
TEXAS WENDISH HERITAGE SOCIETY

AND MUSEUM

Newsletter

Volume XVIII, Number 1

January 2005

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Memorial to the Wendish emigrants who died during the voyage to Texas on the *Ben Nevis*
Located on the grounds of the St. Paul Lutheran Church Cemetery, Serbin, Texas
Dedicated by St. Paul Lutheran Church as part of their observance of the
150th Anniversary of the 1854 voyage

Photo courtesy of Charles Slack

Within the Fold...

In Memoriam

Luise Green of Warda, Texas, passed away January 14, 2005. Luise was a TWHS member since 1997.

Henry Zoch, Sr. of Giddings, Texas, passed away January 10, 2005. Henry was a TWHS member since 1980.

James U. Swayze of Utopia, Texas, passed away June 15, 2004. James was a TWHS member since 1982.

President's Message

Greetings to one and all and my very best wishes for a healthy, happy and prosperous new year. It's that time of year when many of us identify plans, goals and objectives for the year. This is likewise true of our Wendish Heritage Society. Your officers and Directors began the process of identifying various projects in the January Board meeting for the upcoming year.

We are blessed as a group to be able to tackle improvement projects this year because of a positive year in 2004. The generous support and active involvement of the TWHS membership throughout the past year resulted in the resources necessary to target some much needed projects such as roof repair and upgrades to our museum archive capability. To God be the glory.

There is a work day in the planning stages to spruce up and clean up the grounds and the landscaping in preparation for the upcoming spring season. This will be scheduled in the next few weeks. I want to invite all those who would like to be involved to come and join in the fun. Check with Barbara in the office for date and time.

Finally, in closing this message I would like to express admiration and thanks to those who organized and conducted what I believe to be an awesome and inspiring wreath laying ceremony in Galveston on December 16th. This of course

commemorated the 150th anniversary of the arrival of many of our ancestors on the *Ben Nevis* near the actual location where the ship docked. A special thanks to Mr. Ron Lammert of San Antonio who conceived the idea and to Pastor Walter Dube of La Marque who worked with Ron to put together an inspiring program. This event was certainly all about supporting the goals of our Texas Wendish Heritage Society, which are to preserve our heritage and the history of our forefathers.

God's richest blessings to each and every one,
Steve Hooper

Quarterly Membership Meeting

Sunday, February 20, 2005, 2:00 PM

The next quarterly membership meeting of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society is scheduled for Sunday, February 20, 2005 at the Museum complex. The business meeting will begin at 2:00 p.m.

The program, following the business meeting, will be presented by Dr. Debra Allen, a professor of history at Concordia University at Austin. Dr. Allen received a Fulbright scholarship to teach at the American Studies Center of the University of Warsaw during the Fall/Winter semester in 2003-04. She taught two courses on U.S.-Polish relations in the 20th Century and a course on U.S. involvement in World War II. She will give a presentation on her experiences in Poland as well as her research into U.S. involvement at the Potsdam Conference in establishing Poland's western border (with eastern Germany) along the Oder and Neisse Rivers in 1945. In addition to the border adjustment, this Conference also allowed for the "orderly and humane" transfer of the German inhabitants from the area.

Questions? Contact the Museum at (979) 366-2441.

We look forward to seeing you on February 20!

Walk-In Coffee, February 8, 2005

The annual Walk-In Coffee to benefit the Texas Wendish Heritage Society and Museum will be held on Tuesday, February 8, from 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall of the First Presbyterian Church of Giddings located across Grimes Street from the Schubert-Fletcher Museum and northeast of the recently rededicated Lee County Courthouse.

Committee members will prepare an assortment of sandwiches, and donations of baked goods (coffee cakes, cheese cakes, pies, cakes, cookies, and the like) will be greatly appreciated. Free will donations will assist in the operation of the museum.

Please call (979) 366-2441 if you are able to assist with this worthwhile project or if you have any questions. Above all, please plan to stop in for a snack or the noon meal and support our Museum.

Bus Trip to June 2005 Folklife Festival

The chartered bus excursion to the Folklife Festival in San Antonio last June was quite successful, and we are making preliminary plans for a trip to the Festival this year. Dates for this year's event, held on the grounds of UT's Institute of Texan Cultures, are June 9–12. The bus trip will be Saturday, June 11. We will depart around 8:00 a.m. and will stop at the SAS Shoe Factory Outlet for a bit of shopping on our way to San Antonio. Additional information and a registration form will be included in the April 2005 newsletter. For more information, contact the museum at (979) 366-2441 or by email at wendish@bluebon.net.

