



Texas Wendish Heritage Society

Route 2, Box 155 / Giddings, Texas 78942-9769

VOLUME III, NUMBER 1, JANUARY-MARCH, 1990

OPEN FROM 1:00 TO 5:00 EVERY DAY EXCEPT SATURDAY & HOLIDAYS

PHONE 409/366-2441

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

At the start of a new year it is appropriate to evaluate the successes and failures of the past year, and to make plans for the new year. Therefore, I will review our 1989 goals and propose goals for 1990.

The 1989 goals and results are:

Prepare a video of the TWHs. RESULTS: We prepared a plan, gathered material, and applied for grants to pay for the video. Unfortunately, all of the grant requests were rejected and the project is on hold.

Increase membership to 400 from 336. RESULTS: Membership grew to 450 through both new members and the return of former members. Our old membership record was 398.

Establish the Wendish Fest as an annual event. RESULTS: The Wendish Fest was a success in 1989. We had a good attendance, and we made over \$2,000. The Wendish Fest will take place on September 16, 1990.

Develop a long-range plan for the society and museum. RESULTS: The TWHs passed a long-range plan during 1989.

Develop and implement a fund-raising program. RESULTS: We did not develop or implement a program.

Develop comprehensive plan for starting chapters. RESULTS: A committee was formed and they are in the process of preparing a chapter package, but it is not yet finished.

The 1990 proposed goals are:

Balance the 1990 budget.

Raise funds for the endowment.

Develop comprehensive plan for starting chapters.

Increase membership to 500.

The Texas Wendish Heritage Society is facing a large deficit in the 1990 budget. The short-term and long-term finances of the TWHs are a great problem. In a few days, you will receive a separate letter from me explaining the situation with proposed solutions.

These proposed goals will be discussed at the membership meeting on February 18.

George Boerger, President

* "OUR MAN OF THE YEAR AWARD," goes to Leroy Steglich, outgoing museum board chairman, *
* who played front, back, and center, in all phases of museum activities again during *
* 1989. Thank you Leroy, for an outstanding job! *

DR. NIELSEN CONDUCTS PROGRAM AT NOVEMBER MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Dr. George Nielsen, author of 'IN SEARCH OF A HOME: NINETEENTH CENTURY WELSH IMMIGRATION,' conducted the program at our November membership meeting, concentrating on Australia. Dr. Nielsen and his family lived there during part of the time he was writing his book. We would like to thank Dr. Nielsen for coming from Chicago to conduct this very interesting program, and for the book signing after the meeting.

February Meeting Speaker

The program at the February 18 membership meeting will be conducted by Mr. Jack Wiederhold. Mr. Wiederhold will show slides from his visit to East Germany this past summer.

Group Tours by Evelyn Kasper, Chairman

The "Town and Country Garden Club" from Houston was served a noon meal on November 15. Barbara Bush is a member of the club, but was unable to attend.

On November 3, a "Travel Trailer Club", of 15 couples toured the museum and was taken by Mr. Jack Wiederhold through St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

Two groups came to visit the museum and church on November 11. 20 members of the 'Prime Timers' from Lago Vista in Austin visited in the morning, and in the afternoon Nancy Heinke brought a group from Houston. Mr. Wiederhold took both groups through the church.

The morning of November 16 Mrs. Ann Schueler, a second grade teacher from Immanuel Lutheran School in Giddings, brought 20 students to the museum and church.

Several tours are pending for the Spring. Anyone wishing to help host is asked to please contact Evelyn Kasper at 409/242-3367.

Archives by Daphne D. Garrett, Archivist

It is extremely important that all records be placed in the archives in the fireproof vault, and not kept in individual homes.

Will you please deliver or send to the Archives as soon as possible, but no later than the February meeting date, all such records that you have generated or received.

If your files contain items which are necessary to conduct your current business for the Society or Museum, please send the originals to the Archives and retain a copy for your working files.

Landscape
by Laverne Gersch, Chairman

REMINDER!! Bring your excess plants and seeds to the February 18 membership meeting. Have them in containers or bagged and labeled for planting (Wendish origin welcomed). There is no charge for this but a donation box will be available and all proceeds go to the Wendish Museum Landscape Fund to maintain the grounds for 1995.

