Johann Kilian, Pastor

We are pleased to announce the publication of Dr. George Nielsen’s latest book entitled,  
\textit{Johann Kilian, Pastor}. The much-anticipated work is a study of the life of Johann Kilian,  
the religious leader of the Texas Wends.

Reverend Kilian was a university graduate and the most educated member of the group of  
Wends who immigrated to Texas on the ship \textit{Ben Nevis} in 1854. Dr. Nielsen offers a  
very interesting story of Pastor Kilian’s life leading up to his acceptance of the call from  
the Wends, and of his life in Texas following their arrival in December 1854. The story  
provides us with a fascinating glimpse of what life was like for our Wendish ancestors as  
the group established their lives in a new country and gives us a better understanding of  
the joys and difficulties experienced by Rev. Kilian as he served his congregation in their  
new country.

Copies of \textit{Johann Kilian, Pastor}, as well as Dr. Nielsen’s first book on the Wends  
entitled, \textit{In Search of a Home: Nineteenth-Century Wendish Immigration}, are available  
through the Museum gift shop. \textit{Johann Kilian, Pastor} is available in both soft and hard  
cover (see order form included in this newsletter).

We hope you will check out the many interesting and informative items available through  
our gift shop as you plan your Christmas gift-giving list!
Within the Fold...

In Memoriam
Correction to the notice included in the July newsletter: Waldemar John (Wally) Hobratsch, born January 20, 1919 at The Grove, Texas, passed away April 16, 2003 in Dallas.

President’s Message
Eunice Urban Dunk
In this my final President’s message, I extend my sincere thanks to the Executive Board for all of their hard work during the past two years—you have been a joy to work with! The Board joins me in expressing sincere thanks to everyone who helped us to promote our organization; we have had so many generous donations of time and money and without your commitments the Society’s accomplishments could not have happened. Thank you for your help with the Wendish Fests, the Walk-In Coffees, the Folk Life Festivals, various other fund raising events and tours, as well as with the day-to-day operations of the museum. You gave unselfishly when we asked for assistance (including the most recent gift of the dudlesack’s mannequin and display case) and we are grateful. Please remember the Texas Wendish Heritage Society and Museum as the Lord blesses you with time and talents in the future.

Wendish Fest is over, or is it? Around the museum we “walk and talk” Wendish Fest all year long, but particularly for next year since 2004 will be a very special celebration marking the 150th anniversary of the large 1854 Wendish immigration. If you want a schedule of the special events being planned by the congregation of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church to observe this milestone, contact the church office at 979/366-9650 or visit their website at www.stpaulserbin.org. Please plan to attend our November membership meeting, which will include the singing of German Christmas carols followed by fellowship and refreshments. Even if you can’t sing German, you can hum along!

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your president and may you and yours have a Happy Holiday Season and a Blessed New Year.

Eunice Urban Dunk

Memorials
From Herb A. Schulz, Life Membership in memory of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Herman T. (Emma Gloyna) Schulz and his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Ernst (Anne Christiane Hentschel) Gloyna and Mr. and Mrs. Christian (Magdalena Christine Schoppa) Schulz.
UPCOMING EVENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>November 6</td>
<td>Lee County German Society, Community Room, First National Bank, Giddings, 7:00 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 16</td>
<td>Annual Membership Christmas Party with election of officers, 2:00 p.m., Museum complex</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 27</td>
<td>Museum CLOSED for Thanksgiving</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 8</td>
<td>Lee County German Society’s annual Christmas Party, Holy Cross Community Hall, Warda, 4:00 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 25</td>
<td>Museum CLOSED for Christmas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1</td>
<td>Museum CLOSED for New Year’s Day</td>
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Silent Auction Another Success!
Thanks to everyone who supported the Silent Auction again this year. We had a tremendous crowd of people who looked at the items, but it seems like the serious bidding did not start until after lunch. However, we still raised nearly $2,000, which will be a big help in funding museum operations.


We sincerely appreciate everyone who helped make this part of Wendish Fest a success. We plan to have a silent auction again next year and hope that everyone will be on the lookout for unique items to donate to the cause.