Memorials

From Freddie E. Zoch, in memory of Mr. E.A. Lehmann

From Herb Schulz, in memory of the Rev. Alfred L.T. Schuetz of Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Aurora, Colorado.

From Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Zoch, in memory of Willie Teinert.

From Mr. and Mrs. George Dunk, in memory of Esther Pampell.

From Rev. and Mrs. Robert E. Boyce, in memory of John Scheffel.

From Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Schulz, in honor of Alfred and Junell Schulz's 50th Anniversary.

Report from the Noodle Committee

Hattie Schautschick, Chairperson

Another year has passed and the noodle-making continues! I would like to thank everyone who helped with the workload while my husband was under the weather. We cooked 178 pounds of noodles for Wendish Fest last September and sold close to 400 pounds of dried noodles during the event. For the year 2004, we made a total of 5,115 pounds of noodles, which represents an increase of 448 pounds over 2003 and 1,208 pounds over 2002! Thus far for 2005, we have made 177 pounds, so we start the New Year off again making noodles!

Visitors

During the months of October, November, and December 2004 the museum hosted visitors from all parts of Texas, the states of Illinois, Florida, North Carolina, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, California, Maine and Colorado, and from Germany, Australia and Mexico City.

Thank You Museum Docents!

During the months of October, November, and December 2004, the following served as docents at the museum: Freddie Zoch, J.B. Gersch, Jr., Sandra Matthijetz, George Boerger, Mildred Kilian, Ruby Koslan, Carolyn Bohot, Vivian Taylor, Evelyn Kasper, Margo Latimer, Steve Hooper, Jan Slack, Hattie Schautschick, Linda Jolly and Barbara Hielscher.

Two Wendish Entries Win Concordia Historical Institute Awards

George Boerger

Concordia Historical Institute presented Awards of Commendation to Dr. George Nielsen for his biography *Johann Kilian, Pastor* in the Major Publication category and to Tim Ristow and George Boerger for their work on the CD *From Wendish to German to English, A Journey into Wendish Culture, History, and Language* in the Non-Print Media category. There were a number of winners in several different categories including Congregational Histories, Major Publications, Journal Articles, and Non-Print Media. The awards are given annually to those who render significant service to the mission of preserving our American Lutheran history and heritage. The awards ceremony for 2003 projects was November 11, 2004 in St. Louis. George Boerger attended as did Florence Christiansen, George Nielsen's sister, who accepted for Dr. Nielsen. For more information on Concordia Historical Institute, visit their website at chi.lcms.org.

Lee County German Society News

Ruby Koslan

The Lee County Chapter of the Texas German Society met on Thursday, January 6, at the First National Bank Community Room. Mrs. Irene Zingelmann presided at the meeting in the absence of Mrs. Renata Hughes. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in German after which Mrs. Zingelmann read an Epiphany prayer from the Portals of Prayer booklet.

A video of the singers and dancers of Cottbus in Brandenburg was enjoyed by the group. Refreshments were furnished by members of the Society. Our next meeting will be Thursday, February 3, 2005 at 5:00 p.m. Mrs. Sandra Matthijetz of Winchester will present a program entitled, "Blau mit weissen Blumen."

Guests and visitors are always welcome. Membership dues are to be paid by March 1, 2005.

The State Convention is scheduled for Saturday, March 12, 2005 in Rockne beginning at 9:00 a.m.

Wendish Participants in the Civil War

Dr. George Nielsen, Special Features Editor

The topic for the July 2005 issue will be "Wends in the Civil War." Before this topic can be developed it is important to have a complete list of those who served. You can help me by checking the list below to see if your relatives were included and to look for inaccuracies. Not only would I like to know of any individuals I missed, I would also appreciate stories passed down through the generations about military service, efforts to avoid military service, or information about civilian life during the war times. To provide you with additional time to consult relatives or conduct family research, I will return to the "Wends Who Broke the Pattern" theme for the April issue. If you have information to share, please send it to Gnie857317@aol.com or 1132 Enchantment Rd. Rapid City, SD 57701.

17th Texas Volunteer Infantry – R. T. P. Allen

Company B (J. Z. Miller)

+Christopher Lowke (Louke, Looke) 27 July 1839, d. 25 June 1863, Monroe, LA
John Miertschin (Meirtschin) 6 August 1835, d. 9 May 1899, Serbin
+George Prellop (Prillop) 1825, d. 12 September 1863, Monroe, LA
+Matthaus (Matthew) Schubert 6 July 1839, d. war casualty
(Check on Matthew Shubert 24 December 1841)
August Teinert (Tmert) 19 December 1837, d. 27 January 1900, Serbin
Ernst Teinert (Tenert) 6 June 1843, d. 28 August 1905, Thorndale
John Teinert (Tmert) 14 May 1841 d. 8 March 1932 Copperas Cove

