



Texas Wendish Heritage Society

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

VOLUME IV, NUMBER 2, MARCH, 1991

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

PHONE 409/366-2441

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The last Texas Wendish Heritage Society Membership meeting held on February 17, 1991 was a very encouraging meeting. I cherish all of the people who participate in the discussions and making comments.

Passing the Constitution amendment, combining the Museum Board and the Executive Board, was a step in the right direction. This will give each Board member an opportunity to make comments, ask questions and make a decision all at one meeting.

One of my goals for the Museum is to have more people participate on committees and help with money raising projects. One of these opportunities will be at the Yesterfest, Bastrop, Texas on April 13. We need your help and participation to cook and sell noodles. Please contact the Museum or Carolyn Bohot, Yesterfest Chairperson, if you are interested in helping or have questions.

Some of the items which need attention and require funds are items such as flag poles, copy machine, and painting parts of the older buildings. Anyone wishing to give memorials or donate towards any of these projects, are welcomed and encouraged to do so. The Yesterfest booth will be helpful for these projects.

On March 22, the St. Paul Lutheran Church Book Committee is meeting with John Wilson on the status of publishing other records of the church. The St. Paul committee has invited our book committee to be at this meeting and is invited to participate in the discussion and planning.

Now that the Museum will have a monthly newsletter and will be printing this newsletter, a new copy machine would help do a better job. This machine would cost about \$2,700.00. Anyone interested and willing to help purchase this machine, is urged to make a donation towards this project.

We have a heritage that is "second to none". You are needed to help preserve and hand it down to other generations.

Please let us know how you would like to help and how all of us working together can do a better job.

If you have information you would like to share with others, send your news items to the Museum.

Thanks for your continued help and support.

Ken Weiser, President

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 29	Museum will be closed - Good Friday.
March 31	Museum will be closed - Easter Sunday.
April 3	The Collegium Musicum Bremen Orchestra and Choir from Bremen, Germany will perform selections from Hayden, Mozart, and Mendelssohn at 7:30 at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Giddings, TX.
April 12	Deadline for articles for April Newsletter.
April 13	Yesterfest at Bastrop.
May 19	Quarterly Membership meeting at 2:00 p.m. at the Museum.
May 20	Deadline for articles for May Newsletter.
May 26	Serbin Picnic - Homecoming - at the Serbin Picnic Grounds.

Thank you to the following ladies for bringing the refreshments for the February meeting: Ruth Lindner, Ruth Mitschke, Elinor Steglich, Evelyn Kasper and Adele Pampell.

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

NEW ACCESSIONS: DR. KLAUS J. DIPMANN, Berlin, Germany, donated Vol. 4 and Vol. 5 of MINORIITAS; CHARLES WUKROCH, Austin, donated Schisms in the Church and a 1st Edition of "Our Favorite" Cookbook; GARNER PARKER, R., Louise, Texas, donated "Descendants of Christoph Wuerstche and Johann August Lehmann Passengers on The Ben Nevis".

On a recent trip to this area Olga Ralle, pictured on the right in the photo, from Taurada, South Australia came by the museum and presented Georgie Boyce, Librarian, with the book Of Pioneers and Peopel - The Johann Gersch Story.



I Would like to thank the following people that have responded to my request for help: FRIEDA WENDLAND and LILLIAN OLTSMANN for clipping articles from newspapers for the Verticle File; ELINOR STEGLICH and JACK WIEDERHOLD for translating German books for inventory; JAN MURRAY and DOROTHY ZOCH for helping with the photographic inventory; ERNA MERSIOVSKY for translating German handwriting on photographs. These people have made a dent in the backlog of jobs to be done. If you are a Docent on a Sunday afternoon, I hope you will consider doing some of these things for us; such as, clipping articles from newspapers or making copies of various papers (instructions are written on the folder). Please let me or Barbara know.

EXHIBITS

A special baptismal exhibit has been prepared by our curator, Marian Wiederhold. It features a certificate signed by Pastor Kilian in 1861. There are pictures of baptismal fonts in some of the area churches, and beautiful christening dresses and caps. A framed picture with the Bible verse Mark 16:16 in Wendish, German and English also prepared by Mrs. Wiederhold.

