



# Texas Wendish Heritage Society and Museum - Serbin, Texas

ROUTE 2, BOX 155, GIDDINGS, TEXAS 78942-9769

(409) 366-2441

OPEN FROM 1:00 to 5:00 P. M. EVERY DAY EXCEPT SATURDAY & HOLIDAYS  
Phone 409/366-2441

NEWSLETTER

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AUGUST, 1994

## SIXTH ANNUAL WENDISH FEST

The sixth annual Wendish Fest is just around the corner. We are counting on all of you to help make it a success.

The Reverend Dr. Eugene Krentz, President of Concordia University, River Forest, Illinois will conduct the 8:30 English service, and the 10:30 German service. Sunday school will follow immediately after the English service.

Kovanda's Czech Band will be playing for us this year. Mr. Leland Miller of Fayetteville is a member of the band and also a member of our Society and has very graciously offered the band's service at a discounted rate because he is a Wend.

Our menu will again be sausage, green beans, Wendish noodles, beets, peaches, bread, butter, coffee and tea for the price of \$4.50 for adults and/or plates to go and \$3.00 for children's plates.

Desserts will be available all afternoon for 50 cents. This is where we need your help. Please bring your donations of desserts to the picnic grounds as soon as possible. If you wish to enter the coffee cake bake-off, these entries must be in the booth by 10:30. If you are unable to bring a dessert, we would appreciate a monetary donation in lieu of such. The Serbin and Winchester branches of Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL) will be matching funds for us so we can be doubling your donation.

See enclosed program for list of activities for the day. New events this year are pea shelling and corn shelling contests for the children. There will be a handmade quilt exhibit.

We will be looking for volunteers to lead in some of the old time party games after the song-a-long led by Jack Wiederhold and Doug Malke, so put on your thinking caps.

There will be some Hot Air Balloons going up in Giddings, (weather permitting) at day break, so watch the skies for a sight of them.

SEE YOU AT SERBIN ON SEPTEMBER 25th!!

The Committee

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- September 24                      Geburstag at Giddings, Texas
- September 25                      Sixth Annual Wendish Fest at the Museum Complex and the St. Paul, Serbin Picnic Grounds
- October 17                         Deadline for articles for October newsletter
- October 18                         Walk-in coffee/bake sale at Elinor's Cottage behind the Fletcher Home in Giddings, Texas
- November 20                        General Membership Meeting at the Museum at 2:00 p. m. with election of officers

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Thank you to Rev. Paul Hartfield for having the opening devotion at the August membership meeting, and to Mr. James Kalbas for presenting, along with interesting and informative video footage, the program on organic gardening.

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### QUILT DISPLAY AT THE WENDISH FEST by Marian Wiederhold, Chairperson.

An added attraction at this year's Wendish Fest will be a display of handmade quilts. Many of our mothers and grandmothers made beautiful quilts, and we would like to give people an opportunity to share these works of love with others who are interested in, and admire the work involved in this craft. If you have a quilt that you would like to have displayed, please contact Barbara Hielscher at the Museum or Marian Wiederhold at 409/542-5633. Please try to bring quilts to the museum a week before the Wendish Fest. Have your name and phone number attached to quilt.

### WENDISH FEST COFFEE CAKE BAKE-OFF RULES

The rules for the bake-off are the same as last year. There is no entry fee. A 5 inch square is used for judging and the remainder is sold in the bake sale. Entries have to be in the sweets stand on the picnic grounds by 10:30. There are 3 divisions. Kaese Kuchen and Streusel Kuchen need to be at least 10 X13 (cookie sheet size). The "special" division has to be a full recipe and yeast raised. It can be baked in angel food or bundt cake pans and can include cinnamon rolls, or fruit or nut toppings.

First, second, and third place trophies will be awarded in each division and all other entries will receive a participant ribbon.  
**COME JOIN THE FUN!!!**

Laverne Gersch, Chairperson  
Phone 409/366-2247

**WALK-IN COFFEE/BAKE SALE**  
by Hattie Schautschick, Chairperson

There will be a walk-in coffee/bake sale on October 18, at Elinor's Cottage located behind the Fletcher Home in Giddings, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Everyone is asked to bring baked goods to this location before 9:00 a.m. and anyone wishing to help between those hours please contact Hattie at 409/366-9621 or Barbara at the Museum at 409/366-2441. Funds from this event will be matched.