Company F (E. P. Petty)

Andreas Ernst Falke (11 October 1841 or 27 October 1842), d. 19 December 1916, Warda
Andreas Kappler (6 December 1832), d. 7 July 1902, Giddings
Johann Kubitz (1842), d. 29 November 1899, Serbin
Andreas Matthiez (29 October 1831), d. 28 January 1908, Frelsburg
August Miertschin (Mirtschin) Co. B,F,S, d. 17 May 1917, Serbin
(Check on Andreas Miertschin 18 February 1847, d. 24 June 1913, Thorndale)
August Polnick 12 March 1823, d. 25 July 1876
John Schelnick (Schilnick) 9 July 1838, d. 14 December 1917, Giddings
John Schulz
Christoph Vogel 1831, d. 2 March 1903, Serbin

Company H (H. E. Jordt)

+Johann Noack (Nouck) 15 December 1839, d. 17 July 1863, Washington, LA
C. Schulz
Charles Schulze
H. Schulz
Andreas Sonsel 1837, d. 1924, Austin
August Sonsel 29 June 1833, d. 6 December 1914, Colorado County
Ernst Sonsel 1840

Waul's Texas Legion (1st Infantry Battalion)

Company B (Wickeland)

Johann Arldt 6 November 1842, d. 11 April 1891, Serbin
Matthaus B. Hohle 11 April 1830, d. 2 August 1912, New Ulm
Herman K. Janisch

Company C, E, or F (Robert Voigt)

John Kieschnick 8 January 1834, d. 14 February 1916, Thorndale
(J. C. Kieschnick) (Kiesnick, Kiesnok, Kiesnik, Kusnick)
+Johann C. Kasper 1845, d. 25 June 1863, Yazoo City, MS

M. Mitschke (or Mitzky) 1843, d. 19 September 1863

J. Mitschke

A. D. (Carl August??) Weise 1842, d. 19 August 1937, Cisco

Company K

Christian Jatzlau 21 October 1834, d. 3 April 1880

Company ???

+John Kurio (Curio) 25 March 1843, d. July 1864, Mississippi

Captain Julius Bose's Company (Comal County) Texas Volunteer Infantry

Carl August Dube 9 March 1831, d. 1 May 1911, Fedor
Carl Traugott Dube 6 July 1839, d. 22 May 1890, Fedor
Ferdinand Jacob Moerbe 6 December 1828, d. 13 December 1896, Thorndale
Andreas Pilak 10 February 1840, d. 13 August 1910, Fedor
Johann Pilak 1834, d. 1 March 1920, Serbin
Michael Urban 18 June 1830
Carl Wagner 11 June 1828, d. 26 June 1885, Fedor
Andreas Traugott Wuensche 20 September 1841, d. 1 July 1893, Serbin
Johann August Wuensche 15 December 1837, d. 15 November 1908, Thorndale

Union Forces: 1st Reg. Cavalry - Texas

Charles (Johann Carl) Michalk 15 Aug 1843, d. 26 May 1910, Thorndale

Wendish Noodles

If you've ever been curious about how our hard-working noodle committee members got started in the noodle-making business for TWHS, following is a bit of the history as well as a glimpse into a day in the life of our noodle-makers.

In 1990, Allen and Mildred Perry decided to retire from their noodle-making business in Giddings and donated their large Italian pasta machine to the Texas Wendish Heritage Society. Mildred

Noack Perry is of Wendish descent. The noodle machine, which included racks and screens for drying the noodles, was a wonderful gift.

Rev. Robert Boyce, then Pastor of Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Warda and husband of Georgie Boyce (a TWHS board member) worked with Kenneth Ullrich, an electrician from La Grange, to provide the proper electricity for the machine.

Once the proper health certificate was obtained, a committee of noodle-making volunteers was formed. The first committee was comprised of Elinor Steglich, Esther Buscha, Hattie Schautschick, and Evelyn Kasper. After the deaths of Elinor Steglich and Esther Buscha, Laverne Gersch joined the committee. Today, the core committee members are Hattie Schautschick, Evelyn Kasper, and Laverne Gersch (see photo below, l-r), with Hattie serving as Committee Chair. Laverne Gersch provides the fresh country eggs that give our Wendish noodles their famous rich-yellow color. Walter Gersch, Laverne's husband, calls in on noodle-making days to make sure the machine is working properly. Evelyn Kasper is responsible for ensuring that the supply of other ingredients (flour and salt) is replenished.

