



Texas Wendish Heritage Society and Museum - Serbin, Texas

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

EMAIL: wendish@bluebon.net

FAX (979) 366-2805

(979) 366-2441

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XV

NUMBER II

APRIL, 2001

President's Message

Greetings to everyone from the Wendish Museum! For those of you not lucky enough to live in the Central Texas area, it has been a knock-out spring this year, with a gorgeous display of bluebonnets and other wildflowers. The Museum has benefited from nature's beautiful display by hosting a large number of tours during March and April, so things have been busy around Serbin lately.

One of the most exciting recent developments at the Museum has been the scheduling of two groups that will provide special performances at this year's Wendish Fest, to be held September 23, 2001. The Sorbische Trachtentanzgruppe from Cottbus, Germany is a group of dancers who will provide one of the featured performances that day. The other group is the Chor Meja, a singing group, who will provide us with the second performance at the Fest. This year's Fest promises to be a wonderful event, so mark your calendars and plan to attend and enjoy the special entertainment provided by our German visitors!

As you will note inside this newsletter, the Folklife Festival will soon be upon us, scheduled for June 7-10, 2001 on the grounds of The University of Texas' Institute of Texan Cultures in San Antonio. Ron Knippa is gearing up for another successful Wendish booth this year, complete with entertainment, displays, cold beer and plenty of noodles! I will be there to again try my hand at demonstrating Wendish Easter egg decorating, and I hope to see you there.

God's blessings to you all, and we hope to see you in San Antonio at the Folklife Festival and here in Serbin at the Wendish Fest!

Jan Knippa Slack
President



President, Jan Slack accepting a \$1,000 check from Karen Gottier and Buelah Dicus with the North-American Federation of German Folk Dance Groups, and instructors Sabine and Frank-Norbert Sieg

UPCOMING EVENTS

- May 13** Museum will be closed for Mother's Day
- May 20** General Membership Meeting at the Museum Complex at 2:00 p.m.
- May 27** Serbin Homecoming Picnic at the St. Paul Picnic grounds, Serbin, Texas
- May 28** Museum will be *closed* for Memorial Day
- June 7-10** Folklife Festival in San Antonio, Texas
- June 17** Museum will be closed for Father's Day
- June 25** Deadline for articles for June newsletter
- July 4** Museum will be closed for Independence Day
- August 19** General Membership Meeting at the Museum Complex at 2:00 p.m.

AAAAAAAAAAAAA

MAY MEETING PROGRAM

The quarterly meeting of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society will be held on Sunday, May 20, at 2:00 p.m. in the Kilian Building (the building to the right as you enter the Museum Complex).

One of the items of business which will be presented will be the proposal made by the executive board to adopt the following dues structure for 2002:

- \$ 7.50 Student Membership 50.00 Museum Sponsor
- 15.00 Single Membership 100.00 Museum Century
- 25.00 Couple Membership 250.00 Museum Silver
- 30.00 Museum Patron 1000.00 Museum Life (payable over 2 years)

Following a short business meeting, a video concerning the "Painted Churches" in our area, including St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Serbin, will be shown. We have had a number of groups come to our museum as a result of the tours organized highlighting the various Painted Churches and this will give everyone an opportunity to see some of the beautiful churches included in the tour.

TOUR REPORT
by
Evelyn N. Kasper, Coordinator

- February 16 International Folk Dance Workshop Registration and Tour
- February 21 A tour of 18 from Faith Lutheran Church of Sugarland
- March 1 A group of 22 came from Houston for a tour and luncheon
- March 10 First Presbyterian Church from San Antonio brought a group of 26 for a tour and luncheon
- March 13 Rev. Mueller from Dallas brought a group of 26 for a tour and luncheon
- March 28 35 students from A & M University came for a tour only
- March 31 A group of 40 from Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Austin came for a tour and luncheon. Mid afternoon a group of 45 from Houston came for a tour only
- April 10 A group of Seniors from Houston came for a tour only
- April 18 15 Prime Timers from First English Lutheran Church came for a tour only. 37 students and 7 teachers from Faith Lutheran Church in Plano came for a tour only
- April 24 A group of 28 Retired Teachers from Williamson County came to tour, buy noodles, and have coffee and coffee cake
- April 26 A group of 29 from Bastrop Community Senior Center came for a luncheon and tour

News from "The Western Front" – Eden, Texas

Georgie Bernstein Boyce is still "spreading the message" about our Wendish Heritage, and about the TWHS and Museum. On March 14th, Georgie was a guest on the KLST-TV's (San Angelo, Texas), noon News program. Her appearance was to publicize the Tom Green County Historical Society's March 17th meeting, where she was to present a program on 'The Wends of Texas'.

