



Texas Wendish Heritage Society

NEWSLETTER

Volume IV, No. 4 Giddings, Texas July-Aug.-Sept. 1983

Fellow Members of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society:

We send fraternal greetings to all who hold membership in the Texas Wendish Heritage Society around the world, but especially to those who live in LUSATIA, the original home of the WENDS (Sorbs) who came to Texas in the immigration of 1854 under the leadership of the Rev. JAN KILIAN. As more and more of us in America travel to Germany and visit with the WENDS still living there we learn to appreciate the heritage that has been handed down to us.

In this issue we will hear from ROBERT R. ROBINSON - ZWAHR of Lubbock, Texas, who had an exciting extended visit to WENDENLAND.

We'll also hear from B. E. Bill BIAR of Denver, Colo., who has recorded much valuable information which needs to be shared with those who are trying to gain a greater knowledge of the WENDS.

I will also be making references to my own enjoyable visit to the home of the WENDS in May of 1982. Look for the article about the Wendish Folk Song, "HANKA, BUDZ WJESOLA" which was taught to me by the HERZOGS and the BREJERS at the lovely hamlet, KOTITZ, where Rev. Jan Kilian had his first parish after serving as an assistant at HOCHKIRCH.

You'll want to be sure to read the report by DAPHNE DALTON GAKRETT of Houston, Texas. It is about an article researched by Albert Blaha, a Czech desc^e Jant from Dime Box, Texas about the famous BEN NEVIS.

John J. Socha, Editor
Rt. 3, Box 278
Giddings, Texas 78942

Sept. 4, 1852

. . . the inspection of a noble vessel now lying in the Salthouse dock at Liverpool, fitting out for the Australian passenger trade. She is called the Ben Nevis, and will form one of the White Star line of packets, consigned to Messrs. Pilkington & Wilson of Liverpool. The Ben Nevis is of 1420 tons register, and 3000 tons burden, and has capacity for carrying 650 passengers; but the number, we understand, will be restricted to a much less amount, for the greater comfort of the passengers who may engage. She is 180' in length, with 38 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' breath of beam. Commanding as a frigate in appearance, the Ben Nevis is of very handsome model, and she sits upon the water with an ease and grace that afford the happiest augury as to her sailing qualities. Her figure-head is a Highlandman in full costume, and the vessel carries on her stern the Caledonian arms. -Colonially built, the Ben Nevis is of immense strength, and nothing seems to have been omitted, either in her build or fittings for the safety and convenience of the passengers.

With the exception of a small house in the centre, the upper or spar deck presents a beautifully clear run fore and aft, and is especially free from those obstructions at the side of a vessel which often interfere so much with a promenade. The length of the house on deck is 40 feet by 16 feet, and the first compartment of this which we enter is the cooking gallery or caboose. Well protected by metal plating from the possibility of accident by fire, this apartment possesses capacity, according to the standard adopted by the Government emigration officers, to cook for 800 people. In the next compartment to the passenger's caboose, and separated by a bulk-head from the other, is the ship's cooking apparatus, through which, by doors and windows, there will always be circulating a fine current of air. And here we find some ingenious instances of the economy of space for stowage practised on board ship, for, in unconsidered corners of this small room there are pointed out a water-tank, "lockers" for bread, potatoes, coals, and the small stores of the crew, and also a stand for the "harness" cooks, stewards, and other petty officers; and at the extreme end of the range is a "shop", or very convenient apartment for serving out food to the passengers, where the purser and his assistants have every accommodation.

Further on, and nearer to the stern, a beautiful little room has been fitted up with stained glass windows, as the ship's "notel". At the stern on each side of the wheel-house, accommodation has been provided as a lounging-place and smoking room. The vessel is supplied with a fire-engine and force-pump, situated in the forecastle, with a length of leather hose which could be carried to the remotest corner of the ship in case of fire; leaden pipes in connexion with the pump run right round the vessel; and by this means the cisterns, &c, are supplied with water; three pipes rising to the spar-deck from her lower hold, filling the deck cisterns with a full day's supply.