A normal noodle-making day begins at 8:30 a.m. After a short noon-time lunch break, the work

continues until about 4:30 p.m. During that 8-hour period, fifteen batches of noodles are made, which amounts to about 160 pounds. Imagine the number of eggs cracked and pounds of flour lifted and poured into the machine!

The ingredients are poured into one end of the machine, which mixes, kneads and extrudes the dough in long thin noodles on a conveyor belt, where the noodles are cut in short lengths and transferred to large framed screens for drying. The noodles are left on the screens to dry for one day and two nights, and are then packaged in 1-pound bags.

The bagged noodles are not only sold in the TWHS Museum gift shop, but also at Weikel's Bakery in La Grange and B&W Grocery in Giddings. Noodles are also supplied for a number of events during the year including the Folklife Festival in San Antonio, the South Lee County Fire Department's annual barbecue fund-raiser, and Wendish Fest.

The Noodle Committee members provide an important service to TWHS. Noodle sales account for about 15% of the Museum's annual income, as well as provide a chance for folks to purchase "homemade" noodles to cook and serve at home. Now that is a treat to which we are truly fortunate to have access!



Membership Report

George Boerger, Membership Chairperson

*** Three More Life Members ***

For the 7th quarter in a row, we have at least one new life member! Herbert Fritsche of Houston, J.B. Gersch, Jr. of Giddings, and Don Graf of Lubbock are our latest life members, joining the chain consisting of Marvin Schulze, Herb Schulz, Ruth Wuensche Wright, B. J. Scharath, Sandra Miertschin Matthijetz, Ralph Weiser, and Bobby Zoch, Jr. We now have 17 life members! In 2001, we had only 8 life members, so the majority have joined in the last three years. This leaves only one unanswered question: Who will be next?

For 2004, we had a total of 853 members. The goal for 2005 is 950. As of January 8th, 604 members have joined or renewed for 2005, representing a renewal rate of 60%. (Last year at this time 67% had renewed.) We also have 83 first-time members toward the goal of 160.

New members do seem to be joining at a slower pace this year, the main reason being that our members have worked very hard in previous years to sign up most of their family and friends.

If you have children, siblings or friends who are not members, please consider giving them a gift membership. They don't have to come to a meeting or do any work (however, help is always needed and appreciated). If they are members, they will receive the newsletter and even if they don't seem too interested now, the newsletter may be the trigger that spurs their interest in a few years. We do send recipients of gift memberships a nice card telling them who gave them the membership.

During the last quarter of 2004, we did not add members from any of the previously unrepresented states (Alaska, Delaware, Hawaii, Idaho, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, Montana, New Hampshire, North Carolina, North Dakota, Rhode Island, and West Virginia). If you have a Wendish relative or friend in one of these states, you might especially consider giving a gift membership. You never know, maybe your

cousin in Hawaii will so appreciate the newsletter, he or she will invite you for a visit!

Patron (\$30) Members

Theresa Teinert Allen	Lubbock, TX
Duannah Ashmore	Austin, TX
Linda Jean-Lewis Barnett	Pontiac, MI
Dan Beto	Bryan, TX
Donna Beto	Bryan, TX
Bill Biar	Carrollton, TX
Martha Biehle	Smithville, TX
Michael Danner	Sanger, TX
Vera Deterling	Houston, TX
Charles Dube	Lincoln, TX
Vivian Dube	Lincoln, TX
Kirsten Wukasch Egedi	Fillmore, CA
Clarence Ehler (Rev)	Muldoon, TX
Caren Couch Ertel	Grapevine, TX
Mark Ertel	Grapevine, TX
Herbert Foerster	Giddings, TX
Leona Meissner Foster	Midland, TX
Ann Wukasch Gamel	Austin, TX
Charles Greschel	Roseville, CA
Lillain Groeschel	Bellaire, TX
Eleanor Headley	Huntsville, TX
James Hingst	San Antonio, TX
Ardilla Johnson	Dixon, MO
Melonnie Johnson	Collinsville, TX
Milton Kaiser	Houston, TX
Larry Kiesling	Kenedy, TX
Nancy Josephine Kilgore	San Antonio, TX
Emma Michalk Kroeker	Turlock, CA
Alleen Luretsch Lyons	Copperas Cove, TX
Sandra Magers	Dallas, TX
Arnold Mathias	Waco, TX
Helen Mathias	Austin, TX
Marge Mathias	Waco, TX
Vic Mathias	Austin, TX
Gene Miertschin	Boerne, TX
Katherine Moerbe	Austin, TX
Dana Zoch Mortimer	Bridge City, TX
Pamela Wuensche Nordbrock	Bloomington, IL
Barbara Schimentz Peckham	Urbana, IL
Doris Biehle Reagan	Austin, TX
Katherine Ruse Richards	Austin, TX
Wilfred Schrader	Pensacola, FL
Alvina Schroeder	Navasota, TX
Jenny Sharrock	Houston, TX
Roy Sharrock	Garland, TX
Sara Foerster Sick	Houma, LA
Dennis Storch	Lubbock, TX