The television exposure allowed her to make mention of the Museum, and this year's Wendish Fest. She was also able to show some Wendish Easter eggs and other Wendish memorabilia, to the TV audience.

The Tom Green County Historical Society meeting was well attend and provided a very interested and attentive audience as well. The reaction to her program once again underlines the fact that many people, who possibly have genealogical connections to the Wends, are totally unaware of their heritage.

NOODLE REPORT

by Hattie Sschauschick, Chairperson

1300 pounds of noodles have been made since January. The ladies have been busy helping with tours but will start making noodles every week to have enough for the Serbin picnic in May and the Folklife Festival in June. I made a new conveyer belt for the noodle machine from material left from the original belt. Walter Gersch helped to adjust it and put it back onto the machine and it works fine.

FOLKFEST 2001

by Susan Unger

On Saturday, April 7th, I attended the 16th annual New Braunfels Folkfest. It was held on the grounds of the Museum of Texas Handmade Furniture and Conservation Plaza. It is labeled as a "celebration of pioneer traditions and the many cultures of the area." I was invited to demonstrate the folk art of decoration Wendish Easter Eggs.

From the time the gates opened at 10 am, until the closing at 6 p.m. there was a steady stream of interested observers at my booth.

Informational brochures about the Texas Wendish Heritage Society Museum, and Wends, were available to all who stopped by to watch.

About \$100 in egg decoration supplies and materials were sold.

A WALK-IN COFFEE

The Walk-In Coffee on Tuesday, February 13 was truly a success. It offered a wonderful opportunity for more people to learn about the Texas Wendish Heritage Society and raised needed funds for the benefit of the society. Donations are still coming in and we hope that we will reach last year's record amount.

Since the group from Germany arrived the day before the event, some of the hosts from St. Paul's, Serbin, brought their guests in to witness this unique way of raising funds—and they seemed to be impressed!

If you missed this one, plan to come next year; we hope to sponsor another Walk-In Coffee in February.



Rev. Siegfried Matzke, wife Helga, of Germany, host Jack Wiederhold, of Serbin, and Manfred Urban, of Germany enjoying the Walk-In Coffee

VISITORS

During the months of January, February, and March we have had visitors from all parts of Texas and the following: Arkansas, Wyoming, Wisconsin, Oklahoma, Illinois, Germany, Connecticut, Colorado, Washington, Ohio, Canada, Pennsylvania, Oregon, New Mexico, South Carolina, and Louisiana.

DOCENTS

Thank you to the following for acting as docents during the months of January, February and March: Lorine Domel, Mildred Kilian, J. B. Gersch, Jr., Eleanor Schulze, Janice Mitschke, Charles and Jan Slack, Laverne Gersch, Henry and Emily Zoch, Freddie Zoch, Richard and Irene Weaver, and Vivan Taylor.

MEMORIALS

In Memory of:	Donor	Amount
Edwin Teinert	Bluebonnet Electric Co-Op	
Alvin Bernstein	M/M Frank Taylor	
Alvin Bernstein	M/M Melvin Schulze	
Alvin Bernstein	M/M John Scheffel	
Alvin Bernstein	Martha Wetzel	
Alvin Bernstein	Margo Latimer	
Alvin Bernstein	Agnes Swenson & Family	
Alvin Bernstein	M/M Daniel Pietsch & Family	
Alvin Bernstein	M/M J. L. Jones	
Alvin Bernstein	Employees of the Texas District	
	Office of The Lutheran Church	
	Missouri Synod	
Alvin Bernstein	M/M Herb Schulz	\$25.00
Alvin Bernstein	Mrs. Valeria Volkmann	\$20.00
Alvin Bernstein	George Boerger	\$25.00
Hildegard Krause	George Boerger	\$25.00
Daphne D. Garrett	M/M Frank Taylor	
Daphne D. Garrett	M/M Fred Brooks	
Daphne D. Garrett	M/M Michail Unger	
Daphne D. Garrett	Dr. & Mrs. Joe Wilson	
Daphne D. Garrett	Mary'O T. Wilpitz	
Daphne D. Garrett	Miriam York	
Daphne D. Garrett	George Boerger	\$50.00
Daphne D. Garrett	Rev. & Mrs. Robert Boyce	\$30.00
James S. Critz	Houston Geological	
James S. Critz	Margaret L. Bayhi	
James S. Critz	Mrs. Jane M. Dye	
James S. Critz	Olive B. Craig	
James S. Critz	M/M Wally Montgomery	
James S. Critz	M/M Frederick Stow	
James S. Critz	M/M T. H. Riggs	
James S. Critz	Karen J. Longoria	
James S. Critz	M/M Otto Becker	\$10.00
James S. Critz	Terry & Patti Hungerford	\$100.00