**FREEDOM FOUND -- THE ALTUS FAMILY by P. H. Colliver**  
A review by Vivian (Froelich) Taylor

Altus, Biele, Schneider, Pilak, Wiess, Peltz, Lieschke, Doecke, and many, many more familiar names appear in this most interesting family history. Reading this story is not unlike the unfolding of the saga of the Wends in Texas; only this takes place in Australia. A brief, but accurate background of early Wendish (Sorbish) history is given and continues through the migration of this family. An excellent bibliography of resources for further study is included. A wonderful Index of all names is given along with many pictures.

It is easy to see why this book won an award for the best family history published in 1984 in Australia.

The author, P. H. (Pauline Helen Altus) Colliver is the author of two other books. She is a distant cousin to me through the Altus family. (By coincidence, my grandmother Froehlich was also named Helene Altus!) My initial contact with Helen was in 1988.

This past June, while visiting in the Bautzen area, I was delighted to be able to meet three of my "Australian" kin who were there with a larger group from Australia. It was great! I also met a 'John Lehmann' and his wife. Also with the group was a retired Pastor Harms and his wife and the coordinator for the group was 'John Noack'. My travelling companion, Sandra Matthijetz and I, also spent a good bit of time with the delightful "Gotsky's", Beverly and Benno.

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**MEMORIALS**

In Memory of:	Donor	Amount
Victor E. Weise	M/M Paul Weise	\$30.00
Victor A. Zoch	M/M Jack Wiederhold	\$20.00
Victor A. Zoch	M/M Norman Moerbe	\$10.00
Walter Mersiovsky	M/M Otto Becker, Jr.	\$15.00

A \$50.00 donation was received from the Schulz Reunion.

A \$25.00 donation was received from M/M Bill Pittsford for the Pittsford Reunion. Parents William H. and Alma Pittsford.

A \$10.00 donation was received from M/M Robert Hein for the Pittsford Reunion.

A cookbook titled The Melting Pot - ethnic cuisine in Texas, was given to the Museum library in memory of Victor A. Zoch by M/M Walter Gersch. The book has a section titled THE WENDISH, with recipes and a short history of the Wendish settlers

## OBITUARY FOR VICTOR ZOCH

Victor Armin Zoch was born in Winchester, Texas on February 28, 1933, to Theodore Zoch and Adeline (Schulze) Zoch. He died on July 21, 1994 in Austin after a courageous fight with cancer. He is survived by his wife, Dorothy; a brother, Ted; and a sister, Dorothy.

Vic and I had many things in common: We were both teachers, we married late in life, and we were interested in our Wendish heritage. Beata and I enjoyed our trips to the country to visit Vic and Dorothy and will always remember their friendship and hospitality. Whether we were discussing the world of teaching or the "good old days" in the country, I always found Vic to be an interesting person to chat with.

I visited Vic in Seton Hospital shortly before his death. Although exhausted by the battle with his illness, he didn't complain or feel sorry for himself. I called his brother a couple of weeks later to see if Vic had gone home yet. By sad coincidence, I learned that he had gone home that afternoon - this time to his heavenly home.

Vic worked hard for the Texas Wendish Heritage Society and was serving as Vice-President of the Society at the time of his death. Vic was the type person who loved his work, family, and friends. Most importantly, he loved his Lord. We will all miss him, but he will always be with us in our memories.

Dr. Charles Wukasch

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### DOCENTS

Docents during the months of July and August were: Ken Weiser, Henry & Emilie Zoch, Ruth Lindner, Lorine Domel, Barbara Hielscher, August & Laura Zoch, Lillian Oltmann, Mina Sump, Laverne Gersch, Shaina Gersch, Heather Hielscher, Hattie Schautschick, Gloria Mae Gersch, Evelyn Kasper, Bea Tschatschula, and George Boerger.