Christian Symmank
Hilda Wuensche Theis
Martha Toll
Walter Toll
Ruth Krakosky Tschatschula
Stephen Unger
Mary Wachsmann
Edith Moerbe Walters
John Anthony Wuensche IV
Barry Wukasch
Don Wukasch, M.D.
Ted Wukasch
Walter Charles Wukasch II
Doris Malke Zabel
Eunice Malke Zimmerman

Sponsor (\$50) Members

Suzanne Pfluger Buck
Anne Christiansen
Neal Christiansen
Doris Danner
Janet Davee
Bill Davenport
Mary Ann Davenport
Ben Herbrich
John Hingst
Delores Holick
Steve Hooper
Barbara Jannasch
Louis Jannasch, Jr.
Floyd Kiesling
Delores Knippa
Leroy Knippa
Glen Kokel
Larry Kokel
Mike Hopkins Budweiser Dist.
Angeline Mitschke
Kenneth Moerbe (Rev)
Alfred Prellop
Gunter Schaarschmidt (Dr)
Barbara Schneider
Bernice Foerster Schulz
Edgar Schulz
Charles Slack
Jan Knippa Slack
Wilbert Sohns (Rev)
D.G. Symmank
Pearl Symmank
Eleanor Teinert
Herman Teinert
M Joy Teinert

Dusseldorf, Germany
Bishop, TX
Cedar Park, TX
Austin, TX
Brenham, TX
Hobbs, NM
Astoria, NY
Mill Valley, CA
Kingsville, TX
Cave Creek, AZ
Houston, TX
Groves, TX
Houston, TX
St. Louis, MO
Glendale, MO

San Antonio, TX
Chapin, SC
Chapin, SC
Fort Worth, TX
Weatherford, TX
Euleess, TX
Euleess, TX
Queens Village, NY
Kokomo, IN
Houston, TX
Kingwood, TX
La Marque, TX
La Marque, TX
Vernon, TX
New Braunfels, TX
New Braunfels, TX
Spring, TX
Walburg, TX
Brenham, TX
Humble, TX
Waco, TX
Baton Rouge, LA
Sidney, Canada
Metairie, LA
Houston, TX
Houston, TX
Bastrop, TX
Bastrop, TX
Gatesville, TX
Giddings, TX
Giddings, TX
Houston, TX
Lubbock, TX
Lubbock, TX

Natalie Waggoner
Paul Weise
Hilton Wieder
Melvin Winkler
Nelda Winkler

Century (\$100) Members

Candice Blecke
Fred Blecke
Clarence Dube, M.D.
Clarence Hobratschk
Gladys Hobratschk
Elmer Hohle (Rev)
Norma Jean Hohle
Delores Penk
Walter Penk
Janet Richter Schorlemmer
Michael Vukobratovich

Silver (\$250) Members

R. J. Nitsche
Ruth Nitsche

Life (\$1,000) Members

Herbert Fritsche
J.B. Gersch, Jr.
Don Graf

Student (\$7.50) Members

McKay Bloxham
Jacob Boessling
Greg Boothe
Christiana Gentry
Kayla Newman
Elizabeth Symm
Anna Marie Symm
Jan Tschatschula
Deana Venema
Jordan Watts
Melodie Weber
Jennifer Zoch

First Time Members

Jacob Boessling
Curtis Boswell
Kristie Bamsch Campbell
Betty Jo Cluck
Kay Craft
Janet Davee
Bill Davenport
Barbara Davis
Susan Domelsmith
Peggy Debose

Houston, TX
Davenport, IA
Houston, TX
Giddings, TX
Giddings, TX

St. Louis, MO
St. Louis, MO
Houston, TX
Littlefield, TX
Littlefield, TX
Liberty Hill, TX
Liberty Hill, TX
Canyon Lake, TX
Canyon Lake, TX
Eagle Lake, TX
Sierra Vista, AZ

Giddings, TX
Giddings, TX

Houston, TX
Giddings, TX
Lubbock, TX

Katy, TX
Houston, TX
La Grange, TX
Kingwood, TX
Austin, TX
Farwell, TX
Farwell, TX
Finsterwalde, Germany
Austin, TX
Katy, TX
Austin, TX
Fort Worth, TX

Houston, TX
San Antonio, TX
Cypress, TX
Winchester, TX
Columbus, GA
Weatherford, TX
Euleess, TX
Lubbock, TX
Austin, TX
Houston, TX

