



Texas Wendish Heritage Society and Museum - Serbin, Texas

ROUTE 2, BOX 155, GIDDINGS, TEXAS 78942-9769

(409) 366-2441

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

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME VIII

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JANUARY, 1995

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we begin the 24th year of keeping our Wendish heritage alive through the Texas Wendish Heritage Society, we need to remember that by participating in Wendish events, by reading and sharing our newsletter, by recruiting new members, by relating our personal family stories to our family members and friends, and by helping to support our Museum through gifts, memorials, and volunteer hours, we are fulfilling the goals of the organization.

I have a special challenge for you out-of-state members. What are you doing in your area to teach and promote our unique heritage? Please share your experiences with other members by submitting an article for a future newsletter. The newsletter is the "tie that binds" our members together throughout the world.

Last August I was asked to represent our Society and write a nomination letter for the Reverend Paul Hartfield (our Society Chaplin and pastor at St. Paul, Serbin) as he was to be nominated Texas Rural Minister of the Year. This is a joint program sponsored by the Progressive Farmer Magazine, and the Texas Agriculture Extension Service. He received this honor on October 3, 1994 at an awards banquet in Austin, Texas. Del Deterling, executive director of the Progressive Farmer, a Wend (Kiesling family), presented Reverend Hartfield with a beautiful plaque. In this issue of the newsletter there is a picture of the presentation and a copy of my nomination letter.

The Museum will again be open from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. seven afternoons a week starting April 22, 1995 thru September 3, 1995. The Saturday afternoon opening is designed to accommodate family reunion planners and vacationers. Please take advantage of the extra "open" afternoon.

Laverne Gersch
President

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 19 General Membership Meeting at the Museum at
 2:00 p.m.

March 16, 17, & 18 Lee County Jr. Livestock Show Giddings, TX
 (Wendish Booth)

April 17 Deadline for articles for April newsletter

April 29 Yesterfest in Bastrop, TX (Wendish Booth)

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At the February general membership meeting Jack Wiederhold will give a presentation on the restoration of St. Paul Lutheran Church.

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CONCORDIA SEMINARY CHORUS SPRING BREAK TOUR

The Concordia Seminary Chorus, St. Louis, will be singing at Immanuel Lutheran Church on February 27, at 7:30 p.m.

QUILT EXHIBIT AT WENDISH FEST by Marian Weiderhold, Chairperson

This year at the Wendish Fest, a quilt exhibit was featured with many beautiful and outstanding quilts displayed. We'd like to thank the following for sharing their quilts with us: Bessie Mertink, Elsie Mertink, Marjorie Albrecht, Lisa Teinert, Glenn Teinert, Jennifer Teinert, Alice Teinert, Larry Teinert, Ruth Mersiovsky, Edna Kasper, Emilie Zoch, Otilie Prellow, Hattie Schautschick, Laverne Gersch, and Marian Wiederhold. Many favorable comments were received, so possibly another quilt display can be held next year.

There is one quilt that has not been picked up. Please pick it up in the Peter Building.

CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD

Christmas Around the World is a display of Christmas trees decorated by the various ethnic groups in the Austin area. There were fifteen trees this year set up in North Cross Mall. This is the fourth year of this Christmas tree display. The trees were on display from November 20 to December 28.

The Wendish tree was again decorated by Irene and Reinhold Teinert with help from Ruby Fischer. For those of you who saw the tree we hope it reminded you of your tree at home, or at church. Christmas trees are decorated differently today than when our Wendish forefathers came to Texas in 1854.

Christmas Around the World was an idea that Mrs. Jean Zurow of Austin introduced after seeing the fiftieth anniversary display in Chicago.

The management of North Cross Mall is making tentative plans for the display in 1995.

Submitted by Reinhold Teinert - 2. -

KREISCHE CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Our Society was again contacted to participate in the Monument Hill and Kreische Brewery State Historical Parks Christmas program at La Grange, Texas on December 11th. Holy Cross Choir of Warda represented the Texes Wendish Heritage Society.