Wendish Fest Contest Winners
Congratulations to the following who were winners in various contests during Wendish Fest on Sunday, September 28.

Washer Pitching: 1st Place Glenn Albrecht and Eric Albee. 2nd Place Shea Kasper and Chris Kovar. 3rd Place Jeff Roberson and Chris Becker.
Coffee Cake Bake-Off: Streusel, 1st Place Irene Boriack, 2nd Place Elsie Mertink, 3rd Place Gladys Saegert. Kaese, 1st Place Gladys Saegert, 2nd Place Elsie Mertink, 3rd Place Irene Boriack. Special, 1st Place Karen Roberts, 2nd Place Gladys Saegert, 3rd Place Evelyn Buchhom.

Cross Cut Saw Contest: Women’s, 1st Place Julie Schatte and Lisa Teinert, 2nd Place Christine M. Pogue and Jennifer Pogue, 3rd Place Carolyn Bamsch and Carolyn Jurk. Men’s, 1st Place Josh Tonn and Caleb Tonn, 2nd Place Ralph Bamsch and Allen Jurk, 3rd Place Harvey Hobratschk and Wayne Chapman. Mixed, 1st Place Ralph and Carolyn Bamsch, 2nd Place Lloyd Aldt and Samantha Reynolds, 3rd Place Allen and Carolyn Jurk.

Children’s Coloring Contest: Pre-Kindergarten, 1st Place Malyn Parker, 2nd Place Jordan Mitschke, 3rd Place Jacob Birnbaum. First and Second Grades, 1st Place Jaclyn Carothers, 2nd Place Brooke Carothers, 3rd Place Maggie Erickson. Third and Fourth Grades, 1st Place Corie Schimank, 2nd Place Alyssa Wilkins, 3rd Place Ashley Becker.

Report from the Tours Committee
Evelyn Kasper, Chairperson
The museum hosted tours on August 20, October 7, October 11, October 21, and one is scheduled for November 14. Thank you to volunteers who continue to help with these important events!

Report from the Noodle Committee
Hattie Schautschick, Chairperson
Thus far for 2003, the Noodle Ladies have made 3,583 pounds of noodles. That means 1,055 pounds of noodles were made since the last newsletter! A total of 130 pounds of cooked noodles were served at Wendish Fest and 405 pounds of dried noodles were sold. Onward and upward!

Visitors
The Museum hosted 348 visitors during July, August and September from Tennessee, Idaho, California, New York, Missouri, Louisiana, Germany, and cities and towns across Texas.

Museum Docents
Thank you to the following volunteers for serving as museum docents during July, August and September:

Lee County German Society News
Ruby Koslan
On Thursday, October 2, the Lee County German Society met at the First National Bank Community Room with twenty-seven members and three guests present. Renata Hughes opened the business meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a short devotion in German.
Jack Wiederhold presented a very interesting program, showing slides of the early Wends in Serbin and also telling us of the upcoming celebration of the 150th anniversary of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Serbin.

The table prayer was recited in German, after which refreshments were served.
Our next meeting will be on Thursday, November 6, beginning at 7:00 PM (please note the time change). Mr. Eric Dawson will present the program. His topic will be “Giddings Noon Lions Club celebrating 75 years of service to the community.” Guests and visitors are always welcome.
Wendish Immigration Monument

As part of the 150th Anniversary Celebration of the Wendish immigration of 1854, St. Paul Lutheran Church of Serbin plans to dedicate a monument to those who died during the voyage to Texas. It is planned to dedicate the monument in November 2004, and donations are being received to help with the cost. If you would like to help preserve the memory of those who died en route to Texas, please send your contribution to St. Paul Lutheran Church, 1572 CR 211, Giddings, Texas 78942. Please mark your gift for the "Monument Fund." Contributions given as memorials will be acknowledged in St. Paul’s weekly church bulletin.