Delores Dural	Clifton, TX
Altha Garrett	Warda, TX
Christiana Gentry	Kingwood, TX
Virginia Heine	Thorndale, TX
Henry Hooper	Hale Center, TX
Monroe Jatzlau	Weatherford, TX
Esther Hobratch Kempe	Frisco, TX
Michael Kilian	San Antonio, TX
Robin Buchhorn Knippa	Hutto, TX
Phillip Kokel	Pearland, TX
Michelle Kolbe	Laredo, TX
Willene Kiesling Lagrimanta	San Angelo, TX
Bonnie Lincomb	Cost, TX
Druanne Mills	Alpine, TX
Chris Noack	Austin, TX
Jarrold Noack	Keller, TX
Mabel Powell	Shreveport, LA
Ernestine Weiser Schnell	Dawson, TX
Elizabeth Symm	Farwell, TX
Jonathan Tarpey	Tomball, TX
Lynne Teinert	Albany, TX
Stephen Unger	Hobbs, NM
Deana Venema	Austin, TX
Jackie Walker	Donie, TX
Melodie Weber	Austin, TX
John White	Houston, TX
Ruth White	Houston, TX
Terry Witter	Lubbock, TX
Gladys Zoch	Giddings, TX

Publication of the 1854 *Ben Nevis* Passenger List in GEDCOM format at the RootsWeb WorldConnect Project

Russell E. Schwausch

The 1854 *Ben Nevis* Passenger List has been published in GEDCOM format at the RootsWeb WorldConnect Project. The direct link is:

<http://worldconnect.rootsweb.com/~bennevis>

The content is based on the original passenger list handwritten by Johann Kilian and the English translation published by George R. Nielsen in *Johann Kilian, Pastor: A Wendish Lutheran in Germany and Texas*. I am indebted to these two gentlemen and numerous others for recording and researching the historical information on our Wendish ancestors. It is my hope that the publication of this information as a GEDCOM file

on the Internet will make it much easier to do genealogical research on Wendish families.

The web database is included in searches at <http://www.rootsweb.com> making it easily accessible to genealogical researchers. I have also submitted a link to the CyndisList website - see the entry for December 12, 2004 at:

<http://www.CyndisList.com/new1204.htm>

(Russell Schwausch is the great-great-great-grandson of Johann & Hanna Zieschank [*Ben Nevis* Passenger List Family #124] and the great-great-grandson of Johann & Maria Neitsch [*Ben Nevis* Passenger List Family #67].)

Wenden Fest 2004

Roxanne Mehlich

For the Mehlich family of Zearing, Iowa, Wenden Fest began 2 years ago when Cathy Peterson of the Muschick family called from San Diego to talk about the Iowa Barn Foundation, an advertisement for which she had seen in her local newspaper. She recognized the Mehlich name as being Wendish and invited us to join her email list consisting of others who had been working on their family history. Cathy's initial phone call culminated in a trip to Drachhausen, Germany for sixteen Mehlich, Markusch, Schmellick, Bohrisch, Mehlow, Muschick, and Riese descendants (all Wendish families that settled a 3-square-mile area south of Zearing and west of St. Anthony, Iowa. Drachhausen is a small rural village south of Berlin and 10 miles from the Polish border near the Spreewald. We met people who share our surnames, descended from our ancestors' family members who had remained in the homeland.

When our families migrated to Iowa in the 1860s and 1870s, they must have known what they were doing or were just lucky because they chose an area with soil that is some of the best to be found anywhere for farming. Their Wendish roots provided them with a strong work ethic and frugal ways needed to prosper. Members of six of the original families still own the land their ancestors

settled. Some of the descendants have dispersed throughout the U.S. and many did not know they were Wendish (believing themselves to be of German descent), so it was decided that a reunion should be held during 2004 on one of the farms that belonged to an original Wendish settler.

As members of the Iowa Barn Foundation, my family has a special love for old barns and truly appreciates their significance. The barn was the most important building on a farm, housing the livestock and grain that provided for the family. The farmer would build the best barn he could afford, and the size and style indicated the farmer's level of prosperity. Sometimes a farmer would embellish his barn by adding a cupola and decorative lightening ball.

We have such a barn on our property, one which had fallen into disrepair from lack of use. My husband wanted to restore the barn and, after a busy summer of cleaning, pitching tons of straw, gathering interesting old bottles, leather harnesses, bridles and horse collars, and with a new paint job and roof, the barn was ready for a party.