57th Noak Family Reunion Held at Round Top March 18

The 57th annual Noak Family Reunion was held Sunday, March 18 at the Round Top Association Hall with 105 members and 3 guests of the Peter August and Johanna Wilhelmine Mitzschrling Noak (Noak) family in attendance.

Before the catered noon meal was served, Robert Leonhardt of Houston asked the blessing.

After the meal, Tim Lawrence of Houston called the business meeting to order. Diana Kallus of Victoria read the minutes and Lanette Williams of Carmine gave the treasurer's report from the previous year.

Five births were reported since the last reunion, along with one adoption. The youngest person in attendance was Macey Sadira Kovar, one-month old daughter of Matthew Kovar and Celia Noak of Schulenburg. The longest-living female present was Irene Noak, 83, of La Grange, and the longest-living male present was Nelson Noak, Sr., 83, of La Grange.

Four marriages were reported since the last reunion. Most recently married and in attendance was Greg & Cristy Noak of La Grange, with 8 months. The couple married longest was Nelson and Irene Noak of La Grange with 60 years.

Five deaths in the family were reported since the last reunion, including Herman Grief, Marie Grief, Delphine Bergman, Leroy Goehring, and Vernell Noak Jackson. A moment of silent prayer was offered for them and all members of the family who have previously died.

Traveling farthest to the reunion were Ron and Helen Greif of Tulsa, Oklahoma. Others attended from Bellville, Carmine, Houston, Wallis, Orchard, Pinehurst, Rosenberg, Burton, Brenham, Austin, Round Top, Pasadena, Taylor, Schulenburg, La Grange, Arlington, Missouri City, Bryan, Columbus, Victoria and Caldwell.

Members of the Paul and Hulda Noak family will assume duties of host family for the reunion next year. Diana Kallus and Lanette Williams were re-elected to serve as secretary and treasurer, respectively.

Dorothy Rothermel of Brenham spoke to the family concerning a "Descendants of Peter Noak" booklet that she prepared. She also requested email addresses of family members to make contacting them easier.

David Noak of La Grange read a narrative he prepared that has been added to a display at the Wendish Museum in Serbin regarding the wedding dress of Anna Greif, wife of Herman (Noak) Greif. All were encouraged to visit the Museum and see the display, and to also visit the cemetery where Peter Noak is buried.

Door prizes and game winners were announced, and the meeting adjourned with Clinton Marburger of Burton leading the Lord's Prayer.

IN SEARCH OF....."

For those interested in the Wukasch family and their many descendants, the Library and Archives has received a copy of the list of descendants of Mathias (Moz) Wukasch, born in 1798. The detailed list was generously provided by Arlene Riedinger, one of our faithful members, who lives in California. Included in the descendants' list are copies of church records she obtained from the Evangelische Kirchengemeinde in Gross Sarchen. Arlene has spent many years collecting information and creating a rather extensive data base of Wukasch relatives, and we are grateful to her for sharing her information. Thank you, Arlene!

WHAT IS THE "Marijanka"?

By Sandra Matthijetz

On the weekend of February 16,17,18, 2001, Karen Gottier and Beulah Dicus along with The North American Federation of Folk Dance honored our area with a once in a lifetime experience of an in-depth study of the folk dances of our Wendish forefathers. The "Marijanka," we learned, is a Wendish Folk Dance documented in all Lusatian areas.

