR

I would assume you all had a marvellous summer. You may have been spending time gardening, on your knees weeding, harvesting the vegetables and fruit from your trees. Some of you may have spent time hiking in the mountains or walking in our river valley trails or ventured out and tried some fishing, while others went to their country farms and helped with haying or even threshing. What a wonderful diversion from all the hustle and pressures of the city. Whatever you tried, you must have gathered many wonderful memories from your experiences.

I am glad that you came back to share your research at our monthly meetings. In September we began our new year. We were blessed with the visit of Georg and Lydia Ballardt from Germany. Rev Horst Gutsche very graciously interpreted for them. Georg shared how he became a Christian about eleven years ago. As they grew spiritually, their concern and involvement has become focused on helping their Ukrainian and Russian people with the Gospel, food, clothing and the Scriptures. We highlighted the evening by playing Arthur Flegel's address: German Migration Eastward. The two presentations complimented each other.

In October, John Althouse shared methods which he is using for his family story and how we can apply these techniques in our own search.

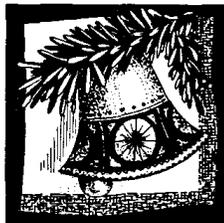
In November we introduced last year's German Award winner, namely, Mya Colwell. She shared her family's story and thanked us for the generous award. Then Robyn Morales gave us her family researched story. The questions and sharing from the audience made this a very interesting evening.

This brings me to the December Pot Luck Dinner Wednesday December 10 at Ritchie Community Hall. We are inviting the Polish Volhynian members and friends to join us for this celebration of a German Christmas. Please bring your favourite German dishes. It is always wise to bring a little extra so that all will be satisfied.

Our program will include readings, stories, carol singing and the St. David's Male Voice Choir. We look forward to a very enjoyable time together. The doors will open at five o'clock. Supper will be at 6:30 pm. Ritchie Hall is located on 98 Street and 78 Avenue.

Please come and join us and help us make this a wonderful event.

All are welcome!



frohe weihnacht

Items for Sale through the HSGPV

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

Call for Stories!

The HSGPV newsletter is always looking for content so if you have any family stories, historical research or announcements such as birthdays, anniversaries, or obituaries, please send them to the HSGPV office at Room 11, Trinity Lutheran Church, 10014—81 Ave



Congratulations Adam & Helga Roth!

Adam and Helga celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on July 31st.. Congratulations from family and friends and members of the HSGPV.

Wishing you many more years together!

Weinachtslicht

Nun tragt die licht gewordenen Herzen
aus eurer Weihnacht Seligkeit
als strahlende und helle Kerzen
hinein in jede Dunkelheit!

Wie wird sie heimlich sacht entweichen
vor seines Wortes hellem Licht,
wenn gläubig wir die Hände reichen
dem Heiland, der so tröstlich spricht:
“Ich bin bei euch!” – Mehr braucht es nicht.

– Amrei Flashar

In Memoriam

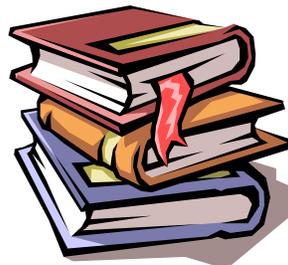


Our deepest sympathies to the family and friends of Felix Fritz, a long-time member of HSGPV, who passed away this summer.

He will be missed.



News on the HSGPV Library



Three sets of E. Wushcke’s “Wandering Volhynien Magazine” were recently sold to people in Manitoba, Regina S.K., Victoria B.C., and Colorado, US. This shows there is interest in our collection and we hope to make more sales in the future!

Our most recent addition to the library is the book “We Were Children: Growing up in Germany 1936-1948” by Inge D. Hess.

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

HSGPV


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Helga Roth (Treasurer) Barbara Stenzel (Secretary)
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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.

FROSTED GINGERBREAD

Ingredients

½ cup margarine
½ cup sugar
1 cup hot water
3 tsp. baking soda
1 cup Rogers' Syrup
2 tsp. ground ginger
1 egg beaten
2 tsp. cinnamon
2 ½ cups flour
1/8 tsp. ground cloves
1/8 tsp. salt

Preparation

1. Melt margarine; add hot water, syrup, and beaten egg.
2. Put all dry ingredients into bowl and make well in center.
3. Add the liquid gradually beating until the mixture is smooth.
4. Grease an 8" square wax paper lined cake pan and pour batter in to it.
5. Bake in 350°F. oven for about 1 hour. When cool, ice with lemon icing.

Lemon icing Sift 1 cup icing sugar into a small bowl. Add 1 teaspoon margarine and enough lemon juice to make a frosting of spreading consistency. Spread onto cake.

— submitted by Agnes Kohler