In the main saloon the berths are paneled in gold and white, the floor has a Brussels carpet, and the settees and sofas are covered with silk velvet and rich tapestry; the coup d'beil being much heightened by the beautiful stained glass ventilator shafts, which run from the spar-deck even into the hold. In the after saloon, which is beautifully lighted by the stern windows of unusual size, bath-rooms are fitted up, and in the locality the captain will fix his quarters. Owing to her great breath of beam, the berths on board the Ben Nevis are as commodious as those of any ship afloat. The height between decks is about seven feet, and we have now only to notice what forms the chief peculiarity and excellence of the vessel--the perfection of her lighting and ventilation. The between decks are cheerfully light and airy, and we understand that the Government Emigration Officer has expressed his high approval of the vessel, especially in those respects.

The Ben Nevis will be commanded by Captain Herron, an experienced ship-master, under whose personal superintendence she has been fitted up. She will sail, it is understood, about the 10th of September.

BILL BIAR, Denver Colorado

Here are some excerpts from his account of his European trip in May and June, 1982. JJS, Editor.

May 30, 1982 - Our flight to Europe started on Sunday afternoon at about 3 P.M. We flew on a charter flight provided by Condor Airlines, a subsidiary of the German Lufthansa...directly to Frankfurt. We rented an Opel Kadett and drove to Düsseldorf. June 2 - We drove to Hohenlimburg, a small industrial city of 25,000 - the best-kept city we got to see this trip.

June 4 - We drove to Hamm...proceeded to Osnabrück etc. (We skip the next ten days to bring you to Bill's visit to East Germany. Editor)

June 15 - Bill Winterhager took me to Nürnberg where our train left at 11 A.M. en route to East Germany. All people not going to the East must get off the train at Hof. We arrived at BAUTZEN at 8:15 P.M. where Horst Schmieder picked me up in his Russian-built Volga and in no time we were at the apartment above the kitchen furniture store now called "Küchen Bjar" not far from the railroad station.

June 16 - Horst and I went to a "Kaufhalle" (super market) to buy some potatoes but there were none. Over half of the shelves in the market were empty. Fresh vegetables consisted of some leaf lettuce, some Kohlrabi and onions. There were plenty of canned beets from Poland...

...June 17 - Left the house at 8 A.M....We went to an Intershop (a store that sells special items for Western money only), and bought a number of items such as ffcos, canned pineapples and chocolate bars. Then we drove to Baruth TO see Pastor Phillip. He had the church books for both Baruth and Gröditz...I traced the Biars back two more generations... (Jan Biar born in 1751...Another Jan Biar born 12-15--1719...).

June 18 - At 7:10 A.M. I was on the train heading back to West Germany...I brought back 11 books and a typical Wendish pitcher the Schmieders gave me...

June 19 - rented a Ford Fiesta and drove to Toeing am ...

June 20 - Went to church in Neuötting, the church in which we were married in 1947.

June 21 - We returned to Munich...Everyone was interested in the World Cup which was being played in Spain.

June 22 - We mailed a 12 pound package home, mostly books. June 23 drove to Roth...June 24, Finally got to see Rothenburg! Returned to Denver from Frankfurt on schedule; June 27...

ROBERT R. RONSON-ZWAHR, Lubbock, Texas

"We had such a wonderful time in the DDR and the beautiful Lausitz; Our only regret being that nine days was just too short of a time to have in Lausitz. There was not any space available to stay in Bautzen due to a Sorbian meeting. The Reisebüro, however, found accommodations for us at the Hotel in nearby Herrnhut. It was really nice. Actually we could get anywhere we wanted as quickly from there as had we been staying in Bautzen."

(Note: Anyone interested in learning more about Bob's trip, please contact him at his address: 3801 - 57th Street, Lubbock, Texas 79413. His telephone number is 806/397-2181. You'll find Bob a most interesting friend to communicate with. His interests in the Wends, the Germans, etc., are dynamic. You'll want to get better acquainted with him as you get to know him..