IN A WENDISH COUNTRY

This is the second of a four part article written by Dr. Maria-Beate v. Loeben, an instructor of English at Wurzburg university.

The year was a sequence of quaint customs, beginning with the "Wedding of the Birds" on the 25th of January. On this day the children got little nests with tiny coloured sugar-eggs and little birds made of sugar or feathers. Occasionally artificial birds were thrown up into the air to tempt the real birds to start their mating-season, which was - quite rightly - considered to be the first sign of burgeoning spring; the early date is indicative of a fairly mild climate: we did have snows every year, and the tinkle of horse-drawn sledges to me is a familiar winter-sound - but there was usually very little snow before New Year's Eve, and even then the years when it stayed, and when there was a severe and prolonged frost, were considered rather the exception. The wonderful old fruit trees of the region bear witness to this fact. In sheltered places peaches and apricots are raised, and south-facing house-fronts are frequently grown over with vines. Every well-kept household produced its own wine, though generally made with currants, raspberries, and strawberries rather than with genuine grapes. It is a very good wine indeed, but not to be got in the shops! After the "Birds wedding" the preparations for Easter began: a baby goat was fattened for the traditional Easter meal, where it replaced the biblical Passover Lamb. In shops lambs made from cake-dough or butter began to appear as decorations, and the women began to colour eggs, which were then covered with intricate ornaments or inscribed with pious or amorous verses. There were various ways to work on the eggs: the original one was to scratch away the colour with a very fine and sharp knife. There were artists who could do almost anything with the point of their knife, from ornaments and flowers to landscapes and verses. The easier way was to use an ordinary steel pen, dip it into muriatic acid, and remove the colour or rather dye of the egg that way. It was, of course, much easier thus to write on the eggs as well. Such eggs, being little works of art, were, in the course of time, no longer meant to be eaten but used for purposes of decoration, and in this case empty shells were used which required an extra delicate handling. These eggs have become quite famous, and nowadays you can buy them almost everywhere.

On Easter morn the girls of the village went out in the dark with jugs to fetch water from some stream; it was supposed to give you special beauty (but only if you refrained from speaking until you had used it), and if the surface of the stream was still you might see your future husband's face in it, looking at you. These customs which are, of course, not confined to the Wendish-speaking parts of the world, were, however, religiously attended to when I was a child, and as the most natural thing in the world we expected on Easter-morning jugs with Easter-water to stand outside our bedroom-doors - and our nanny saw to it that we used it and kept quiet until we had done so. In the afternoon of Easter Sunday most people went to the town of Budissin (Bautzen) to watch the "Easter kirm", a procession of riders in old-fashioned dress-coats. The main attraction, however, and a unique local speciality, was a competition on the Proitschenberg, where competitors - mainly children - let their hard-boiled eggs roll down a steep hill and, according to some rules which I have never quite understood, lost their own eggs, or won those of their opponents.

TO BE CONTINUED-----

GROUP TOURS
by Evelyn Kasper, Chairman

A group from The Spirited Saints of St. John, Galveston, joined by friends from Giddings, toured our facilities on January 12.

28 guests from the Fellowship Club, and AAL of Trinity Lutheran Church in Spring enjoyed a visit here on February 21.

Both groups had coffee cake and coffee about 10:00 a.m. and then had the noon lunch. Thanks to all who helped host these events.

AUSTIN CHAPTER NEWS
by Charles Wukasch

The Austin chapter of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society met on Sunday, March 10, at Redeemer Lutheran (Austin). 13 people were in attendance. Rev. Reinhard Wuensche gave the devotion.

DOCENTS

Thank you, to the following who acted as docents from January 1 through February 28: Jack and Marian Wiederhold, Freddie Zoch, Herbert and Schautschick, Lorine Domel, Ruth Lindner, Walter and Erna Mersiovsky, August Zoch, Lillian Oltmann and Frieda Wendland.

