



# Texas Wendish Heritage Society

NEWSLETTER

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Volume I, No. 4      Serbin, Texas      July-September, 1980

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## A LOOK AT THE NEWSLETTER

With this issue of the Newsletter we complete Volume One of our experiment. Action by the Heritage Society membership at its next regular meeting will probably determine if the Newsletter will be continued as Volume two, or if it will follow the same format.

It should be noted that Volume One was instigated by our former president, Mr. Theodore Lammert of Katy, Texas. He and the editor discussed some of the possibilities of a Newsletter to stimulate interest in the purposes, goals, and objectives of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society. Whether this purpose was achieved can probably best be determined and measured by the reactions of the members who have received the four issues published during the past twelve months.

Since the Society will probably discuss the future of the Newsletter at the meeting in September, it is suggested that all our readers send in your reactions for consideration at that time. Let it be known how you feel about the Newsletter, whether you want it to continue, and what format it should take if it is continued. Any suggestions from you, the reader, will be appreciated. Kindly write without delay to your Editor at his new address;

John J. Socha  
507 S. Caldwell  
Giddings, Texas 78942

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THE GLORIA PATRI: Česc budz Wotcej, Synej a swjatemu Duchej,  
Kaž było je spocžatku, netko a koždy čas a wot wečnoszcze  
do wečnoszcze. Hamjen.

The NEWSLETTER of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society, with headquarters at the Wendish Museum in Serbin, Texas, is published quarterly.

Editor: John J. Socha

Contributors: Officers and members of the Society and anyone interested in helping to preserve the Wendish (Sorbian, Upper Lusatian) heritage.

The Texas Wendish Heritage Society is a non-profit organization and in no way discriminates in matters of race, religion, or ethnic background.

Financial contributions to the Texas Wendish Heritage Society are tax-deductible.

Dues are \$5.00 per person per year and may be sent to the Treasurer, T.W.H.S., P.O. Box 311, Giddings, Texas 78942.

The President is Evelyn Kasper Box 68, Warda, Texas, 78960.

Newsletter Editor living in Giddings.

John J. Socha is now the Manager of the Giddings Chamber of Commerce. He still has the status of a Pastor in the Lutheran Church-Mo. Synod. As a Candidate-Status Pastor he will continue to be eligible for a call as he continues to preach and serve in numerous other pastoral capacities. His Chamber address is P.O. Box 180 Giddings; 78942 Phone 713/542-3455.

(SPEWARSKE KNIHI, Continued)

This Hymn-Book of 1955 is a handy text for the study of the Wendish language. Here's one stanza of "Abide, O Dearest Jesus" - "Ach, Wostan Pri Nas z Hradu, hlej, sweta wjecor je, hdyz njewemy sej radu, dla certa lestnosce."

Notice the differences in the same stanza in the old 1838 - 1888 editions: "Ach wostan pschi nasz s hradu, hlaj szweta wjecor je, so njepschindzemy k padu psches czerta lesznosce."

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SILENT NIGHT! HOLY NIGHT!  
CICHA NOC, SWJATA NAM NOC!

Cicha noc, swjata nam noc.  
Wsitko spi; pri zlobju  
Marja z Jozefom njezdremuje,  
Synk jej lubozny zwjeseluje.  
Cisinko, Synko, ty spi,  
Cisinko, Synko, ty spi.

J. Mohr, 1848  
Zejler.

From Spewarske Knihi 1955  
Naklad Domowiny w Budysinje

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Now is a good time to talk to your Wendish relatives and friends about joining the Texas Wendish Heritage Society. See the information in the column to the left.



WENDISH MUSEUM RESEARCH CENTER AT SERBIN IN LIMITED USE

Things are happening at Serbin, Texas, Lee County, Texas. The Research Center of the Wendish Museum, yet to be fully developed, is in limited use.