Additional Sketches of the 1853 Immigrants

Dr. George Nielsen, Special Features Editor

Even though the 1853 group of Prussian Wends joined to cross the Atlantic, they did not create their own little community in Texas. Some remained in the New Ulm area, others joined the Serbin settlement, while others soon moved to other communities. Nevertheless, a feeling of kinship remained for a time and members of the group maintained some ties, such as serving as attendants at baptisms and marriages.

Matthes Matthiez (b. 11 April 1821 at Kaschel) was listed first on Kilian’s list and most likely served as a leader or spokesman. He may have had a higher status in the community by virtue of the fact that his father owned one-half of a farm, which carried more prestige than positions such as cottager and laborer. Matthes also knew life outside the village, having served in the military for two years and living in Dresden for two years. He died on December 4, 1880 at Serbin.

His wife, Dorothea Rehle (b. 10 July 1822 at Kaschel) died at Serbin on May 4, 1900.

The birthplaces of the children illustrate the migration of the family. Three of the eight children were born in Kaschel: Andreas (b. 7 September 1847), Hanna (b. 15 August 1849) and Maria (b. 28 August 1851). Agnes (b. 9 October 1853) was born on board the ship and was baptized by George Schelnick. The remainder were born in Texas: Johann (b. 1 March 1856) at New Ulm, Carl August (b. 30 April 1858) at New Ulm, Theresia (b. 19 June 1860) at Willowbranch [Willy Branch], and Ernst (b. 25 May 1863) at Willowbranch.

The second generation also illustrates a typical residential pattern of the segment of the Wendish immigrants who stayed in the general Serbin area and married Wends: Andreas married Magdalena Zwarh; Hanna married Johann Mitschke; Maria married Ernst Mitschke; Agnes married Johann Fritsche; Johann married Maria Schellnik; Carl August married Maria Magdalena Mertinki; Theresia married Carl August Nowak; and Ernst married Agnes Deo.

Other travelers with the family were Maria Matthiez (an unmarried sister), and Johann Schmidt (age 16).

Johann Matthiez (b. 9 December 1816) was the older brother of Matthes. He never married and died at Serbin on 10 March 1880. The 1870 census indicates his real estate worth $250 and personal property of $100. He lived with his uncle, George Schmidt.

George Schelnik (b. at Dürbach on 27 January 1824) a farmer, joined the Serbin settlement in 1857. He died on 29 June 1867 at Serbin.

His wife, Maria Hollass (b. in 1820 at Oelsa) died on 20 September 1889 at Lincoln. The widow is listed in the 1870 Bastrop County Census as possessing $800 in real estate and $200 in personal property.

Children of George and Maria Schelnik were Johann Carl (b. 1854), who married Maria Stephan and Maria (b. 3 January 1858), who married Johann Matthiez (1856).

Others traveling with the family were Hanna Hollass (Maria’s mother), Hanna Hollas (Maria’s sister), and Christoph Hollas.

Johann Kasper (b. 1807 at Kolpen) died at New Ulm in October 1855, one month after the death of Hans Caspar and two years after he migrated.
His wife Hannan Schramm (b. 2 November 1819) married twice-widowed Johann Pampel, living in Industry, in 1858. They later moved to Serbin where Pampel died in 1867. The widow Hanna and four children were in the 1870 Bastrop County Census listed as Anna Pampel with $300 in real estate and $200 in personal property. She is also in the 1880 census living with Traugott and Anna. She died on 16 August 1888.

Children of Johann and Hanna Kasper were Johann (b. 1845), who died while fighting in the Civil War in 1863; Magdalena (b. at Kolpen), who married Heinrich Becker; Hanna (b. 25 June 1849; 5th child, 2nd daughter); Johann Traugott (b. 10 June 1852), who married Magdalena Fritsche in 1879; and Maria (b. 24 February 1855).

Hans Caspar was the first head of a Wendish household to die in Texas. He died on 26 September 1855, just two years after he migrated. On 27 January 1856, Michael Hering from Sandy Creek married Johanne (n. Christiane), the widow of Hans Caspar, who was living at the Lower Pinoak Settlement (Serbin).