STROWE NOWE LËTO ("Happy New Year")
from
Charles Wukasch, president, Austin Chapter

The Austin chapter of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society held its Christmas party on Sunday, December 10, at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Austin. The party was attended by some 50 people. The Rev. Paul Bohot of Redeemer Lutheran gave the devotion. Charles Wukasch read the nativity story in Wendish. There was lots of delicious food and a wonderful evening of Christian fellowship was enjoyed by all.

Museum Exhibits
by Marian Wiederhold, Chairman

Anyone knowledgeable in a particular aspect of Wendish history is invited to share this information with the Museum Exhibit Committee for consideration as an exhibit. Please submit a one or two page essay with the information you would like to share. The exhibit committee will consider the idea for display and check the information for accuracy. The committee wishes to incorporate as many ideas from different sources as possible in the museum exhibits. If you are knowledgeable in a particular aspect of Wendish history you are encouraged to share that information through our museum.

Docents

Since October 1, docents were: Mildred Kilian, Ruth Lindner, Georgie Boyce, Bessie Mertink, Matt Mertink, Judy Hielscher, Evelyn Kasper, Mr. & Mrs. Leroy Steglich, Gloria Mae Gersch, Barbara Hielscher, Heather Hielscher, Carolyn Bohot, Ruth Willey, Vivian Taylor, Mr. & Mrs. Jack Wiederhold, George Boerger, Lorine Domel, August Zoch, Cindy Hielscher, Jamie Liebscher, Mr. & Mrs. Herbert Falke, Bea Tschatschula, and Patricia Hielscher.

Visitors

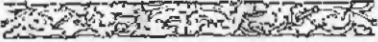
623 Visitors have signed the guest register since October 1. There have been visitors from Nebraska, Colorado, Louisiana, Oregon, Nevada, Canada, Virginia, Kansas, Missouri, Germany, S. Dakota, England, and from all over Texas.

Accessions

A Black Wedding dress made by an Original 1890 pattern was donated by Cindy Knippa of San Antonio.

A book of German sermons for the home was donated by Mr. & Mrs. Walter Lehmann of Giddings.

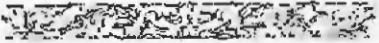
LILLIE MOERBE CALWELL MEMORIAL LIBRARY
by, Georgie B. Boyce, Librarian



Lillie Moerbe Caldwell
Memorial Library

At left is a facsimile of the "book plate" which will be placed in each book donated to the library. It is used to identify the donor (if desired), and the person, or occasion for which the donation is made. Actual size of the plate is 3½" x 4".

Texas Wendish Heritage Museum



As many of you know the year 1989, was designated, by the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, as the 150th Anniversary of the "Old Lutheran Immigration". Pastor Paul Hartfield of Serbin served on the planning committee for this observance. The Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly solicited articles about congregations which were founded by these "confessional Lutheran immigrants" and which are still flourishing today. Two of our own Central Texas congregations were among those featured. The "Summer 1989" issue contains an article about Trinity Lutheran Church of Fedor, Texas, which was written by Mr. Herbert E. Dube. The "Fall 1989" issue includes an article about Holy Cross Lutheran

an Church of Warda, Texas, which was written by Pastor Robert E. Boyce. Both of these issues are available in our library for your review.

Our thanks to Weldon Mersiovsky of Georgetown, Texas, for donating the following items:

Descendant's Charts of the following families: Koal, Krause, Jurk, Lorenschk, Matthiez, Mersiovsky, Mirtschin and Zwahr.

"Family of Adolph Mersiovsky and Mary Theresa Lorenz" by Weldon Walter Mersiovsky.

"Hanusch Family Tree" compiled by Cynthia Randig Motloch.

Guide to the National Archives of the United States. 1974.

18 National Genealogical Society Quarterly (Volumes 63, 64, 65, 66 and part of 67)

Index to Volumes 62 and 63. Index to Volumes 64 and 65.

Library Loan Service Book List, National Genealogical Society.

Library Loan Service. Supplement to 1971 Book List. 1971.