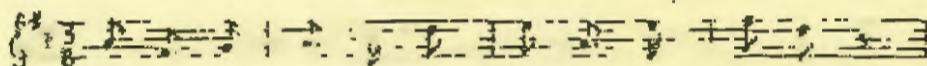
A descendant of three pioneer German-Texan Verein families - The Bremers, Seilers and Kreitzes-Robert R. "Bob" Ronson-Zwahr, born in West Texas in 1940 and reared in that section of the state, received his BBA degree from the University of Texas at Austin in 1963. While at UT, he received additional schooling in Mexico and Germany. In 1970, Bob had his working career ended by rheumatoid arthritis, and he has since devoted his energies and resources to a continual historical research begun as a teenager on the German and Wendish-German elements in Texas. A member of the Sons of the Republic of Texas, the German-Texan Heritage Society, the Society for the Development of German in Texas, the Texas Wendish Heritage Society and many other local, state and national genealogical, historical and cultural organizations, he is a strong advocate of all ethnic groups preserving their own unique identities. Bob serves as a Special Consultant to the German-Texan Heritage Society and is a former Associate Editor of the Journal of German-American Studies.

BOB has just published a two-volume set of books entitled Die Brämerverwandtschaft in Deutschland und in Texas (The Bremers and Their Kin in Germany and in Texas), Volumes I (666 pages) and II (984 pages), contain a total of 1650 pages (size 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches), approximately 2,200 pictures (as well as many other illustrations), a bibliography and a surname index (containing about 7,400 individual family names). Cost is \$50.00 per set.

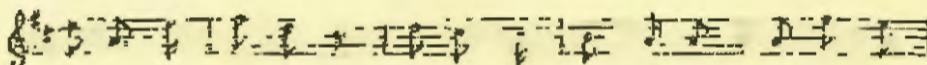
Hanka, buž wjesola / Hanka, budz wjesola

Zeszyt 6

H. Zajler / K. A. Kocor



1. An - ka buž wja - se - ta, žon - čo ty rě - dne,
1. Han - ka hidi wje - se - ta, ho - ki - čo rja - ne.



žon - čo ty rě - dne, ron - nož by rje - se - ta zorn - ko ty
he - li - čo rja - ne, ru - rnož by rje - sy - ta zorn - je - ško



rě - dno, ron - nož by rje - se - ta zorn - ko ty že - dno.
ža - ne, ru - rnož by rje - sy - ta zorn - je - ško za - ne.

Anka, buž wjesola

Anko, buž wjesola,
žončo ty rědne, žončo ty rědne.
Rowrož by rje - cí: zern - ko ty že - dno,
ron - nož by njesola zern - ko ty že - dno.

Anka, buž wjesola,
gładkie maš włóski, gładkie róś włoski.
Nekłoduj do s'napa złotne kłoski,
nakłoduj do s'napa złoski, n kłoski.

Anka, buž wjesola,
lubje se smějoš, lubje se smějoš.
Sy-li ty syrota, k'ebu ty změjoš,
sy-li ty syrota, klébu ty změjoš.

Anka, buž wjesola,
rědna ty róža, rědna ty róža.
Blido si pšíkýwa zęgan o brzde,
blido si pšíkýwa zęgan o brzda.

Hanka, budz wjesola

Hanka, budz wjesola,
holiča rjane, holiča rjane.
Runjež by njesyla zornješko žane,
runjež by njesyla zornješko žane.

Hanka, budz wjesola,
hłodke maš włóski, hłodke maš włóski.
Nakłoduj do s'napa złoczone kłoski,
nakłoduj do s'napa złoczone kłoski.

Hanka, budz wjesola,
lubje so směješ, lubje so směješ.
Sy-li tež syrotka, chléba ty změješ,
sy-li tež syrotka, chléba ty změješ.