Karen, whose home is in Tolland, Connecticut, traveled to Germany and studied not only the folk dances but also the customs and costumes that make our Slavic heritage so unique. There she met Sabine & Frank-Norbert Sieg and brought them with here to serve as our personal instructors. According to an article written by Karen for "The German Folk Dancer," Sabine made her state examination at the Sorbish High School, studied Cultural Sciences and Sorbistic at the University of Leipzig and presently serves ad department head of the Endowment for the Sorbish People in Cottbus. Together with her husband, Frank-Norbert, Sabine was instrumental in the formation of the Lower Sorbish Ensemble "Pseza" (Spinning Room) where she is an active singer and dancer. They were accompanied by talented accordionist, Ron Tomocik of Denver, Colorado playing our Wendish folk tunes.

Though we went home with legs & feet aching, those of us that personally participated in the workshop were treated with the unique experience of working with folk dance professionals as well as several international folk dancers from all over the U.S. including Virginia, Oklahoma, Colorado, Indiana, Maryland, Idaho, Washington, New York, Ohio, Connecticut and Texas. Barbara Hielscher, Eleanor Schulze, Sandra Matthijetz and Freddie Zoch participated from the Texas Wendish Heritage Society.

On Saturday evening all participants dressed in the costumes of their heritage and enjoyed a traditional Wendish meal. After the meal all participated in a Grand March to the Music of the Czech Melody Masters of Austin, Texas. During intermission several dance groups presented the dances of their heritage. Those performing were: "Der Volkstanzgruppe" from Houston, "Cesky folklorni soubor z Texasu" of Houston represented by Donna & Gunter Merkle who presented Bohemian folk dance, "Volkstanzgruppe T.E.V. Edelweis Club" from Denver, CO., and the "New Braunsfels German Folk dancers" which included Beulah Dicus and her husband, who helped coordinate things in Texas.

Karen & Beulah also arranged a beautiful display of Wendish costumes and other items of interest from the Lusatian area. A

giant "Danke" to both ladies for all the time and hard work spent to bring us this most interesting and informative workshop.

Coming up this August 4th & 5th there will be the 12th Deutscher Volkstanz Verband Texas Lehrgang und Tanzfest in Frydek, Texas hosted by "Die Rathkamp Deutscher Volkstanzgruppe" of Houston. For further information please contact Monroe & Betty Rathkamp at (713) 468-7666.



Sabine, Frank-Norbert Sieg & Karin Gottier



Beulah & Robert Dicus



Guenther & Donna Merkel



Grand March

WINEDALE SPRING ARTS AND CRAFTS FESTIVAL

by Jan Slack

The Texas Wendish Heritage Society participated again this year at the Winedale Spring Arts and Crafts Festival, held during March 24 and 25 on the grounds of the Winedale Historical Institute near Round Top. Participating in this event is another good opportunity to "get the word out" about our organization. There could not be a more lovely location for such an event. Artists and craftsmen from all over Texas share their talent, and attendees have the opportunity to purchase a wide variety of beautiful items. And of course, I never turn down a good opportunity to spend my husband's hard-earned money! A trusty band of volunteers set up the Wendish booth and spent two days selling cooked and dried noodles to an enthusiastic crowd of people. Many thanks to Walter and Laverne Gersch for setting up the booth, helping to transport all the equipment necessary for cooking and selling noodles, and for helping during both days. I also want to thank J.B. Gersch, Vivian Taylor, Renata Fichte, Irene Boriack, Ron Knippa and my dear husband Charlie for being there to cook noodles, wash dirty dishes, and answer all the questions like "What is a Wend?" and "Why are Wendish noodles so special?"



Food booth, with new awning, at Winedale Festival

WENDISH FEST SILENT AUCTION

Remember the upcoming WENDISH FEST SILENT AUCTION between now and September 23! The handcrafted items seemed to attract the most attention last year, but that does not mean that those are the only items that created an interest. We will be happy to put a bid sheet on whatever you would like to donate. For instance, if your church, civic organization, club or family reunion has published a cook book, history book, or the like, a copy of it would be most appreciated. If distance prevents you from sending your desired donation, we will be happy to purchase your selected item and put your name on the donor card; if you are not sure what you want to give but would like to give something, we have someone who will be happy to work with you.

We look forward to seeing you on September 23.

TEXAS WENDISH HERITAGE SOCIETY
General Membership Meeting - February 18, 2001

President Jan Slack called the meeting to order at 2:15p.m. in the Kilian Building of the Museum Complex at Serbin, Texas, on Sunday, February 18, 2001. Present were _____ members and 2 visitors.