39 The Genealogical Helper (All or part of Volumes 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35)

Also, Dankeschön to Gerhard Simmank of Frankfurt, Germany, for the Simmank Family Chart, and the gift of 2 Wendish books: Die Lausitz Sorbische Trachten (Wendish Costumes in Upper Lusatia -Saxon) and Studien zu sorbischen Personen-namen (Study of Wendish names).

Membership

New Members/Previous Members-Renewed

Linda Mercer, Houston, TX.

David F. Mitschke, Giddings, TX.

M/M Daniel Wendland, Houston, TX.

Rebekah Bohot, Austin, TX.

M/M Walter Lehmann, Giddings, TX.

Barry Wukasch, Scottsdale, AZ.

Sally Laseter, Waco, TX.

Patsy Seay, McGregor, TX.

Rosalie A. Berry, Lubbock, TX.

Ruth T. Emmrich, Buda, TX.

Margaret A. Lovallo, Sacramento, CA.

Linda I. Rosinbaum, Oklahoma City, OK.

Lynn L. Johnston, Austin, TX.

Student Members

Heather R. Hielscher, Winchester, TX.

Margaret Lovallo, Sacramento, CA.

Patron Members

Gene Miertschin, Friendswood, TX.	Kathy Lee Miller, Lafayette, LA.
Conrad R. Proft, Jr., Crestwood, MO.	Katherine Schmelter, Houston, TX.
M/M Herb Schulz, Torrance, CA.	W. L. Simmank, Stillwater, OK.
Elinor Vlasak, Rosebud, TX.	Jerry L. Knippa, San Antonio, TX.
Lee P. Brueckel, Winterville, Ohio	Edward H. Bernthal, Waupun, WI.
Naomi T. Gordon, Grand Junction, CO.	Margaret Wolf Hart, Austin, TX.
Dana K. Clary, Orange, TX.	Mary S. Guggisberg, Vernon, TX.
Delores R. Hall, Wharton, TX.	Ronald W. Kasper, Georgetown, TX.
Ruben L. Moerbe, Austin, TX.	Delores Munsell, Austin, TX.
Charlene P. Stelzig, Weatherford, OK.	Nancy T. Allen, Houston, TX.
Glenn A. Zoch, Austin, TX.	Harold V. Theiss, Houston, TX.
Dr. & Mrs. George Kunze, Warda, TX.	Paul H. Knippa, Jr., Austin, TX.
Linda Boerger, Wharton, TX.	Ruth T. Emmrich, Buda, Tx.
Ludwig D. Groeschell, Austin, TX.	Linda L. Rosinbaum, Oklahoma City, OK.
Marvin Wappler, Groves, TX.	

Sponsor Members

Sandra Matthijetz, Houston, TX.	Dr. Wilbert J. Sohns, Casper, WY.
Dentler Erdmann, Montebello, CA.	Marjorie Harkrider, Garland, TX.
Violet Miertschin, Winchester, TX.	Herman Teinert, Lubbock, TX.
Weldon P. Boerger, Wharton, TX.	Edwin Domaschk, Port Arthur, TX.
Jay Kruemcke, Pflugerville, TX.	

Century Members

Charles R. Haschke, Winchester, TX.

Life Members

George Boerger

Memorials

On Occasion Of:	Donor	Amount
M/M Reinhold Teinert 40th Wedding Anniversary	M/M Allen Buchhorn	\$15.30