August Polnick [Polnik] (b. 12 March 1823 at Förstgen) was a mason and farmer. The family lived on Rabbs Creek before the Ben Nevis arrived, and when the Kilians could not find housing in the New Ulm area, they went on to live with the Polnicks. Later, the Polnick family temporarily joined the Wends at the Lower Pinoak Settlement (Serbin) and then moved to Fedor where August died in 1876.

His wife Maria n Wagner (b. 3 February 1823 at Weigersdorf) died in 1889 at The Grove.

The children of this family were the most scattered of the 1853 families. Two children, Johann and August, died on the voyage. Andreas (b. 16 October 1849 at Weigersdorf) (see photograph) survived the voyage. Andreas married Johanna Ida Angermann and, evidently for reasons of health, lived in Scurry County, Bosque County and then finally at Fordyce, AK where he died. Carl August was born on 23 December 1854 while the Polnicks lived on Rabbs Creek. He married Henrietta Ida Symmank and lived at Aleman in Hamilton County. Anna

Magdalena (b. 25 November 1856 at Low Pinoak Settlement) has not been further identified. Maria Ernestine (b. 25 September 1859), married Heinrich Koslan and lived at Manheim until her death in 1881.

Anna Wagner (b.13 April 1820 at Weigersdorf), Maria Polnick’s sister, who was not married, also traveled with the family.

Andreas (Andrew) Polnick and Johanna Caroline Ida Angermann Polnick

Johann Domaschk (Thomaschke)-Janak (b. 20 November 1819 probably at Reichwalde) died at Serbin on 12 October 1857, four years after his migration.

His wife was Hanna n. Sarodnik (b. 30 April 1826 at Wunschka). After the death of her husband, Hanna married Johann Hohle and gave birth to three more children. She died at Serbin on 12 May 1870.

Two children, Christoph (b. 10 September 1848) and Hanna (b. 5 November 1850) were born in Europe, and two children Johann (b. 4 October 1854) and Maria (b. 25 April 1857) were born in Texas. Children from Hanna’s second marriage were Hanna Theresia (b. 2 August 1859), Johann Ernst (b. 17 September 1861,) and Carl August (b. 9 March 1866).
The children of this family illustrate the scattering of Wends to secondary Wendish settlements where they married Wends. Christoph was a blacksmith in Giddings, Hanna married Andreas Mierschin and moved to Thorndale, Johann married Maria Theresia Schellnik and moved to Warda, and Maria married Adolph Pampel and moved to Loebau. Hanna Hohle married Johann Schellnick and died at Mannheim, Johann Hohle died at Loebau, and Carl August Hohle died at The Grove.

Thanks Bettie Polnack Fry and Dr. Joe Wilson for assistance. Photo courtesy of Bettie Polnack Fry.

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Membership Report

George Boerger, Membership Chairperson

For the second quarter in a row, we have a new life member. Herb Schulz of Torrance, California upgraded his membership in August. Herb has been a member since 1987. We now have 10 life members. Thank you Herb!

The final count for 2003 is 657 members, a 17% increase over last year! This large increase was accomplished by:

- Adding 110 first-time members, including 22 spouses of current members
- Regaining 29 former members
- Losing only 43 members from 2002, which is half the normal attrition rate. A record 518 people renewed. Before 2002, our all time record was 509.

The membership goal for 2004 is 750! Wow! Could this number be correct? Yes, and it can be proven mathematically. Remember, the 1854 migration occurred 150 years ago. If the TWHS had started out with 5 members in '55 (1855) when they founded Serbin and grew by just 5 members each year, we would have 750 members in 2004. To meet the goal, we will need 150 first-time members in the 150th year! Only 3 times have we exceeded 100 first-time members (124 in 1979, 102 in 1981 and 110 in 2003). In each of the following newsletters, you will receive an update as to how we are tracking towards this goal.

In the last two years, many of our members have generously answered my pleas for help and given gift memberships, supplied people’s names and addresses to send invitations to, and recruited friends and family. A few may be able to do even more, but we really need others to jump in. It is a great way to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the largest Wendish migration to Texas.