VISITORS

During January and February we have had visitors from: Michigan, Oklahoma, Canada, Wisconsin, Missouri, Colorado, Australia, Pennsylvania, Louisiana, Illinois, France, and Washington.

MEMBERSHIP

New Members/Previous Members-Renewed

Robbie Gorr, Ontario, Canada	John Wuensche, Victoria, TX.
Florence M. Woods, Natalia, TX.	Dr. Gunter Schaarschmidt, Victoria, Canada
Brenda Kleidon, Three Rivers, MI.	Jan Gilbreath, Charlottesville, VA.
Mildred N. Krautz, Winchester, TX.	Craig Zoch, League City, TX.
Dana L. Zoch, League City, TX.	

STUDENT

Kelli Watts, Houston, TX.	Jan Gilbreath, Charlottesville, VA.
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PATRON

Eunice M. Zimmerman, Glendale, MO.	Barbara J. T. Womack, Crosby, TX.
Margie Loomans, Austin, TX.	David Goeke, San Antonio, TX.
Martha Goeke, San Antonio, TX.	Linda S. Boerger, Wharton, TX.
Gerhard Simmank, Germany	George Kunze, Warda, TX.
Flora Kunze, Warda, TX.	Weldon P. Boerger, East Bernard, TX.

MATCHING GIFTS

The following matching gifts were received:

\$250.00 from Arco Foundation.

\$800.00 from The Coca Cola Company.

\$25.00 from Arco Foundation.

Meeting of the
Texas Wendish Heritage Society
Serbin, Texas
February 17, 1991

1. There were about 40 people in attendance.
2. Rev. Hartfield gave the devotion.
3. There were no visitors.
4. There were no questions on the previous meeting's minutes.
5. Treasurer's report: Ken Weiser gave the report.
6. Change in constitution: Evelyn Kasper suggested that we have one combined board. Elwood Domaschk explained why we had originally set up two separate boards. He recommended that we continue with the two boards. A vote was taken: With only one vote against, the membership voted that we combine the two boards.
7. Committee reports: Evelyn Kasper: Tours; Laverne Gersch: *Vogelhochzeit* ; Barbara Hielscher: Geneology (given for the absent Weldon Merziovsky), Herbert Falke: Float, Herbert Schauschitschk: Landscaping; Georgie Boyce: Library, Ken Weiser: Membership (given for the absent Judy Hielscher), Barbara Hielscher: Newsletter; Barbara Hielscher: *Yesterfest* ; Charles Wukasch: Liaison with Sorbs of Germany
8. Laverne Gersch gave the program. She spoke on the visit to Texas by her Australian relatives.

Charles Wukasch

Charles Wukasch, Recording Secretary

MEMORIALS

In Memory Of:	Donor	Amount
Gertrude Gloyna	M/M Herb Schulze	\$20.00
Wilfred "Woody" Domaschk	M/M Leroy Steglich	\$15.00
Martin Franks	M/M August Zoch	\$5.00
William Strecker, Jr.	Mary Guggisburg	\$20.00
Mary Krause	M/M Robert Garrett	\$15.00
Herbert Prellop	M/M Reinhold Teinert	
Irene K. Johnson	M/M Reinhold Teinert	

Mr. George Boerger donated \$100.00 to the endowment in the name of George and Hanna (Krautschik) Schmidt.

OUTSTANDING YOUNG WENDS!

Nathan Wiederhold, son of Jack and Marian Wiederhold, and grandson of Mr. and Mrs. Milton Kasper was one of six area high school seniors to receive the 1990-91 DAP Good Citizen Award. The Guy-Smith-James McMillan Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution hosted a George Washington Tea honoring these students on February 16.

David O'Leary, son of Joseph and Linda O'Leary, and grandson of Leroy and Elinor Steglich was selected 1st Chair Bass in the 1991 All-State Choir. He is a senior at Mac Arthur High School in San Antonio. He also sings in the choir at Crown of Life Lutheran Church and plays his Trumpet for special services. David will attend Concordia Lutheran College in Austin in the Fall.



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