In Memory Of:	Donor	Amount
Grandmother-Mary Brooka	Rose & John C. Marburger	\$5.00
M/M Herman Matthijetz	M/M Willious Lee	\$20.00
M/M Herman Matthijetz	John Matthijetz	\$25.00
Mr. Harry Mitschke	Mrs. Edna Mitschke	\$50.00
Wilma Kilian	M/M Leon Lindner	\$10.00
Ruth S. Lehmann	Carol L. Davis	\$50.00
Freddie Guggisberg Video Fund	Rev. & Mrs. Robert Boyce	\$15.00
Edwin Gersch Landscape Fund	M/M Walter Gersch	\$10.00
Theodore Kraskosky Landscape Fund	M/M Walter Gersch	\$10.00
Jennifer L. Meyer Landscape Fund	M/M Walter Gersch	\$10.00
Henrietta M. Miller	Leland H. Miller	\$12.50
Otto P. Kappler	M/M Victor Teinert	\$15.00
Otto P. Kappler	M/M Robert Dietrich	\$20.00
Otto P. Kappler	M/M Kenneth Zoch	\$6.00
Freddie Guggisberg Video Fund	M/M Alvin B. Bernstein	\$20.00
Freddie Guggisberg Video Fund	Alwina S. Wallace	\$10.00
Theodore Kraskosky	M/M Herbert Falke	\$10.00
Freddie Guggisberg	M/M Floyd Kiesling	\$10.00
Freddie Guggisberg	M/M Herb Schulz	\$50.00
Theodore Kraskosky	Vivian Taylor	\$20.00
Laura L. Pieratt	Bessie Mertink & M/M A. C. Flipppo	\$10.00

Thank you to St. Paul's LLL for a \$20.00 donation for the Wendish Fest in October.

Our sincere sympathy to the family of Cortrude Mitschke, a charter member of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society, who passed away on December 31, 1989. She was one of five ladies who helped organize the Texas Wendish Club in August 1971, serving as treasurer.

TEXAS WENDISH HERITAGE SOCIETY

Minutes

Serbin, Texas, November 19, 1989

George Boerger, President, called the meeting to order at 2:00 P.M. and introduced Pastor Boyce who led a devotion based on the first thirteen verses from the Gospel of St. Mark.

GUESTS: The following guests and new members were introduced:

Visitors: Hermine Moerbe, Dime Box
Walter and Elsie Rauder, Houston
Marvin and Carol Walter, Giddings
Walter and Louise Lehman, Giddings

New Member: Walter Lehman

MINUTES: The minutes were approved as distributed. They will be filed in the archives.

TREASURER'S REPORT: In the absence of Reinhold Teinert, Ken Weiser presented the treasurer's report. A motion to approve the report and submit it for audit was passed.

ELECTION: The following slate of officers was presented to the membership:

George Boerger, President
LaVerne Gersch, Vice President
Barbara Hielscher, Corresponding Secretary
Carolyn Bohot, Recording Secretary
Reinhold Teinert, Treasurer
Ron Knippa, Board Member (three-year term)

A motion to accept the slate as presented was passed.

WENDISH FEST: Leroy Steglich expressed his thanks for the help AT the Wendish Fest -- especially noting the contributions of Evelyn Kasper and LaVerne Gersch. Approximately \$2,000 was raised; a noon meal was served to 500 people, and additional food booths operated in the afternoon.

The membership responded enthusiastically to the suggestion that we have another Wendish Fest next year. Evelyn Kasper made a motion that it be held on the third Sunday in September. Motion passed.

TOURS: Leroy Steglich reported the new chairs have been purchased with the proceeds from tours.

NEW BUSINESS: Mrs. Fehr suggested that a 10th Anniversary Celebration be held to coincide with the November meeting. George Boerger directed the Museum Board to consider this activity.

TEXAS WENDISH HERITAGE SOCIETY

Minutes - November 19, 1989

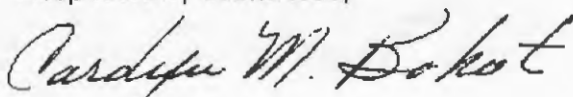
Page 2

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The next meeting of the Executive Board will be held at the museum at 2:00 P.M. on Saturday, January 13, 1990.

Carolyn Bohot announced that the Austin Chapter's annual Christmas party will be held on December 10, at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Austin. An invitation was extended to all members and their guests.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the membership, the meeting was adjourned. Dr. George Neilsen presented the program. He described the research which preceded the publication of his latest book and showed slides of his stay among the Wends in Australia. After the program, refreshments were served and Dr. Neilsen autographed copies of his book.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carolyn M. Bohot". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Carolyn M. Bohot
Recording Secretary

JACK WIEDERHOLD RECALLS 6 WEEKS
IN EAST GERMANY AS WALL COMES TUMBLING DOWN

This is the first in a series of articles written by L. M. Preuss III, editor of The Giddings Times and News, after he interviewed Jack Wiederhold of Giddings concerning Jack's 1989 six-week trip to east Germany.