Sunday, May 25, was Serbin Picnic Day, always a big event for all of Lee and surrounding counties. And a great family affair.

In preparation for the Picnic and homecoming of many Wends and others, members of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society, worked like eager beavers, readying the Research Center, both indoors and outdoors.

Among those working before, during and/or after the event were: HERMINE MARBURGER, ESTHER SCHMIDT, ALVIN SCHMIDT, LILLIAN AND BILL PRATHO, LAURA ZOCH, EVELYN KASPER, ESTHER BUSCHA, LAVERNE GERSCH, WALTER GERSCH, COUNTY COMMISSIONER OTTO BECKER JR., RUBY KOSLAN, MRS. OTTO NOACK, DAN SEIDLER, ALFRED MENZEL, HERMAN MITSCHKE, and yours truly, John J. Socha

Show Cases used for the unique collection of Wendish exhibits, were from PRATHO'S GIDDINGS DEPARTMENT STORE. They were made many, many years ago by AUGUST WEBER, famed cabinet maker from Germany. He is the artist who painted the interior of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Serbin. We are told that he never talked to anyone while he worked. And he let it be known that he didn't appreciate having people disturb him while he worked. (Ye editor needs to learn this discipline!)

PRATHO'S WAS BEGUN 58 YEARS AGO BY PAUL J. PRATHO, WHO BOUGHT OUT THE FAMOUS, HISTORIC GIDDINGS GRANGE STORE, SO WELL KNOWN FOR MANY YEARS. Bill Pratho, an active member of our TWHS, and also chairman of the Museum Bldg. Comm., became associated with PRATHO'S in 1930. (We'll have to have a Fiftieth Ann. Celebration, Bill!) Bill is the one who donated the Show Cases to the TWHS Museum and Research Center.

During the Serbin Picnic Society members helped hundreds of exhibit-viewers become acquainted with hundreds of Wendish artifacts and relics on exhibit. The appreciation of the Society is expressed to all donors.

WE SEND GREETINGS to Frances Leake, Winnebago, Ill. and thank her for the Bible she donated to the Museum. Her family is the KOLBAS, Christian, Half-Farmer, Neudorf, B. May 22, 1830.

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GERHARD SIMMANK WRITES FROM FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY West

June 18, 1980, Dear Mr. Socha, Greetings to you of a International new Membership of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society. "Simmank" is a good old Wendish name, means "Little Simon." My English is no good. I write in German: - (Mr. Simmank then proceeds to tell us about the ancient name, Simmank, and its varied spellings: Semank, Ssemmancka (1723), Seman (Semich), Symank, Symmank and Simmang. Following an interesting statement about the Slavic use of the letter "K", Mr. Simmank writes: "This is for the Newsletter, please:

WITAJCE HOLCY Z DALOKA (Greetings, people, from afar)  
(Seid gegrüsst, Männer, aus weiter Ferne)

I will close now with best wishes for your health and happiness Hoping this finds you well and  
Wutrobny postrow s dele Wam, Yours Sincerely,

Wasa

= Gerhard Simmank

Ziegelhüttenweg 84  
6 Frankfurt-am-Main-Süd 70  
Postfach 70 - 11 - 13  
Federal Republic of German (West)

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SPEWARSKE KNIHI - HYMNAL

Spewarske Knihi, za evangelsko-lutherskich Serbow, Znowa wudal konwent serbskich duschownych, (Hymnal, for Evangelical Lutheran Serbs (Wends), newly published by the Conference of Serbisch Pastors, and published w Budysinje in 1955.

B. E. Biar, our good friend and energetic Wendish descendant scholar, brought this hymnal back to the States in 1972. He gave it to Mrs. Harry Wuensche (Emma) of Mc Dade, Texas. She has been gracious in letting me borrow it from time to time.

I enjoy comparing the Wendish in this modern Hymn-Book and the Hymnal used by the Wends at St. Paul, Serbin and elsewhere 125 years ago.