TOUR REPORT

by Evelyn N. Kasper, Co-ordinator

A group of approximately 35, from Chapelwood Methodist Church, in Houston, enjoyed a luncheon and tour of the Museum and St. Paul Lutheran Church on December 7th.

An AARP group of 39, from Rosenberg, enjoyed a luncheon and tour of the Museum and St. Paul Lutheran Church on January 24th.

BAKE SALE

THANKS to the members who helped bake and/or sell the Christmas sweets and noodles at the bake sale in front of the La Grange State Bank on Friday, Decembr 16th.

NOODLE REPORT

by Elinor Steglich, Chairperson

The noodle committee reports that they made close to 1900 pounds of noodles in 1994. Due to increase in expenses thay have increased the price of noodles to \$2.50 per pound.

REUNIONS

Sonsel - Dungen Reunion

On October 16, 1994 descendants of the Sonsel-Dungen family attended the 26th annual reunion. Records show that Hanna Sonsel and her six children came to Texas on the Ben Nevis supposedly to join her husband. One of those children, a son (Carl August), married Sophie Dungen.

The reunion was held in Frelsburg, Texas (near New Ulm). Approximately 125 people attended even though that was the weekend of the floods in the Houston area. Everyone enjoyed a potluck meal and games. Door prizes were awarded. Family photographs and items, such as, a picture of the Ben Nevis, Wendish Cookbook, Brochures on the Wendish Society and Fest, and other books regarding the Wendish heritage were on display.

Everyone had a good time!

Submitted by Emily (Sonsel) Tisinger

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

I am still trying to get back "on track" with my volunteer work here at the Museum and especially the library. It is amazing how much paper work is involved, and if a person misses a few months the stacks of books and paper keep getting bigger and bigger. I do want to thank Daphne Garrett for helping me inventory some of the German books and getting them on the library shelves for the Wendish Fest.

We have one book that was left in the library and no one knows who the donor is. It is The History of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church - Arneckeville, DeWitt County, Texas 1868-1992. If you donated this book, please let me know.

We would like to thank the following people for their donations during 1994:

DAN MRKICH of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada donated the book he authored, KOSOVO (The song of the Serbs) and a book he translated into English, MOUNTAIN LAUREL (GORSKI VIJENAC).

JAMES WALKER of Giddings, Texas, donated Singers and Storytellers (Texas Folklore Society Publication XXX) published in 1961, which has the story, "Folklore of the German-Wends in Texas" written by George R. Nielsen.

KEN WEISER of Giddings, Texas, donated the 1994 LCMS Lutheran Annual.

VIVIAN (FROHLICH) TAYLOR of Weimar, Texas, donated Freedom Found (A History of the Altus Family in Australia).

WALTER & LAVERNE (ZUCH) GERSCH of Giddings, Texas, donated the cookbook, The Melting Pot, which has a section on Wendish cooking, in memory of Victor Zuch.

ALVIN & CLARA (SCHULZ) BERNSTEIN of Abilene, Texas donated Sorbische Volkstrachten Der Tracht der Sorben um Schleife (folkdress of the Schleife area in Germany) in memory of Clara's maternal grandparents, Johann Noack and Anna (Medack) Noack. They also donated Sorbische Volkstrachten Die Tracht der Sorben um Cottbus (folkdress of the Cottbus area in Germany) in memory of Alvin's maternal grandparents, Johann Kulke and Agnes Miersch Kulke.

GOETHE INSTITUTE, German Cultural Center, of Houston, donated an atlas, Deutsch Lernen Deutschland Kennen Lernen (Strassenatla von Deutschland) also, magazines and brochures with travelling tips to Germany. If you are planning a trip to Germany, you will want to look at this available literature.

HANKA MIKAN of Bautzen, Germany, donated the periodical, "94/95 Deutsch-Sorbisches Volkstheater Bautzen", which gives the 1994 and 1995 Bautzen theater schedule, shows photos of the actors (including one of Mrs. Mikan) and many other interesting photos.

JOHN JACOB of Austin, Texas, compiled and donated "The Doering Family History.

MICHAEL PLASTER of Austin, Texas, sent us his updated genealogical information on the Kieschnick family and descendants charts for the Sohn and Hildebrandt families.