It was an especially momentous and happy occasion for Jack Wiederhold of Giddings in November as he watched TV reports of the Berlin Wall being opened to allow Germans free passage to the West.

For Mr. Wiederhold, it was like observing an event that he never thought would happen, even as recently as a few months ago when he was spending six weeks in East Germany during the summer while studying the German language and visiting the homeland of the Serbin Wends.

'I Stayed up late that night just watching all those TV reports,' says Jack, who said he was shedding tears of joy as he watched the celebrating at the Berlin Wall and the new-found freedom for East Germans trapped under Communism behind the Iron Curtain.

Back in July and August when Jack was in East Germany, he said no one even considered the possibility that the Berlin Wall might some day come down. About the only hope the East Germans he talked to had was for some political reforms that might come about through Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

"Mr. Gorbachev is our only hope," were the words that Jack heard over and over again when he talked confidentially to East Germans.

"The teachers that I had (in my German class) would talk to me if I was alone, but they would never talk to you (frankly) as a class," said Jack. "But if you would talk to them one-to-one (an expression they called 'under four eyes'), then they would talk frankly, always saying that Mr. Gorbachev was their only hope. They hoped that if he succeeded in his loosening up of the Soviet Union, Then there was also hope for East Germany."

"They never expressed any hope of things improving because of what the United States was doing -- only that they hoped Mr. Gorbachev succeeds," said Jack.

Jack spent his first four weeks in East Germany in the southern city of Leipzig, with a population of 600,000. This is where he took the German classes and got to talk with his teachers about their feelings and hopes for the future.

It is in Leipzig where 200,000 people chanting 'Freedom! Freedom!' marched in the largest pro-democracy demonstration ever held in East Germany.

One of the most unusual things which happened to Jack while he was in Leipzig was when their class took a trip to Torqua, a little town on the Elbe River. This was the place where the Russian and American soldiers met on a bridge over the Elbe River and shook hands, signifying the conquering of Germany.

There is a large monument there put up by the Russians to praise both the Americans and Russians for defeating Nazism.

While the group was at the monument, one Russian soldier also came to have their pictures taken at the monument.

Jack said that the Russian soldiers aren't allowed to have their pictures taken with East Germans or others. In fact, he said the German soldiers aren't supposed to talk with the East Germans.

But the leaders of the school got an idea that it would be nice to take a picture of the soldiers with the three Americans in the group -- Jack Wiederhold, as well as students from South Dakota and New York -- since the Russians and Americans met there in 1945 under friendly circumstances.

One of the leaders approached the Russian battalion leader and suggested the idea. "No," was his abrupt answer. But the East German continued to talk to the Russian battalion leader until he finally consented.

Jack said it was really a strange and indescribable feeling to stand next to Russian soldiers and have your picture taken -- especially since it was something apparently rarely if ever done, because it's against regulations for Russian soldiers to do so.

While in East Germany, Jack Wiederhold also spent two weeks in and around Bautzen, a large town of 100,000 which is the area from which the Serbin Wends immigrated to the United States and finally settled at Serbin in Lee County, Texas.

Jack stayed 25 miles north of there at Klitten, a little village. The Lutheran congregation there is St. John's Lutheran Church, whose pastor sent a letter of congratulations to St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Serbin on its anniversary celebration recently.

St. John's is the mother church of St. Paul's, Serbin. Jack said that numerous people living in that area remember hearing their great grandfather or great grandmother talking about being related to people in Texas. He said some even remembered their great grandfather talking about how they almost joined Pastor Kilian and the other Wends when they got on the boat headed for the United States, but changed their minds at the last minute.

Some of the East German Wends also talked about buying some of the farms from the Wends who were packing up to leave with Pastor Kilian.

Jack said that few Wends can speak Wendish any longer. They were a minority in Germany and were not allowed to talk Wendish so the language died out. They were also oppressed by the government under Hitler.