In the very near future, you will receive a 2004 renewal notice (unless you have already paid). Please complete the card and mail in your check. The membership dues not only pay for the newsletter, but also pay part of the cost of operating the museum. When you join at a higher level, the extra money is added to the endowment and the interest from the endowment also pays for part of the cost of operating the museum. Without all of your generous contributions of time, talent, and money, the TWHS could not exist!

---

**October 2003 Sponsor Members**

- Gail Lerche
- Larry Lerche
- Lottie Randall
  
  Austin, TX
  Austin, TX
  Richardson, TX

**October 2003 Life Members**

- Herb Schulz
  Torrance, CA

**October 2003 Century Members**

- Kayron Dube
  Houston, TX

**October 2003 Student Members**

- Oscar Beisert, Jr.
- Melanie Dube
  Austin, TX
  McDade, TX
**October 2003 First-Time Members**

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>City/Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>Alice Dietrich</td>
<td>Friendswood, TX</td>
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<td>Kayron Dube</td>
<td>Houston, TX</td>
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<td>Melanie Dube</td>
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<td>Ann Wukasch Gamel</td>
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<td>Ethel Kriegel Hikel</td>
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<td>Vernelle Kremcke</td>
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<td>R.D. Latimer</td>
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<td>Gail Lerche</td>
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<td>Larry Lerche</td>
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<td>Marguerite Loftin</td>
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<td>Joey Miertschin</td>
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<td>John E. Miertschin</td>
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<td>Betty Mitschke</td>
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<td>Benjamin Wagner</td>
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<td>Helen Wagner</td>
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**October 2003 Patron Members**

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<tr>
<td>Ann Wukasch Gamel</td>
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<td>Roy Peters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barry Wukasch</td>
<td>Cave Creek, AZ</td>
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<td>Don C. Wukasch</td>
<td>Houston, TX</td>
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<td>Walter Charles Wukasch II</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. James Zwernemann</td>
<td>East Haddam, CN</td>
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**Financial Report**

**George Boerger**

The Wendish Fest is our biggest event of the year and its success is critical to the organization in many ways, including financially. Approximately 34% of our annual gross revenue came from the Wendish Fest this year. Because we use both tickets and cash in some booths, it is difficult to determine exactly how much money each booth took in, but I have made some estimated allocations. So in general terms, here is how we did:

**Revenue:**

- **Meal tickets** $9,600
- **Beer** $2,400
- **Tea, Desserts & Snacks** $1,700
- **Soda & Water** $1,300
- **Crosscut saw** $200
- **Miscellaneous** $100
- **Silent Auction** $1,700
- **Donations** $1,000

**Picnic Grounds total** $18,000

**Museum Complex:**

- **Craft Items** $1,421
- **Noodle Sales** $1,337
- **Book Sales** $997
- **Admissions** $779
- **CD Sales** $324
- **Memberships** $305

**Museum Complex total** $5,163

**Grand total revenue** $23,163

**Estimated Costs:**

- **Picnic Grounds** $11,800
- **Museum Complex** $2,000

**Total expenses** $13,800

**Estimated Profit** $9,363

As you can see, all the hard work preparing for Wendish Fest results in a fun and profitable day! This profit is used to help cover the over $40,000 needed to operate the museum and the organization.
Minutes of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society General Membership Meeting
August 17, 2003

The quarterly membership meeting of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society was called to order at 2:00 p.m. at the Lehm Berg Winery on Sunday, August 17, 2003 by Eunice Dunk, President. Thirty-five members and guests were present.

Reverend Michael Buchhorn provided the opening devotion.

The minutes of the May 2003 membership meeting were approved as presented in the July 2003 newsletter.

George Boerger reported that membership is now at 657, an increase of 96 members from 2002. We are now gearing up for 2004 and a goal of 700 members.

Hattie Schautschick reported that the noodle committee will meet after the membership meeting to pack about 100 pounds of noodles, and help is needed.

