



# Texas Wendish Heritage Society and Museum - Berlin, Texas

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OPEN FROM 1:00 to 5:00 P. M. EVERY DAY EXCEPT SATURDAY & HOLIDAYS  
Phone 409/366-2441

NEWSLETTER

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OCTOBER, 1994

## WENDISH FEST 1994

The weather was perfect for our sixth annual Wendish Fest on September 25, 1994. Thanks to our willing workers (members and friends) for keeping our food lines running smoothly. We served 770 plates and had only a few waiting periods for "more good Wendish noodles". The ladies couldn't cook them fast enough.

Also a big "Thank you" for the volunteers setting up the tables and benches, washing them down, furnishing drinking water, ice, roping off the areas, and to everyone who helped in any way to make this event a success.

We appreciate the special prices for Kovanda's Czech Band through the courtesy of our member, Leland Miller of Fayetteville, and the speaker system through the courtesy of our member, Bryan Gersch.

The Rev. Dr. Eugene Krentz of Concordia University, River Forest, Illinois conducted the 8:30 a.m. service and the 10:00 a.m. service at St. Paul Lutheran Church. He and his wife seemed to enjoy the day of festivities together with Rev. and Mrs. Paul Hartfield. In fact, he even entered the cross cut saw contest.

The local papers and radio station gave us some great publicity and the Giddings Times and News featured pictures of our contest winners and activities at the festival. Winners in the cross cut saw contest in the men's division were Ralph Bamsch and Elwart Hobratschk - 1st place; Harvey Hobratschk and Wayne Chapman - 2nd place; and Eldor Becker and Marvin Kurio - 3rd place. Women's cross cut saw winners were Diana Mitschke and Karen Mitschke - 1st Place; Sandra Northrup and Peggy Varner - 2nd place; and Irene Wiesenhutter and Mary Smith - 3rd place. Mixed cross cut saw winners were Ralph and Carolyn Bamsch - 1st place; Connie Walker and Terry Burgfield - 2nd place; and Ruby Weiser and Eldor Becker - 3rd place.

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**Winners of the coffee cake bake-off were:**

**Category I - Streusel**

Irene Wiesenhutter - 1st place; Irene Teinert - 2nd place; and Elinor Steglich - 3rd place.

**Category II - Cheese (Kase)**

Irene Wiesenhutter - 1st place; Adele Jenke - 2nd place; and Hattie Schautschick - 3rd place.

**Category III - Special**

Irene Teinert - 1st place; Ruby Weiser - 2nd place, and Evelyn Buchhorn - 3rd place.

Judges for the bake-off were: Cynthia and Paul Jamar of radio Station KOKE, Giddings, and Vera and Daniel Zitterich of Radio Station KVLG-KBUK, La Grange.

There were three contests for children this year - coloring, corn shelling, and pea shelling. Judges for the coloring contest were Ron and Glenda Lammert and Joyce Hinze. Winners were:

**Ages 3 - 5**

Christy Lammert, 1st place; Justin Rees, 2nd place; and Cecil Walker, 3rd place.

**Ages 6 - 8**

Sara Knox, 1st place; Johanna Lammert, 2nd place; and Sarah Gersch, 3rd place.

**Ages 9 - 12**

Richard Shapell, 1st place; Minnie Gersch, 2nd place; and Tasha Chapmen, 3rd place.

Leslie Carpenter, J. D. Kilian and Wes Swearingen were in charge of the next two events, corn shelling and pea shelling.

**Corn shelling**

**Ages 0 -5**

Alicia Gersch, 1st place; Nick Gober; 2nd place; and Christy Lammert, 3rd place

**Ages 6 - 8**

Joel Shappell, 1st place; Nicole Varner, 2nd place; and Natallie Varner, 3rd place.

**Ages 9 - 12**

Richard Shappell, 1st place; Erica Northrup, 2nd place; and Sarah De Leon, 3rd place.

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## Pea Shelling

### Ages 0 - 5

Alicia Gersch, 1st place; Mark Wasley, 2nd place; Christy Lammert, 3rd place.

### Ages 6 - 8

Sarah Gersch, 1st place; Sarah Knox, 2nd place; and Morgan Yrshus, 3rd place.

### Ages 9 - 12

Missy Lammert, 1st place; Minnie Gersch, 2nd place; and Melissa Wells, 3rd place.

Jimmie and Ken Griffin kept the washer pitching tournament going. Other activities included cutting cedar plaques, horseback rides for the younger children, blacksmithing by Steed Henderson of Round Top, corn shucking and shelling, sausage stuffing (Tom swearingen and Wayne chapman had so many helpers that we may have to use a larger table next year), Dr. John Armour's stone ground cornmeal, churning, noodle making, quilting, sing-a-longs, Wendish folk tales, and Easter egg decorating. We were privileged to have Dr. Lotar Balke who has a collection of over 2000 Easter eggs in a Museum in Drebkau, Germany, demonstrate egg decorating. There were also wine making instructions and a large quilt display in the St. Paul Building.

It was a wonderful day! Leroy Steglich is a pretty good judge of food - we had enough for all and no left-overs. Who could ask for more? We all made a pretty good team and hopefully we can have a repeat performance in 1995.

Thanks again!

Evelyn N. Kasper  
for the  
Wendish Fest Committee

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### NEEDED

Good used electric roasters. We could certainly use them.

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Thank you to John Schmidt for donating his time and labor to spray paint some of our folding chairs.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**November 20**

General Membership Meeting at the Museum  
at 2:00 p. m. with election of officers

**December 14**

Deadline for articles for the December  
newsletter

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At the November general membership meeting Dr. Charles Wukasch will give a presentation on his academic activities: the paper he gave in Albuquerque in April on Texas Wendish and the paper that he will give in New Orleans, in November, on the Wendish poet, Jakub Bart-Cisinski.

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## LOST AND FOUND

At the Wendish Fest an oak-handled knife with a long slender blade, and a heavy aluminum Frigidaire roaster pan, with lid, were picked up by mistake or misplaced. If anyone knows where these two items might be, please call the Museum at 409/366-2441.

## DOCENTS

Thank you to the following for acting as docents during the month of September: Reinhold and Irene Teinert, Laverne Gersch, John and Anna Schmidt, Lorine Domel, Frieda Wendland, Ruby Koslan, and Bessie Mertink.

## VISITORS

Visiting the Museum during September were people from all parts of Texas and the following: Czechoslovakia, Georgia, West Virginia, Missouri, Michigan, Oklahoma, Kansas, Florida, California, and Lusatia.

## WALK-IN COFFEE / BAKE SALE

by Hattie Schautschick, Chairperson

Our second annual walk-in coffee and bake sale at Eleanor's Cottage in Giddings, October 18, 1994, was a big success despite the rains and floods. We made over \$600. Thanks to the workers and to everyone who donated baked items and cash. We appreciate your support and look forward to 1995.

## TOURS

Treat your organization to a good Wendish meal and show them your Museum. Suggest a trip to Serbin when you have the opportunity.

We hosted a group of 35 from a Garden Club in Houston on October 4th, and 23 from Salem Lutheran on October 13th. These groups had coffee and coffee cake.

Our luncheon tour scheduled for October 17th was rained out and rescheduled for a later date.

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

My husband, the preacher, says, "there are reasons, and there are excuses"; so I'll not bother to make you decide. Let's just pretend that this is not the first "library update" since June, 1993.

First of all, we want to thank our Sorbisch/German friends in Germany for sending us the following books last summer with Jack Wiederhold: GERTRUD MAHLING, from Groditz, donated Volkslieder der Sorben in der Ober-und Niederlausitz (a book of folk songs in Wendish and German); JOACHIM GLUCKLICH, who is the headmaster of Burgneudorf, Germany, Middle school donated Wuknjemy Serbsce 2 (a 2nd grade reader for learning Sorbisch) and Jan, Minka a Bobik ra prozdninach (a children's picture book for learning Sorbisch).

In August the DOMOWINA in Bautzen sent us a number of brochures, postcards, calendars and the following books: Serbska swajzba u Blotach - Die wendische (sorbische) Hochzeit (Sorbisch Weddings in Spreewald); Sorbische Stickerein by Lotar Balke (shows various types of embroidery in Lusatia); Lieferbare Literatur a catalog of available books published by the Domowina Verlag.

MRS. EMIL (LILY) KRUGLER of Giddings donated Salt, Light, and signs of the Times - An Intimate Look at the Life and Times of Alfred (Rip) Rehwinkel an interesting biography of one of the most colorful and one of the most popular professors in the history of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

LAVERNE GERSCH donated Dead Man on the Bayou? by Ted Wax. The sub-title is "Western History's Best Kept Secret Finally Revealed", about Bill Longley.

MICHAEL PLASTER of Austin donated "The Kieschnick Family Descendants Charts".