We received news that Ernst and Margarete Mucha (Margarete's mother was a Mehlich), whom we had met during our trip to Drachhausen, were coming to Iowa. We then began planning Wenden Fest 2004 to coincide with their stay with us. Of course, the barn was the center for the festivities. On Saturday, October 2, Wenden Fest began with an old fashioned hay ride taking us past the farms of our Wendish ancestors and returning us to the Markusch farm where we enjoyed a slide presentation of old barns, highlighting one built by a Wendish carpenter named Chris Muschick (he also built our barn). Next, we enjoyed an old-fashioned cream corn supper, the main ingredients being Iowa sweet corn and German-style bratwurst, and were entertained with excellent violin music of famous German composers.

On Sunday, with over 130 in attendance, we enjoyed a reenactment of the migration of our ancestors. Following the play, we were treated to homemade ice cream, barn-shaped cookies, and other goodies. The remainder of the day was

spent visiting and becoming acquainted with each other while marveling at the gorgeous red and white quilt designed and made for the occasion by Cathy Peterson. We each had provided Cathy with a square of white fabric and embroidered our signatures and ancestors' names, which she incorporated into the quilt.

Other items of interest on display during Sunday included other quilts from our families, a crock of homemade sauerkraut, and antique canning jars full of pickles, mincemeat and elderberry jam.

Our ancestors must have agonized over their decision to leave their homes. Imagine saying good-bye to parents and siblings, embarking on a long and difficult ocean voyage to an unknown country. But the freedoms and opportunities in America beckoned. We closed the reunion with a toast to the Wends, both those in Germany and in America.

(Reunion attendees came from Germany, Texas, Louisiana, Wisconsin, Missouri, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, Illinois, Minnesota, Utah, California, and from many counties in Iowa.)

Minutes of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society General Membership Meeting, November 21, 2004

The quarterly membership meeting of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society was called to order at 2:05 PM in the Kilian Building on Sunday, November 21, 2004, by Steve Hooper, President.

Reverend Michael Buchhorn provided the opening devotion based on Revelations. While we are currently looking forward to Santa's coming, Reverend Buchhorn reminded us not to lose sight of an even greater coming — the Lord's coming.

There were 29 members and guests in attendance. Steve Hooper welcomed all of the members and first time attendees.

Steve Hooper announced that the election of Board Members to fill the vacancies of those members whose terms were expiring at the end of the year was scheduled for this meeting. He

presented the slate of nominees: George Boerger, Evelyn Buchhorn, Vivian Dube, Evelyn Kasper, Ron Knippa, Margo Latimer, Hattie Schautschick and Marvin Schwausch. Six nominees were to be elected. He indicated all of the nominees had agreed to serve. He opened the floor to any additional nominations. There being none, he appointed the following to distribute the ballots and count the votes: Jan Slack, Walter Gersch and Chuck Dube. Ballots were marked and returned for counting.

The minutes of the August 15, 2004 meeting were approved as presented in the October newsletter.

George Boerger reported that we had a record Wendish Fest. He reported that we have a new membership record of 853 members. He said he wanted to thank everyone that had made this record membership possible and was setting the 2005 goal at 950 members.

Evelyn Kasper reported for Hattie Schautschick that work on replenishing the noodle inventory was the major activity since they had completely exhausted the supply of noodles during the Wendish Fest. Currently, they were having problems with the weather, since it was too wet to dry the noodles on their normal schedule.

Evelyn Kasper reported that they had two luncheon tours in October and one in November. Evelyn also discussed possible groups from Germany that might accept an invitation to the 2005 Wendish Fest. To-date, no group has been invited.

The ballot counters returned with the results of the balloting. The six nominees with the most votes were: George Boerger, Evelyn Buchhorn, Vivian Dube, Evelyn Kasper, Ron Knippa and Hattie Schautschick. George Boerger made the motion that the ballots be destroyed. Evelyn Buchhorn seconded the motion. Motion carried.

There being no further business, the business meeting adjourned at 2:40 PM.

Monroe Bieberstein and Ivadell Koenig led the group by playing Christmas carols on their

keyboards while the members joined in singing either in English or German.

Those wishing to participate in a gift exchange were asked to bring a gift selected from the Museum Gift Shop. Gifts were numbered as they were placed under the Christmas tree. Members then drew a number from the basket and the corresponding gift was theirs, unless they saw a gift that someone previously had received and asked that person to exchange their gifts with them. Everyone enjoyed participating in the gift exchange. Gifts of noodles seemed to be the preferred gift of the evening and people getting those were repeatedly asked to give them up for the other gift.

Members had been asked to research the meaning of their family name and be prepared to share that research with the group. Symmank, Kasper, Noack, Gersch, Wukasch and Dube were a few names that were translated.

Refreshments brought by the members were enjoyed.