R. H. & QUINTELLA ZIMMERMANN of Fredericksburg, Texas, donated "The Descendants of William Munzenmayer, Sr. - 1842-19--, From Ohio to Texas and California".

DOROTHY (NOAK) ROTHERMEL of Carmine, Texas, donated "Celebrating our Heritage" about the Peter Noak family.

PASTOR ROBERT E. & GEORGIE (BERNSTEIN) BOYCE donated Kleine Sorbische Ostereier Fibel, (decorating of Wendish Easter eggs with colored photos), in memory of Georgie's mother, Clara L. (Schulz) Bernstein.

In 1994 the Library purchased the Atlas of the German Empire 1892. This atlas is located on top of the vertical file in the library for those of you who would like or need to look at it.

After completing the above list, I found another stack of books to be inventoried, so I will continue 1994 donations in our next newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP

New Members

Carol Garner, Garland, TX	Marvin P. Schulze, Austin, TX
Hubert L. Schulz, Huero, TX	Dorothy J. Strickland, Brenham, TX

Student Members

John Karle, St. Louis, MO

Patron Members

Milton Kaiser, Houston, TX	Marvin Wappler, Groves, TX
Betty S. Zoch, El Campo, TX	Floyd V. Zoch, El Campo, TX
Eugene Hemmann, St. Charles, IL	Deborah S. Nance, Houston, TX
Elo Toll, Cedar Park, TX	Herb Schulz, Torrance, CA
Paul Weise, Palm Coast, FL	Gene Miertschin, Friendswood, TX
Henry C. Hensel, Norman, OK	Violet Miertschin, Winchester, TX
W. L. Simank, Stillwater, OK	Joy Teinert, Lubbock, TX
Elinor Vlasak, Rosebud, TX	Frances Maxwell, Dallas, TX
Ruth Emmerick, Buda, TX	Delores R. Hall, Wharton, TX
Kathy L. Miller, Layfayette, LA	Hubert C. Noack, Waco, TX
Ted Wukasch, Groves, TX	Sandra Matthijetz, Houston, TX
Harold V. Theiss, Houston, TX	

Sponsor Members

Ludwig Groeschel, Austin, TX	Edna Groeschel, Austin, TX
Herman Teinert, Lubbock, TX	Dr. Rev. Wilbert Sohns, Gatesville, TX

Century Members

Jerry Knippa, Boerne, TX

MEMORIALS

In Memory of:	Donor	Amount
Walter Mersiovsky	M/M Otto Becker, Jr.	\$15.00
Walter Mersiovsky	M/M Herbert Zoch	\$25.00
Walter Mersiovsky	George Boerger (landscape fund)	\$25.00

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Victor Zoch	George Boerger (landscape fund)	\$75.00
Louise Mitschke	George Boerger (landscape fund)	\$25.00
Clara Bernstein	George Boerger (landscape fund)	\$25.00
Henry & Agnes Schoppa	Mary Guggisberg	\$40.00
Carl A. Fehr	Mrs. Arthur Fehr	\$25.00
Edgar Teinert	M/M Vic Mathias	\$50.00

In Honor of:	Donor	Amount
Lillian Wenke 75th birthday	M/M Edgar Schulz	\$15.00

M/M Charlie Zoch 60th Wedding Anniversary	M/M Leroy Steglich	\$10.00
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A \$50.00 donation was received from Mr. Leland Miller.

\$40.00 was donated to our walk-in coffee and bake sale by Mrs. Lillian Pratho.

\$50.00 was donated to our walk-in coffee and bake sale by Mrs. Alois J. Yeager.

A \$600.00 matching gift was received.

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Thank you to Mrs. Anna Schmidt for bringing the Memorials & Gifts Register up to date. This register has been placed in the library.

Thank you to Telford Zoch for providing and setting up the Christmas tree in the Kilian building, and to Evelyn Kasper, Georgie Boyce and Thank you to Mr. & Mrs. Elmer Zoch for a one year gift subscription to the Houston Lutheran.