Hopefully, the above list acknowledges donations from July through December of 1993, if not, please let me know.

I would like to thank VIVIAN (FROEHLICH) TAYLOR for her book review in our last newsletter of Freedom found -- The Altus Family by P. H. Colliver, and for donating the book to the library.

**MEMBERSHIP**

**New Members**

Claire Miertschin, San Antonio, TX    Henry Sonsel, Gonzales, TX

Beverly Gotzky, Victoria Australia    Janelle Kappler, Lakeside, CA

**Patron Members**

Claire Miertschin, San Antonio, TX

**Sponsor Members**

Janelle Kappler, Lakeside, CA

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## MEMORIALS

In Memory of:	Donor	Amount
Clara S. Bernstein	Mrs. Agnes Swenson, Janet Knippa, & Patricia Prather	\$25.00
Clara S. Bernstein	Mary Guggisberg (for photo library)	\$25.00
Clara S. Bernstein	M/M John Scheffel	\$25.00
Clara S. Bernstein	M/M Herb Schulz	\$25.00
Clara S. Bernstein	M/M Leroy Steglich	\$25.00
Clara S. Bernstein	M/M Robert Garrett	\$15.00
Clara S. Bernstein	Mrs. Alma Schulz	\$30.00
Clara S. Bernstein	Mrs. Margo Latimer, M/M Dennis Latimer & Family, M/M Guy Latimer & Family, and Mr. R. D. Latimer & Family	\$100.00
Louise Mitschke	M/M Leroy Steglich	\$15.00
Martha Brockman	Margaret Wolf Hart	\$10.00
Walter Mersiovsky	M/M John Schmidt	\$25.00

## WENDISH VISITOR TOURS TEXAS

Dr. Lotar Balke from Drebkau, Lausitz presented a most interesting slide show and talk about the customs and folkdress of Lusatia on September 30 at the Museum. Thirty-three people attended, coming from Austin, San Antonio, Houston, and the local area. Luise Green translated and Elmer Zoch video taped the program. Dr. Balke also assisted at the Wendish Fest. He demonstrated the embossed technique of Wendish Easter eggs while Daphne Garrett demonstrated the batik wax technique.

Dr. Balke was the guest of Daphne and Bob Garrett from September 21 until October 11. They drove 1300 miles in Texas, showing him a wide variety of Texas sights, including the Alabama-Chouhatta Indian Reservation in East Texas, Galveston, the LBJ Ranch, Fredericksburg and San Antonio. Other members helping to entertain the visitor were Joseph Wilson and Hilde Graeter in Houston; Vivian Taylor, Mr. & Mrs. Milton Kasper, Jack and Marian Wiederhold, Laverne and Walter Gersch, Evelyn and Arnold Kasper, locally; David and Martha Goeke in San Antonio.

## PITTSFORD FAMILY REUNION

The immediate family and descendants of William Harrison Pittsford II and Alma Michalk Pittsford celebrated together in a reunion at Camp Lone Star, LaGrange, Texas, July 1-3, 1994.

Family members who attended the reunion were:

1. Ruby (Pittsford) Hein (daughter of Alma and W. H. Pittsford) and Raymond Hein, Overland Park, Kansas; their children and spouses and grandchildren Sharon (Hein) and Jeff Bartels, David and Christopher, St. Paul, Minnesota; Linda (Hein) and Ron Kettner, Sarah, Lauren and Andrew, Shawnee, Kansas; Diane (Hein) and Karl Schoettlin, Jeff and Michael, Shawnee, Kansas.
2. W. H. (Bill) Pittsford III (son of Alma and W. H. Pittsford) and Lynette Pittsford, Austin, Texas; their children and spouses and grandchildren Glenn and Wanda Pittsford, Amy and Kelli, Georgetown, Texas; Alice (Pittsford) and Gary Childress, Kristen, Stephen and Bethany, Victoria, Texas; Gordon Pittsford and friend Linda Nabors, Natalie and Halie, Austin, Texas.
3. Norine Pittsford, wife of Raymond Pittsford (son of Alma and W. H. Pittsford), who died May 10, 1994, Elgin, Texas; their children and spouses and grandchildren Donna (Pittsford) and Bubba Barnett, Manchaca, Texas, Jamie and fiancée Tanya Bleke (married July 9, 1994), Austin, Texas; son Josh is stationed with the Marines in Okinawa and was unable to attend the reunion; however, Josh's friend Cathi Edwards was present; Danny Pittsford and son Daniel, Austin, Texas; Danny's daughter Kara was in New York for the summer and could not attend the reunion.
4. LaVerne (Pittsford) Hein (daughter of Alma and W. H. Pittsford) and Robert Hein, Dawson, Minnesota; their children and spouses and grandchildren Barbara (Hein) and Monte Montgomery and Stephen, San Angelo, Texas; Rosie (Hein) Falk (Rosie's husband Jerry was unable to attend), Salem, Virginia; Robin (Hein) and Randy Muench, Anya and Josef, Robbinsdale, Minnesota. also could not attend the reunion.

