



Texas Wendish Heritage Society

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NEWSLETTER

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TEXAS SESQUECENTENNIAL CERTIFICATION

THE TEXAS WENDISH HERITAGE SOCIETY
HAS BEEN CERTIFIED BY THE TEXAS SESQUE-
CENTENNIAL COMMISSION.

THE WENDISH MUSEUM WILL BE INCLUDED IN
A SESQUECENTENNIAL GUIDE, DIRECTING
PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD TO
VISIT AND ENJOY THE WENDISH HERITAGE.

TRIBUTE TO KILIAN BY WELDOM MERSIOVSKY
BEGUN IN THIS ISSUE OF THE NEWSLETTER.

130TH ANNIVERSARY OF IMMIGRATION OBSERVED
SPECIAL ACTIVITIES OF TWHS AND ST. PAUL
CHURCH, SERBIN, HELD IN NOVEMBER AND
DECEMBER.

WENDISH ORATORIO, "VALECO" AVAILABLE ON
CASSETTE.

HAPPY NEW YEAR of 1985 !

MERSIOVSKY^{rad} TRIBUTE TO KILIAN

In observance of the 130th Anniversary of the Wendish Immigration of 1854 by the Texas Wendish Heritage Society, the November, 1984 meeting was devoted to Tributes to the Wends and to their leader, the Rev. Jan Kilian (1811 - 1884). Society Vice President, Weldon Mersiofsky wrote and presented the following Tribute to Kilian, entitled, THE TEXAS WENDS - How It Really Happened. We will publish it for your enjoyment in three installments. JJS.

Now, as it came to pass, the Lord looked down upon His people and saw in the midst of the land of the Germans in Upper Lusatia a people milling around who called themselves Wends. He looked to afar and saw on the horizon a devout young Wendish minister and proclaimed, "Jan Kilian, I am the Lord your God who called to Moses from the fiery bush, who led the Children of Israel out of the bondage in Egypt, and who brought them into the promised land in which there was milk and honey without end. I am the Lord your God who sent Jesus to save the world from sin, the same whom they crucified and who rose again on the third day. I am the Lord your God who sent the world Martin Luther to lead my people from the spiritual bondage in which they lived and brought them to realize that by faith they are saved and that not of themselves, it is a gift from Me, not of merit, lest any person should boast."

And young Jan said to the Lord, "Was willst du mit mir?" ("What do you want with me?"). And the Lord said, "I have looked down upon the earth and seen that it was good, but there are people who are in America, far away, who have not heard My word and who are dying without salvation, and My heart is filled with pity for those people because I have heard their cries for help. America is being filled with people whom I love yet they have no knowledge of Me. There will come a time when America will be a powerful people, the like of which this world has never seen. They will be very helpful to Me if they know Me and know My plans for them."

And young Jan said to the Lord his God, "What do You want with me?" And the Lord said, "I have seen this people here in Germany who are people without a home and they are crying for Me to give them rest but rest I will not give to them. I am preparing them for a journey that will test their faith. They will be tested by troubles and temptations and Napoleonic Wars and the famines and the depressions and the persecutions and the oppressions I have sifted the wheat from the chaff and they are almost ready. I have one group

that I will send to Missouri - they are Saxons and they are ready. They have a leader - your classmate - C.F.W. Walther. Now this group of Wends is almost ready, yet they have no leader."

And young Jan said to the Lord his God, "What do You want with me?" And the Lord said, "Jan, these people need a strong leader, a man of devout heart and upright spirit, a man of courage who knows that I the Lord your God is his strength and shield, a man who will fall on his knees like my servant David and praise and honor My name, a man like my servant Paul who will proclaim my message to the world and go where My spirit wills him to go."

And young Jan said to the Lord his God, "Where will you find such a man because I will go with him." And the Lord said to Jan, "You are the man for whom I seek and of whom I speak. You will need no one to go with you for I am always with you. I will guide you in the ways that you should go and where to lead your people. If you stray I will lead you back to Me as a shepherd leads his flock. Do not fear for I am with you always even to the end of the world."

And Jan went and did as the Lord His God had commanded him to do. And he told his people of the task ahead of them and what they were to do and where they were to go. There was grumbling amongst the people and Jan said to them, "Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve Him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the feelings you have for the Fatherland and your fear of the unknown. And if you be unwilling to serve the Lord your God, choose this day whom you will serve; but as for me and my house we will serve the Lord."

And of the people who had gathered around Jan Kilian, about a third, said, "We won't go!" Another third said, "Count us in." And the last third said, "Ya'll go one over there and tell us how it is. Cut the wood and build the towns and till the fields and when you tell us how good it is, then we will come."

So the third went, almost 600 strong, and they left the land of their fathers to go to the land the Lord had promised. And the Lord their God went before them by day and by night and He continually tested the people to strengthen their spirit and make them ready for the ordeal ahead.

TO BE CONTINUED.

The NEWSLETTER of the TWHS, headquartered at the Wendish Museum in Serbin, Texas, is published at Dime Box, quarterly.

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

Financial contributions to the TWHS are tax-deductible.

Membership Dues are \$10 per person, per year, and may be sent to TWHS, P.O.Box 311, Giddings, Tx, 78942.

Send all NEWSLETTER correspondence to the Editor: see above address.

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ST. PAUL LUTHERAN OF SERBIN
Mother church of the Wends, observed the 130th Anniversary of the congregation and the immigration, Sun., Dec. 16, the day the Wends set foot on Galveston Island. A highlight of the long day of celebration included a musical anthem written by Wend, B.E.Biar of Denver, set to an old Wendish melody.

THIS N THAT

TWHS member, Emily Putnam of Houston, journeyed to Wendenland recently. She says: "I met a young widow there who would offer "bed and breakfast" to a limited number of individuals, if someone were interested in living "among the people."... "I drove in a rented car by myself from Berlin airport to Weiszwasser....I had no problem what-soever, and found the experience very interesting." Thanks, Emily.

DO YOU WANT A CASSETTE OF THE WENDISH ORATORIO, "NALECO" "To Spring" ? - Send me a blank 60 minute tape, \$5.50 check, and your name and address. Great music, enjoyable listening. Ed.

PLAN TO VISIT OUR BEAUTIFUL WENDISH MUSEUM IN SERBIN. Open every Sunday afternoon until 5:00 o'clock. Orchids to all the Volunteers who have transformed the 1915 St. Paul Luth. School building into a respectable Wendish Museum.

SEND US INFORMATION about your family background. You are the best authority. And if you publish a Family History be sure to submit a copy for the files of the Wendish Museum.

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Our wish for you in 1985 is that God will bless you and yours with ever spiritual and temporal blessings. And, God bless the activities of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society. JJS