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CONTINUING FUND RAISER

Mr. and Mrs. John Schmidt, Watkins Products Representatives, want everyone to know that anyone who buys Watkins Products through the Texas Wendish Heritage Society will receive a 20% discount, which in turn is donated to the Society. There are books and order forms in the gift shop. Please pick one up when you visit again.

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Pictured at left the Reverend Paul Hartfield receiving his plaque as Texas Rural Minister of the year. Left to right, Del Deterling, the Reverend and Mrs. Paul Hartfield. The nomination letter follows on the next page.



Texas Wendish Heritage Museum

Serbin, Texas

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I am a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church.

I am also President of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society which is headquartered along with a museum on one acre of St. Paul Lutheran Church property. The Wendish Museum is now considered one of the best small museums in Texas.

When the congregation built a new school and gymnasium in 1979, Rev. Paul Hartfield was very instrumental in the utilization of the historic old school buildings for a museum to preserve the Wendish culture.

Through the combined efforts of Rev. Hartfield and the entire congregation, a perpetual lease on one acre of land was granted to the society, and the school buildings were donated for a museum.

In 1986, Rev. Hartfield was again instrumental in obtaining funds from the Peter Foundation for an additional museum building with an interpretive center, vault for archives, library and workroom.

Presently, the Wendish Museum complex is comprised of three buildings, two original log cabins, a small storage building, and an outdoor exhibit of a Wendish flower garden. The United States flag, the Texas flag, and the only Wendish flag in the United States wave proudly on the museum grounds.

Rev. Hartfield has served as chaplain of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society since 1979. He always provides the opening devotion for our quarterly meetings, stressing the importance of our Christian and Wendish heritage.

Besides attending to his ministerial duties, my pastor is always ready to support community projects and is always seen actively participating in the many events of our farm and ranch community.

Having known and worked with him for many years, I heartily support the nomination of Rev. Paul Hartfield for Texas Rural Minister of the Year!

Sincerely,

Laverne Gersch



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GENERAL MEETING

NOVEMBER 20, 1994

The General Meeting of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society was called to order by Laverne Gersch, President, at 2:00 P.M..

DEVOTION: The opening devotion was given by Pastor Hartfield and taken from the Gospel according to St. Mark 13: v32, title 'Watch'. For Christians, when the day and hour of the end comes, it will be a surprise; but, there will not be fear and anger. Christians can take comfort because of our faith in Jesus Christ. He loves us and has reserved a place for us in heaven. We are told "watch, be ready and wait." While living for Him, we must be diligent in doing our tasks.

Thank you, Pastor Hartfield.

WELCOME: Laverne Gersch welcomed all members and guests. A member attending the first quarterly meeting was Marvin Schwausch from Round Rock, TX Also: Camry Zoch, Elsie Mertink and Minna Zump were recognized.

MINUTES: The minutes of August 21, 1994 meeting were approved as mailed out to the membership.

FINANCIAL REPORT: George Boerger reported that the Texas Wendish Heritage Society will have an estimated surplus of \$1,000.00 at 12/31/94. At this time income is down from 1993 and cost of sales is lower. The Wendish Fest, with AAL matching funds did well. Report accepted as given.

COMMENTS: **RURAL MINISTER OF THE YEAR, 1994** - Laverne Gersch announced that Pastor Hartfield had been chosen the Rural Minister of the Year by the Progressive Farmer Magazine. The TWHS congratulates you. We are happy and proud that you are the Society's Chaplain.

1995 DUES - The 1995 dues are do. Please pay today or mail in as soon as possible. If paid today, postage fees can be saved.

ETHNIC CHRISTMAS TREE - by Mr & Mrs Reinhold Teinert. The traditional Wendish christmas tree is in place at Northcross Mall, Austin, Texas and was trimmed by the Teinert's. The first display of ethnic Christmas trees was at the Barton Creek Square Mall. The past two years they have been at Northcross Mall. The first year there were ten trees and this year (1994) there may be seventeen decorated trees. Russia may come in with a tree.

NOODLE UPDATE - Elinor Steglich is back and reported 'workers are working'. Made noodles Tuesday and sacked on Friday. Buy and give noodles as Christmas gifts, they are fresh.

WENDISH FLOAT - Telford Zoch has parked the 'ship' for the winter. There is a need for new tires.