The reunion began on Friday, July 1, when family members met at the Texas Wendish Heritage Museum in Serbin. The group toured the museum and St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Serbin. They stopped at the Warda Cemetery where the Michalks and Tschatschulas, the four grandparents of Alma Michalk Pittsford, are buried. All ate together at the Bon Ton Restaurant in LaGrange before heading to Camp Lone Star. The evening was spent settling into the retreat center at Camp Lone Star, getting acquainted and reacquainted and celebrating the July birthdays of seven family members.

During the weekend many hours were spent reminiscing, along with viewing home movies and slides from at least thirty-five years ago and videos from recent years. Adults and children enjoyed recreational activities such as swimming, canoeing, kayaking and walking at

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Camp Lone Star. Bill Pittsford entertained with lively harmonica music, and Rosie Falk displayed her talent for "flat footing."

Lynette Pittsford and Alice Childress took advantage of all the relatives being together and hosted a wedding shower for Jamie Pittsford and Tanya Bleke who were married the following Saturday, July 9. All age groups enjoyed the games, refreshments and opening of gifts.

The reunion wrapped up Sunday morning with a photo session and worship service. The worship service was led by Jeff Bartels; Alice Childress, Kristen Childress and Sharon Bartels were pianists. The theme of the service was "New Life in Christ," and the service provided a wonderful opportunity to remember those family members who have already received their crown of eternal life in heaven -- Alma Pittsford, W. H. Pittsford II, Frances Pittsford, Raymond Pittsford and Nanette Pittsford.

A second Pittsford Family Reunion is planned for July, 1996, at Camp Lone Star. It may be an old saying, but the meaning definitely fits for this reunion -- "A good time was had by all!"

#### NOACK REUNION

Sixty-five members of the Johann and Maria Noack family met for the annual reunion of the Noack family at the Warda picnic grounds on Sunday, October 2nd. Leon Noack prepared the barbecued sausage, and side dishes were brought by the members.

Potted plants were awarded to Emma von Gonten, oldest member present, and to Della Herbrick, the only surviving child of John and Mary Noack. Ernest Zachary Noack, great-grandson of Ernest and Leona Noack, received a prize for being the youngest member present.

Serving as officers for the next two years will be Leon Noack, President, Debbie White, Vice-President, Evelyn Kasper, Secretary, and Elinor Steglich, Treasurer.

#### PIETSCH REUNION

The sixth annual Pietsch reunion was held on October 9, 1994 in Winchester, Texas at the Zilss Memorial Community Hall. 85 descendants of the Traugott and Anna (Handrick) Pietsch family were present.

At noon a short devotion was given by the Rev. Wayne Schuler, and everyone joined in the common table prayer. Then a delicious pot luck lunch was enjoyed by everyone.

In the afternoon everyone visited and shared pictures, and stories of years past.

The next reunion will be held on October 8, 1995 at the same location.

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## FLOAT WINS SECOND PLACE

Congratulations to Telford and Freddie Zoch for bringing home a beautiful 2nd place trophy for the Most Original Float in the Fayette County Fair Parade in La Grange on September 3, 1994.

They pulled a low boy trailer with a large sign advertising the Wendish Fest. Caroline and Ralph Bamsch were cross-cut sawing, Freddie was holding the log, and Walter Gersch was the time keeper. On the front of the trailer was a kitchen table with two of our younger Wends, Shaina Gersch and Sarah Schwartz, making noodles.

Watching the activities from the back of the pickup were the spectators: Barbara, Ashley, and Jerry Hielscher, Evelyn Kasper, Laverne and Sarah Gersch, Elizabeth Schwartz, Jennifer Zoch, and Rebecca McRae.

# **Texas Mendish Heritage Museum**

**ROUTE 2, BOX 155**

**GIDDINGS, TEXAS 78942-9769**

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