### VISITORS

During the months of July and August there were visitors from: Minnesota, Virginia, Kansas, Arkansas, Washington, Maryland, Missouri, New Mexico, Michigan, Colorado, New York, Louisiana, Germany, and all parts of Texas.

### MEMBERSHIP

#### New Members

Valeria Cash, Lomita, TX	Ruby Hein, Overland Park, KS
Sara S. Reilly, Houston, TX	Walter Patschke, Waxahachie, TX
Margaret Ruse, New Braunfels, TX	Lloyd W. Schuhmann, Giddings, TX

#### Patron Members

Lloyd W. Schuhmann, Giddings, TX

## WENDS JOURNEY BACK TO HOMELAND FOR FESTIVAL

Since the wall came down between East and West Germany tourism is encouraged and the Wendish people certainly played a big part in this by hosting The Sorbisch Kultur Fest in Raddush. The Texas Wends, Australian Wends, and Poles were well represented at this festival. The Australian Wends and the Poles were accepted as Associate Members of the Wendish Organization and the Texas Wends were also invited to join. Perhaps this can be accomplished by 1998 when they will host the next big festival. As I understand it, there would be no cost involved - only a formal request for membership. There were six Texans in our group: Pastor Robert and Georgie Boyce, Leroy and Elinor Steglich, and Arnold and Evelyn Kasper. Also attending from Texas were Mary Guggisberg from Vernon, Vivian Taylor from Weimar, and Sandra Matthijetz from Winchester.

When our group arrived in Bautzen on June 20th, we visited the Domowina Headquarters where we received a very cordial welcome by the entire staff. In addition to posters, brochures, etc., we were given little Sorbisch flags which served as our gate passes at the Festival. We also got to visit with Dr. Tony Bruk who visited our Festival in 1991. He gave us a copy of the video he made while here in Texas. His wife gave us a very thorough and interesting tour of the Museum. We were pleased to hear so many of the people speaking the Wendish language. Many of the younger people speak Wendish, including Janina Topel, the Public Relations lady from the Domowina, who accompanied us to Grödditz for a visit with Gertrude Mahling the next day. Frau Mahling works with the Sorbishes Institut.

Janina speaks Wendish, German and English. One of the nicest things the Domowina staff did for us was to make reservations for our stay in Gasthaus Mickan while we were in Bautzen. Hanka Mickan is a Wendish actress and she and her husband were wonderful hosts to us. They invited us to dinner the night before we left, and Hanka, together with another actress friend and a neighbor sang Wendish songs and showed us a little Wendish dance. I hope Pastor Boyce's video camera was working. We felt like we were leaving old friends after our four day stay. Frau Mickan gifted our Museum with her sister's Folk Costume and a large map of Bautzen. While here the Steglichs visited with members of the Winzer family.

Our visits in the entire area were heart warming. On our way Dr. Lotar Balke at Drebkau showed us his collection of over 2,000 Easter eggs. He has some beautiful eggs and I was quite pleased to see a couple of eggs with my name and Daphne Garret's name on them. Dr. Balke will be visiting with the Garretts during the Wendish Festival this year. He has written several books on the Wendish costumes.

We visited many dorfs where our grandparents lived before coming to Texas. Visiting in the Spreewitz and Spremberg area gave me a special bonding with my grandmother, Anna (Jurischk) Fritsche, who came here when she was eight years old. She talked about the beautiful cherry trees, they were ripe and plentiful at the time we were there, as were the strawberries. I can certainly understand why the people missed their homeland when they first came here. Visiting with Pastor Hornich and his family and friends was a real treat, and attending services in the church at Spreewitz which is over 300 years old, was a real thrill. The Hornichs entertained us there on Saturday night much like we do right here. They grilled meat in the yard and invited a host of friends and neighbors, and we sat around singing German songs with Pastor Hornich on the guitar first, and then some English songs with Pastor Boyce on the guitar.

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Our hosts joined us at the Sorbisch Culture Fest in Raddusch on Saturday and again on Sunday. It was a real treat to be able to visit the Festival and I hope that I will be able to do so again some day.