Beulah Dicus & Karin Gottier of the North-American Federation of German Folk Dance Groups were introduced and presented the Texas Wendish Museum with a check for \$1,000 from the Folkdance workshop just held at the American Legion Hall in Giddings. Karin then also introduced Sabine and Frank-Norbet Sieg from Cottbus who were the Sorbish dance instructors and thanked the Museum for hosting the event.

Pastor Matzke then brought greetings to all from the church at Klitten and said many of the people of Klitten admire the people of Texas for keeping the traditions of our ancestors alive. He wished God's blessings on our work and many friendships and reminded everyone that before the Wall came down his visit would not have been possible. He says he plans to share his many experiences in Texas with his friends when he returns to Klitten.

Pastor Elmer Hohle then lead the devotion by singing "Oh Jesus King of Glory" in Wendish. He reminded us in this Epiphany season we are to remember God came to our rescue and fulfilled his promise, and we need to commit our lives in thankfulness and gratitude to Him. He closed the devotion by saying the Lord's Prayer in English, German and Wendish.

Pastor Hohle then presented the Museum and Dr. David Zersen, our guest speaker for the day, with wood block prints that he had made titled "And Mary pondered these things."

The minutes of the November 19, 2000 meeting were approved as presented in the January, 2001 newsletter.

A financial report was then given by bookkeeper, George Boerger.

Hattie Schautschick stated that the ladies had made 500 lbs. of noodles for the year 2001.

Evelyn Kasper mentioned that tours are beginning to be set up for 2001 and a group of 75 students will be visiting from A & M shortly.

Georgie Boyce reported on the Folkdance Workshop that had just concluded earlier today telling how Karin Gottier had traveled to Germany and researched not only the dances but the costumes and customs as well. Demonstrations of egg decorating, salt dough birds and butter lambs were given for our folk dance guests who came from all over the U.S.

Eunice Dunk reported that the Walk-In Coffee took in a little over \$800.00 and how much we appreciated all the ladies who contributed time and the delicious sweets that helped to again make this a success.

Jan then reminded everyone that there were membership cards available if you have not renewed for 2001 or knew of anyone wanting to become a member.

The meeting was adjourned and refreshments were served.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Matthijetz
Sandra Matthijetz
Secretary

!! IT'S FOLKLIFE FESTIVAL TIME !!

To Quote the Sainted Rev. John Socha, TWHS Newsletter Vol. I, No. 3, April-June 1980, "At Present there is no other single activity that brings as much publicity, prestige, recognition, and renown to the Texas Wendish Heritage Society as the Folklife Festival in San Antonio." "Each year the fame of the Wends of Texas spreads more and more."

Although things are much different twenty-one years later, our participation in San Antonio is still a great way to spread our story. Please contact me if you want to help (cook, serve, sing, dance, entertain). It will be a great time.

June 7th – 10th
Institute of Texas Cultures
San Antonio, TX

Ron Knippa
2662 Pebble Bow
San Antonio, TX 78232
210-496-3105 –
Audix (24/7) 1-800-756-3344 Ext. 8306



p.s. Craft items are in short supply. Children's bonnets, potholders, aprons, embroidery pillowcases, book makers can all be used.

Eunice Dunk reported that the Walk-In Coffee took in a little over \$800.00 and how much we appreciated all the ladies who contributed time and the delicious sweets that helped to again make this a success.

Jan then reminded everyone that there were membership cards available if you have not renewed for 2001 or knew of anyone wanting to become a member.

The meeting was adjourned and refreshments were served.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Marthijetz
Sandra Marthijetz
Secretary

!! IT'S FOLKLIFE FESTIVAL TIME !!

To Quote the Sainted Rev. John Socha, TWHS Newsletter Vol. I, No. 3, April-June 1980, "At Present there is no other single activity that brings as much publicity, prestige, recognition, and renown to the Texas Wendish Heritage Society as the Folklife Festival in San Antonio." "Each year the fame of the Wends of Texas spreads more and more."

Although things are much different twenty-one years later, our participation in San Antonio is still a great way to spread our story. Please contact me if you want to help (cook, serve, sing, dance, entertain). It will be a great time.

June 7th - 10th
Institute of Texas Cultures
San Antonio, TX

Ron Knippa
2662 Pebble Bow
San Antonio, TX 78232
210-496-3105 -
Audix (24/7) 1-800-756-3344 Ext. 8306



p.s. Craft items are in short supply. Children's bonnets, potholders, aprons, embroidery pillowcases, book makers can all be used.