Hanka, budz wjesola,
rjana ty róža, rjana ty róža.
Blidko si přikrywa wosrjedk o w'lóža,
blidko si přikrywa wosrjedk o w'lóža.

"Hanka, budz wjesola," means, "Anna, be joyful."
This folk song, and "Lubka lilija" were taken from a
lovely collection of Wendish Folk Songs in Lower and
Upper Lusatian, SPEŁNA W DOMWINSKICH SKUPINACH, 1979.

Lubko! Ietju / Lubko lilija

Lubošnje

H. Zejler / I. Zejler

mf

1. Lub-ko le - lu - ja, rěd - nje za - kwit - ta! Žow - ko
 2. Lub-ko li - li - ja je - nje za - kće - ta! Hol - čo

bru - ne, bru - ne woc - ka seň se ku - mnjo, mo - ja
 bru - ne, bru - ne woc - ka seň se ku - mnjo, mo - ja

ju - bosc sy a du - ša we - mnjo.
 mo - ja sy a du - ša we - mnjo!

Lubko! Ietju

Lubko Ietju, rědne rekwišta!
 Žowčko brune, brune wocka seň se ku mnjo,
 moja lubosć s̄t a duša we mnjo.

Gaž si njewiž s̄t, ja se potužym.
 Žowčko brune ...

Rědne janješam lubje pširovnam.
 Žowčko brune ...

Nie njepožedam, gaž si wopeckom.
 Žowčko brune ...

Mojo bogatstwo twoja lubosć jo.
 Žowčko brune ...

A rod wumrješ hčet, njewiž lubje mēl.
 Žowčko brune ...

Lubko lilija

Lubko lilija, rje - z - k - i - l - o!
 Holčo brune, brune woc - ka, sy - ka mn -
 rodošć moja s̄t a duša we mn - ni!

Hdyž se n - swidžu, čerpju z - došu
 Holčo, brune ...

Porno jendželam, tebje pširunom.
 Holčo, brune ...

Harja zapřewam, hdyž če wokošam.
 Holčo, brune ...

Slo m, zemja chce, sym - li bjez tebje!
 Holčo, brune ...

Börze wumrēc círcyl, rje - zh teje mēl.
 Holčo, brune ...

This beautiful Wendish Folk Song is well known to the members of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society in the Giddings area.

The words on the left are in Lower Lusatian; on the right, in Upper Lusatian. JJS

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

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Membership Dues: \$5.00, per person, per year, and may be sent to TREASURER: T.W.H.S.

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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.

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S. = YOU AT THE TEXAS FOLKLIFE FESTIVAL IN SAN ANTONIO, Aug. 4-7 at the WENDISH BOOTH.
RON KNIPPA, Chairman.

TELL YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT THE TEXAS WENDISH HERITAGE SOCIETY. INVITE THEM TO JOIN.

POET, An International Monthly of the World Poetry Society, Intercontinental, March 1982, Vol. 23, No. 3, page 27 published a poem; "TREES OF THE WENDS" by Louise Lamar from California:

Young daughters of the Wends
Don mist white veils and
Bridal gowns of black lest
You forget the rocky paths
Ahead and windswept early
Eraves.

Your fathers walked bleak
Texas miles, possessions on
Their backs and tamed the
hostile soil. Proud Wends,
They were of Slavic blood,
No longer outcasts, neither
Serfs far from the German
River Sprce.

In Serbin, Texas, flowers
Rule and your grandchild-
ren's children stand as
Straight as trees trained
By your hands.

Although your Wendish
Tongue is still-no dances
Nor folk songs, ornate
church pillars still rise
high above your hand-carved
pews.

From blue and bright gold
organ pipes tones blend
with hymns and Wendish
Hearts sing of your praise
To God.

Note: "A Slovak Christmas,"
by my sister, Margaret So-
cha Kmetz (died April, 1983)
of Garfield, New Jersey, al-
so appears in POET, p.2.