On our trip Georgie Boyce discovered that she is not only a Wend, but a real gem. The name Bernstein means amber which is a hard, translucent yellowish-brown fossil resin of pine trees, used for jewelry. Can you imagine why she came home loaded down with jewelry?

Evelyn N. Kasper



Photo at left: Texas Wends at the Domowina in Pautzen, June, 1994: Flinor Steglich, Georgie Boyce, Evelyn Kasper, Leroy Steglich, & Arnold Kasper.

Photo below: Visiting with Dr. Toni Bruk at the Domowina Building in Bautzen: Pastor Robert Boyce, Leroy Steglich, Elinor Steglich, Dr. Toni Bruk and Evelyn Kasper



Photo at left: Gravestones of Pastor Kilian's children buried at Klitten. The church takes care of these graves. Normally, for a fee of sixty dollars, a gravespace is reserved for 25 years, at the end of that time, the space is sold to some one else unless the fee is again paid. This explains why you do not see many old stones. The congregation usually keeps up the graves of the pastors.

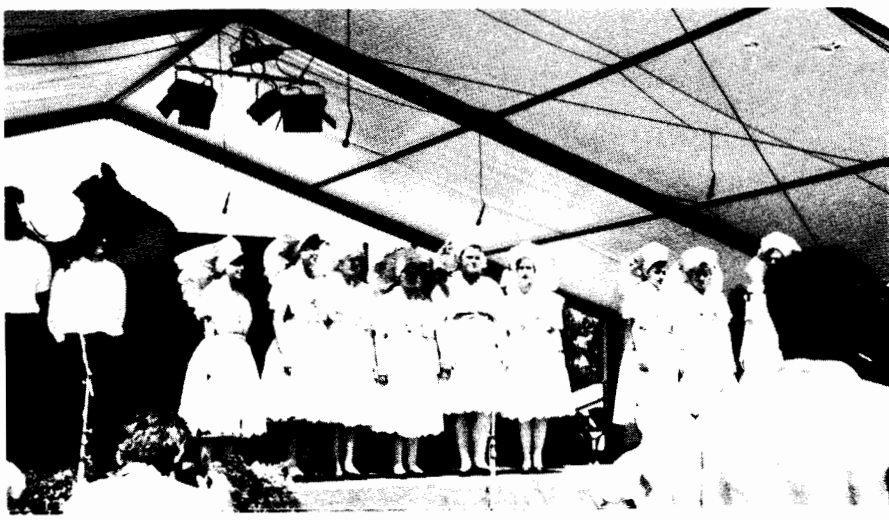


Photo to left: At the Raddusch Sorbian Days of Culture Fest on Saturday, June 25th.

Photo to right: Texas Wends at the Sorbisch Kultur Fest in Raddusch with some of their hosts from Spreewitz. From left to right: Evelyn Kasper, Wilfried Ladusch - host of the Kaspers, Johannes Grosa - host of the Steglichs, Leroy Steglich, Arnold Kasper, Pastor Hornich, host of the Boyces, Pastor Robert Boyce, Ester Hornich, and Elinor Steglich



Photo to left: The same group as above with more Texas Wends: Front row - Sandra Matthijetz Back row - Vivian Taylor and Georgie Boyce. (Mary Guggusberg was not present at the time.) At far left is Beverly Gotzky from Australia who was there with a large delegation of Wend from Australia.

Photo to right: The beautiful parade on the Spree River was enjoyed Sunday, June 26th



## TALK AND SLIDE SHOW ON FOLK DRESS OF LUSATIA

The Museum staff has invited Dr. Lotar Balke of Drebkau, Lusatia to give a talk and slide show about the folk dress of Lusatia on Friday evening, September 30 at 7:30 p.m. Dr. Balke is an expert and author on Volkstracht as well as the stitchery and textiles of Lusatia. Dr. Balke will be visiting Texas from September 21 to October 11 as the guest of Bob and Daphne Garrett.

Anyone interested in this subject is invited to attend. The Museum will serve coffee and sweets (contributions of cookies or other sweets would be welcome). If you plan to come from out of town, please confirm the scheduled talk with the Museum on Friday afternoon.



## Texas Mendish Heritage Museum

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