OFFICE OF VICE PRESIDENT: The Board of Directors submitted the name of Georgie Boyce to serve in this position to complete the vacancy due to the death of Victor Zoch. It was approved.

BY-LAWS: The revised 1994 by-laws were mailed to all members for study and review. Noted changes: the office of corresponding secretary was deleted. Barbara Hielscher and the just Past President will serve on the Board of Directors.

Motion: A motion was made by George Boerger to accept the Bylaws as printed and mailed to the membership.
Second: Bea Tschatschula. Carried.

1995 BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION:

The Ballot Committee: Telford Zoch, Chairman
Walter Gersch Otto Becker, Jr.
Georgie Boyce George Boerger

Printed ballots were passed to all attending members. There were no nominations from the floor.

Motion: A motion was made by Leroy Steglich that nomination cease and accept the ballot of candidates as printed.
Second: Walter Gersch. Carried.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS CANDIDATES: Hattie Schautschick Marvin Schwausch
Eleanor Schulze Jack Wiederhold
Howard Winter Elmer Zoch
Teresa Zoch Walter Zoch
Donald Zuhn

Of the nine, six will be elected by written ballot.

ELECTED: Hattie Schautschick Marvin Schwausch
Eleanor Schulze Jack Wiederhold
Elmer Zoch Walter Zoch

MOTION: A motion was made by Leroy Steglich that after the meeting of this date (Nov. 20, 1994) the ballots be destroyed.
Second: Evelyn Kasper. Carried.

NOTE: The two year terms of the Directors are staggered there by continuity is assured.

PROGRAM: by Charles Wukasch, PHD. Charles attended two academic conferences, (1) Albuquerque, New Mexico, April 21-23, 1994; (2) New Orleans, Louisiana, November 12&13, 1994. Albuquerque - This conference dealt with the Wendish language and is a South Central Association. The Wendish language as spoken in Texas has almost died out. A tri-lingual situation was introduced in the community: in the home (spoken by the older generation) it was Wendish; in the school (mediating) it was German; and English was spoken in Austin. At one time Wendish was spoken in all three situations; then, no Wendish, German/English was spoken; and later, no German only English. In Germany, since beginning of the 19th Century, speak German. Very little Wendish is spoken. It is a minority language in Germany. Sorbian - a Sorb (not Serb) or a Wend, are the same. The Upper Sorbs (came to Texas) and the Lower Sorbs had two separate languages. In Lusatia, geographical concept, where the Wends came from, the Wendish culture existed during the time Jesus Christ in Germany.

PROGRAM Cont'd: There has been a lack of transmission of the Wendish language and culture to the younger generation. There has been a rural phenomenon'. Today, heritage (language and culture) is done through study, which is the artificial way. It is not learned at home. We should be proud to keep up the culture - it need not die because the language died out.

New Orleans - This conference dealt with Wendish Poet, Jakub Bart-Ćisinski. These people immigrated from Canada and spoke French. The younger generation does not speak French.

This Wendish Poet was first a Lutheran Pastor, second a Catholic Priest. He was a secret Lutheran and was forced into retirement in Eastern Germany. He was a famous Poet. He died at the age of fifty three (53) in the year 1903. The Czech and Wendish are very similar.

GUESTS: At this time, Laverne Gersch introduced her house guests: Andrea Schiebner from Germany and Harold Schiebner from Italy. They are film makers and made a movie here six (6) years ago. They have traveled from Germany to Australia to Texas. Andrea and Harold have been working with Dr. Joe Wilson. The documents will be given to Dr. Wilson and the film will be given to Texas Wendish Heritage Society and Museum.

A side activity has been green tomatoes. They have used four hundred (400) pounds of tomatoes and many other vegetables. The canned green tomatoes will be seasoned and ready to eat in January 1995. A taste sample and the recipe will be left here.

Laverne Gersch thanked Dr. Wukasch and her company, the Schiebner's for their interesting contributions to the TWHS meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Vivian Taylor at 3:30 P.M. to adjourn.
Second: George Boerger. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Della Mullens

Della Mullens, Secretary

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Texas Wendish Heritage Museum

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