One of the things Jack was surprised about is that the worship services at the Lutheran churches there are very similar to the ones conducted at St. Paul's in Serbin. "They're Conservative people," said Jack, "and they also haven't merged with other less conservative Lutherans, similar to the Missouri Synod Lutherans in America."

Jack said that the Lutheran churches there don't have any national flags in their churches like in the U. S. "They don't like their government, so they won't allow the flag in their churches," he said. But they do have freedom of religion.

TO BE CONTINUED

Thank you to the ladies who donated refreshments for the November meeting. Any ladies wishing to bring refreshments for the February meeting, or any of the remaining meetings this year are asked to please, contact Ruth Lindner at 409/542-3490 or Evelyn Kasper at 409/242-3367.

Reunions

Anyone planning a family reunion please send us a note giving the place, date, time and any other information and we will print it in our newsletter. Following the reunion send a Reunion Write-up letting everyone know the results of the reunion. The next newsletter will out the first of May. Send information at least 4 weeks in advance.

General Meeting Dates for 1990

Meeting - May 20, 1990	Deadline for newsletter April 16, 1990
Meeting - August 19, 1990	Deadline for newsletter July 16, 1990
Meeting - November 19, 1990	Deadline for newsletter October 15, 1990

Special Events

Serbin Picnic - Homecoming, May 27, 1990

Folklife Festival, August 2-5, 1990

Wendish Fest, September 16, 1990

Institute of Texan Cultures Children's Christmas Festival
contributed by Cindy Knippa

Many of the approximately 2,500 people who attended the Festival gathered around a Wendish Christmas tree and watched as Joshua, David, Meagan, Nathian, and Sarah Knippa, Missey, and Johanna Lammert made paper chains for the tree. They also heard about Wendish customs and the Wendish ornaments on the Christmas tree, from Cindy Knippa.

***** EAST GERMANY TOUR UPDATE *****

Approximate dates for the trip is September 12 thru September 25. A 5 day/4 night tour "Following Martin Luther's Footsteps" would possibly include, WITTENBERG, LEIPZIG, ERFURT, EISENACH, WARTBURG CASTLE, EISLEBEN, & MANSFIELD. Plans are being made to then headquarter in Cottbus where more desirable accommodations can be arranged for a larger group. From there daily trips to various Wendish communities can be accomplished easily until the end of the tour. If you are interested, get your passport ready and let me know.

CONTACT: Emily Luker Putnam, 17930 Beaver Creek Dr., Houston, Texas 77090-1810.
Tel: 713/444-8870.

Museum Musings

Thank you to Elinor Steglich for the use of her Christmas ornaments on the Christmas tree in the St. Paul building. They belonged to her grandmother and are truly authentic.

Thank you to Evelyn Kasper for donating several Christmas ornaments for the Christmas tree.

In view of the shortage of operating funds, the Museum Board decided to charge a \$1.00 admission to non members over the Junior High School Age. School groups touring the facilities will be asked for a donation.

SPECIAL OFFER

CONFIRMATION, GRADUATION, MOTHER'S DAY, FATHER'S DAY, SPECIAL

The Texas Wendish Heritage Society at Serbin, Texas is having a special sale on the book by Dr. George Nielsen, "IN SEARCH OF A HOME: NINETEENTH CENTURY WENDISH IMMIGRATION," This updated version of his study of the immigration to Australia and Serbin, Texas, by the Wends is recognized as the best source available for research on the Wends.

You may order now through June 30, 1990:

<u>Price List</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Tax</u>	<u>Total</u>
Regular Price (after 6/30/90)	\$19.00	\$1.24	\$20.24
SALE PRICE - 1 BOOK	\$16.00	\$1.04	\$17.04
SALE PRICE - 5 OR MORE BOOKS	\$15.00	\$.98	\$15.98
SALE PRICE - 10 OR MORE BOOKS	\$14.00	\$.91	\$14.91

Postage: \$2.00 for the first book.

Add \$1.00 for each additional book

Out of state orders -- no sales tax is charged.

Sale price expires June 30, 1990.

Books may be ordered from the Texas Wendish Heritage Society, Route 2, Box 155, Giddings, Texas 78942. For further information call 409/366-2441.



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