Respectfully submitted.

J. B. Gersch, Jr., Secretary

Wreath-laying at Galveston Marking 150th Anniversary of *Ben Nevis* Immigration

Ron Lammert and Rev. Walter A. Dube

Defying adverse weather predictions, prevailing rain and blustery winds, more than 80 proud and grateful Wendish descendants and friends gathered on December 16, 2004 in Galveston to mark the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the *Ben Nevis* in Galveston harbor, which brought the largest Wendish immigrant group to Texas.

Despite the rain, the crowd enthusiastically joined in recognizing the unique story of the Wends who left their homeland to journey to Texas.

The event was held at the Texas Seaport Museum, a location near the point where the Wends

disembarked from the *Ben Nevis* on December 16, 1854.

The observance, organized by Ron Lammert with a phone call to Rev. Walter Dube, was held for a threefold purpose. First, it was to thank God for His divine providence and blessing upon the Wendish migration and the generations of descendants that followed. Second, it was to gratefully acknowledge and celebrate the convictions and courage of the Wendish forefathers as they risked everything on a venture that was primarily based on faith and future dreams. And third, the observance intended to perpetuate an appreciation for the Wendish heritage and legacy among the present and future generations of Wendish descendants.

The program included the reading by Geneva Paymann of Houston (A great great granddaughter of Rev. Johann Kilian) of a Proclamation recognizing the event and significance of the anniversary and signed by Governor Rick Perry.

The highlight of the ceremony came with the laying of a wreath in honor of the 500-plus Wendish immigrants who stepped from ship to shore on that December 16, 1854 to begin a new life in a new country. Rev. Walter Dube of La Marque, a fifth generation Wendish Texan, officiated and Paul Zoch (a direct descendant who grew up in the Serbin community) and Wes Krueger were the wreath bearers.

The significance of the wreath's design was to honor the noble character and sterling virtues that defined our Wendish forebears. The circular ring is a reminder of the eternal, unending sustaining mercies of God in whom they trusted. The evergreen ivy symbolizes the fresh new life of freedom and opportunity they envisioned for themselves and their families. The yellow rose of Texas pays tribute to the land of liberty and privilege that welcomed them to their new homeland. The sky blue ribbon reminds us of the cherished Christian faith of the Wends whereby they embraced the hope of eternal life in heaven in

the presence of Christ. And the white cross embedded within the ivy bears testimony to the redeeming grace of God through the Cross which was profoundly precious to them and interwoven throughout the spiritual and social fabric of Wendish life.

The wreath was placed on the dock at the Texas Seaport Museum and then taken to Serbin, where it is on display at the Texas Wendish Heritage Museum.

Additional program highlights included a series of presentations by David Goeke of San Antonio, Ron Lammert of San Antonio, Lesley Sommer (Director of Preservation and Conservation Services for the Galveston Historical Foundation), and Steve Hooper (TWHs President) of Kingwood, all direct descendents of immigrants who stepped from the *Ben Nevis* on that December 16th in 1854.

David Goeke gave a dramatic presentation in which he traced the footsteps of the migration's origin from Bautzen, Germany via Hamburg, Germany, Liverpool, England and Queenstown, Ireland. Throughout the presentation Goeke related in living detail how the voyage was besieged by hardships, adversity and sickness. He spoke of the agonizing decisions faced by the immigrants on a journey that took over 3 months and claimed many lives along the way. He often accented his comments with a sobering interactive question, "Could you have done it; would you have done it?", as he spoke of the dangers and risks experienced by the immigrants during the undertaking. Goeke later dismissed the gathered audience at the end of the program with a benediction, which he spoke in Wendish, German and English, a common benediction always used by the Wends to conclude their worship services.

As spoken by Rev. Dube at the ceremony, "How indebted we all are! To God be the praise for the faith, courage and strength of our Wendish forbears on behalf of all of us here today."

Scenes from the December 16, 2004
observance of the December 16, 1854
arrival in Texas of the Wendish
immigrants on the *Ben Nevis*



Paul Zoch and Wes Krueger
Presenting the memorial wreath



Steve Hooper, TWHS President,
greeting the attendees

Important Dates

- February 8 Walk-In Coffee, 9:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m., First Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, Giddings, Texas
- February 20 General Membership Meeting, 2:00 p.m., Museum complex
- April 3 Daylight savings time begins
- April 4 Deadline for April newsletter
- April 9-10 Winedale Spring Festival and Texas Arts and Crafts Exhibition, Winedale Historical Center near Round Top, Texas
- April 20 Palm Sunday, Museum CLOSED
- April 27 Easter Sunday, Museum CLOSED

Texas Wendish Heritage Society

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