Evelyn Kasper reported that the museum hosted two luncheon tours during July and August.

Evelyn Kasper reported that plans for Wendish Fest are in progress. We expect to host 40 visitors from Germany. The cooks plan to prepare enough place lunches to feed 1,500. Popcorn will be a new item sold at the snack booth.

Eunice Dunk reported that the Folklife Festival was held in San Antonio in early June and the Wendish booth was awarded 3rd Place.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned. Carl Droemer of Lehm Berg Winery provided the program on the history of the winery, followed by a tour and wine tasting.

Respectfully submitted,
Jan Slack, Secretary

In Search of...

Dee Osborn is seeking information on her Witte ancestors. She is specifically tracing the line of John August Witte, born 1878 in Bardenfeltz, Oldenberg, Germany, who settled in Lee County around 1892. He married Lena Ludwig (b. June 30, 1873) in 1905 in Lee County. They moved to Nueces County where their children Alma, Fred August, Selma, Klara, Ella Louise, Walter, Henry, and Ida Frieda were born. She would like information on the parents and grandparents of John August Witte and Lena Ludwig Witte. If you have information, please send it to Dee at 2361 Willow Loop, Florence, Oregon 97439 or by email to rdosborn@oregonfast.net

Mary Gromatzky is seeking information on the Wendt and Woik families. If you can help her, please contact her by email at marygeee@juno.com

Frank Wissel is seeking information on his great-grandparents. His great-grandfather’s name was Matthes Mattiza who was married in Serbin on February 3, 1889 but he does not know the name of his great-grandmother. If you can provide any information, please contact him at 6881 Retherford Drive, Huntington Beach, California 92647 or by email at wisselfm@prodigy.net.
The Lone Star Experience

Sandra Matthijetz

The Texas Wendish Heritage Society recently participated in the 9th Conference of the Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International held at the Omni Hotel Westside in Houston from October 16–18, 2003. Barbara Hielscher, Sandra and Raymond Matthijetz and Mary Watts worked the booth for the three-day event introducing people to our society and museum as well as selling books, noodles and decorated eggs. Income for the museum from booth sales totaled around $700.

Approximately 300 registrants attended from not only Texas, but also from New Mexico, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Iowa, Oregon, Wisconsin, Florida, California, Canada and Europe. Most who attended had never heard of the Wends and were eager to learn about our unique Slavic heritage, our society and museum. We also received a personal invitation from the president of CGSI to participate in future conferences.

When the event was over, we returned home tired but proud to know that information shared about the Texas Wendish Heritage Society and Museum was now traveling across the country by car and plane. We had to chuckle at the thought of those bags of noodles waddling along the conveyors toward the x-ray machines at Bush and Hobby airports.
Scenes from Wendish Fest 2003 (photos courtesy of Georgie Boyce)

Coffee Cake Bake Off judges Allen and Alice Birnbaum, James and Joyce Arndt with Diane Wassenich, contest moderator

Kornelia Thor and Joachim Koch from Finsterwald, Germany
Male dancers with the Trachtentanzgruppe Zeissig

Presentation of gifts to TWHS
Presentation of dudelsack player’s costume for the TWHS Museum

Giddings Mayor James Arndt with Wolfgang Finger (Mayor of Zeissig), Horst-Dieter Brahmig (Mayor of Hoyerswerda), Eunice Dunk and Rev. Bob Boyce
We wish you a Blessed Holiday Season and a Happy New Year!

Texas Wendish Heritage Society
Executive Director.........................................................Barbara Hielscher
Officers.................................................................Eunice Dunk, President
Sandra Matthijetz, Vice President
Jan Slack, Secretary
Laverne Gersch, Treasurer

Newsletter Editor-in-Chief..............................................Jan Slack
Please send Newsletter submissions to:
Newsletter Editor, 1011 CR 212, Giddings, Texas 78942-5940
Email wendish@bluebon.net or Fax (979) 366-2805

Texas Wendish Heritage Society and Museum
1011 CR 212
GIDDINGS, TEXAS 78942-5940

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED