



# Texas Wendish Heritage Society

NEWSLETTER

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Elmer Zoch Photo

"WITAJCE k NAM"

"W E L C O M E"

Little did I realize, when I made and painted the above sign, that it would attract as much attention as it has.

"Welcome to us" is what it says. It is copied after some signs used in Wendenland to welcome visitors to their fairs, picnics, and other gatherings.

The sign above is used at the entrance to the Wendish Museum area in Serbin. It has also been used at the Wendish Booth at the Folklife Festival in San Antonio.

We are sincere in our invitation to all our readers to come by and visit the Wendish Museum whenever you are in the Giddings area. The Welcome mat - sign - is out.  
"WITAJCE k NAM!"

John J. Socha

HENRY W. SCHKADE JR. VISITS WENDENLAND - Part II. (For Part I refer to Vol. II, No. 4, July-Sept., 1981)

Martin had arranged to be on vacation during the week of my visit, making himself available as my tour guide. Martin is a Wendish language teacher in a special school for the preservation of the Wendish history, culture, and traditions. In the Martin Leschber home Wendish is spoken first and German second. This quotation of Jan Kilian is prominently placed in their living room: "Serbja, zachowajce sweru swojich wotcow rec a weru!" I consider myself very fortunate to have such an expert on Wendish heritage along on our many excursions around Ober Lausitz. We drove to many villages to see, to mention only a few things: a very old Wendish windmill, one of the few remaining Wendish ovens for the breaking of bread, various Wendish churches, typical Wendish cottages and buildings, the Wendish bookstore, and the Wendish Museum in Bautzen. The Museum contains collections of costumes, tools and farm equipment, painted Easter eggs, samples of skills and crafts, and much more.

My two main purposes in making the trip to the DDR were to visit with relatives and to further pursue my genealogical research. The first was certain to be accomplished, but I could hardly contain my excitement when Cousin Martin guided me to the church in the village of BARUTH (four miles from the church of Jan Kilian in Dauban) that proved to contain in its archives the baptismal records of my paternal great-grandfather, confirming my suspicion that he was born in the village nearby. This discovery was only possible because of Martin's extreme familiarity with the immediate area - he was born in Baruth!

Cousin Martin and I visited with two Leschber families in Petershain (six miles from Dauban), ancestral home of the Leschbers for several hundred years. The retired Lutheran minister helped us research the record there. From Petershain, we first visited an elderly Leschber couple on their farm at Drasendorf on the Niesse River at the Polish border, just a few miles north of Czechoslovakia. Then to Ullersdorf where we talked of family ties with yet another Leschber family over coffee and coffee cake.

I returned with many photographs, genealogical information from the State Archives in Bautzen, books and literature of various kinds, a Wendish vase with traditional designs painted on it (a gift from the Leschber family),

Wendish newspapers, detailed local maps of Ober Lausitz and Bautzen, a large beautiful calendar printed in Wendish and other collectibles.

My return home was really only a beginning to what is now an ongoing relationship with my Central European family, via now frequent correspondence. I encourage everyone with Wendish ancestors to locate their relatives in Lusatia and visit them! Henry W. Schkade. (Since Part I, Henry has moved to Walburg, Texas. His new address is: Henry W. Schkade, Route 2, Box 73B, Georgetown, Texas 78626. He says: "Hopefully close enough that I can attend meetings in Serbin. Our thanks to Mr. Schkade for a most interesting article. Hope he will bring his collectibles to the next meeting of the TWHS. JJS.)

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#### MUSEUM REPORT . . . . . by EVELYN KASPER

Perhaps you got by the Museum to see our big cedar Christmas tree during the holiday season. Daphne Garrett selected and donated the tree. Assisting with the decorating were Lillian Wieder, Ruth Lindner, Bea Tschatschula, Ruby Koslan and LaVerne Gersch. Daphne Garrett and her mother, Mrs. Inez Dalton of San Antonio, baked the cookies for the tree.

This report covers the period from 9-27-81 thru 1-1-82. Hostesses were: Viola Spacek, Elsie Socha, Ella Melde, Bessie Mertink, Emma Wuensche, Ruth Mitschke, Illian Wieder, Doris Wottrich, Evelyn Kasper, Victor Bohot, Elva Bohot, <sup>Glenda Lammert,</sup> Bekki Lammert, Daphne Garrett, LaVerne Gersch, Walter Marburger, Hermine Marburger, Ruth Kilian Lindner, Bea Tschatschula, Ruby- Koslan, Marie Kilian Luecke, Esther Buscha, Lorine Domel and Selma Simon. We showed about 200 visitors during this period, including folks from California, Louisiana, and Illinois. The Museum was opened three times by special appointment and I encouragemen groups to do this.

Sales in the Gift Shop: \$8.50 Miscellaneous; \$47.25 T Shirts; \$290 Books. Thanks to Albert Blaha for 11 prints of Ben Nevis to be sold, and to Ted Lammert for 2 copies of The German Texans. Mr. Blaha has also loaned a collection of Post Cards. Many thanks to all donors.

STILL AVAILABLE: Wendish Hymns and Spiritual Treasures, compiled by John J. Socha. Send \$2.25 to WENDISH, P.O.Box 180, Giddings, Texas 78942 for your copy.

CONCORDIA HISTORICAL INSTITUTE NEWSLETTER RECOGNIZES OUR NEWSLETTER. The Dec. 1981 issue of historical footnotes, said some ~~nice~~ things about our description of the Wends. The editor, Dr. Aug. Suelflow asks, "Will our descendants be able to pay these same high compliments to us? Just as the Texas Wendish Heritage Society (P.O.Box 311, Giddings, Texas 78942) is preserving and protecting the noble story of their Lutheran ancestors in Texas, so is our Institute working to serve you in preserving and researching the history and heritage of Lutheranism in America and specifically the Missouri Synod. Continue to share in and spread the word of our ministry among your friends."

The Concordia Historical Institute needs you as a member. Become an active member for just \$10.00. Send your check to Concordia Historical Institute, 801 De Mun Ave., Saint Louis Missouri, 63105.

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HELP! NELSON E. LEOPOLD wants some information about his Grandfather, WILHELM LEOPOLD, "who was left on the beach (Galveston) in 1854 by his uncle (ship captain.). Why his uncle left him we don't know - "We have been able to find his permanent naturalization papers (1869) but all they say is that he came from Prussia" P.S. The name of the people in Galveston who raised my Grandfather was SCHOCKE. Anyone able to provide information about Wilhelm Leopold, please contact Nelson E. Leopold, Rt. 1, Box 456, Sweeny, Texas 77480.

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Have an interesting letter from B. E. Biar, 3904 S. Syracuse Way, Denver, Colo., 80237 in regards to the letter from Pastor Laser, now retired. We'll share the letter at another time.

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OUR PRESIDENT, Theodore Lammert of Katy, Texas, says: We are thankful for the financial accomplishments of the past year. We have made \$14,000 available to the Museum Board for the restoration work on the schoolhouse. . . It is our plans to use the \$14,000 to close in the front room of the schoolhouse, re-shingle the roof, and restore the brick flue that was used for the wood heaters in the schoolhouse.

He pleads for continued contributions so that air-conditioning and many other projects can complete the project. Give Memorial Wreaths. Seek Grants from your Company.