

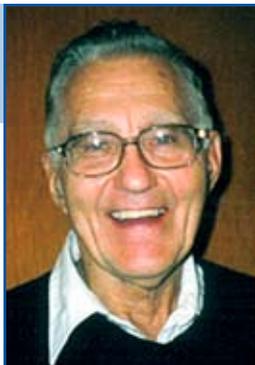
# GROW QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Area Chapter of the Germans from Russia Heritage Society (GRHS)

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July - August - September 2013

## Message from the President



It's a gigantic step forward after two years without a library, and a permanent home while GAS (German America Society), our host, was forced to sell their home, rent another facility, purchase a suitable property, and renovate it to accommodate themselves and the Affiliate Clubs. Yes, after almost a century of residency in the lovely Winehard building, GAS and her affiliates will have permanent occupancy once again.

With changes, improvements can be made. GRHS had requested their local Chapters utilizing their GRHS website in archiving their Newsletters, other than their current issue, to remove their Newsletters. This has encouraged GROW to commence their own website. GROW's youngest talented Member, Sarah Cook, favored GROW by commencing our website under the name grow-chapter.webs.com. She has already started to transfer the archived newsletters so you can continue to look back and see GROW since its beginning. Before long Webmistress, Jan Prunier, and Sarah will be building our new website and transferring the remaining pages except for a link when roaming around on GRHS Chapters pages. With the new website, we will perhaps increase our web pages to include such items as the Chapter Meeting Summaries, etc. When one has the intestinal fortitude not to give up but march forward, a better future is out there within our achieving. Accept the challenges and keep increasing our goals.

Should you receive this newsletter before 23 June, our next Chapter meeting, remember our Russia folk singer coming, Natalia Hougen, to stir and excite us with her musical talent. She has been in the US for eight years and works at Mt. Hood College. She works with Board Member Jeanette McDermid at the college; she has taught at Reed College and has

performed throughout the Portland area. Also, don't forget to calendar our GROW Picnic August 25 at the lovely 21 acre Gresham Park with additional details can be found on page 4 of this newsletter.

On September 22 we are having the exceptional Powerpoint presentation from GROW Member, Larry Kuntz, who as farm boy from Drake, ND, curiously with his first car, a Volkswagen, became one of the top executives in the Volkswagen of America. Is it any wonder that his E-mail address is: vwlarry@comcast.net?

For October 27, Board Member Allen White, and one of our scouts, is planning for the Mt. Angel Dancers to entertain us.

On Sunday, December 8, we have the good fortune to have incoming OR AHSGR Chapter President, Steve Schreiber, recently retired top executive from the Port of Portland, present to our GROW members on the "Solving a mystery to learn the origins of my Schreiber family in Germany".

You will be delighted with the array of talent coming to our GROW Meetings. Have a GREAT Summer and eagerly plan to invite friends and family to come together for the above events.

Roger

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# Snow Storm's Coming

by Ronald Schauer

“Now, don't go any farther than the barn. Every year kids like you go out in a snow-storm. Then they get lost and disoriented and end up freezing to death a few yards from the house.”

Mother's admonitions usually included some form of death. Like when I climbed up the windmill and she yelled up at me, “You come down right now. If you fall off there and kill yourself you're going to get a good licking.” Her real favorite was to remind me that “No one ever died from work.” She deftly wove this adage into all sorts of conversations.

Still, being a realistic worrier, she made sure I was bundled against the cold and wind in my blue flannel shirt, a sweater, the oversized mackinaw, the red plaid wool cap with ear flaps that extended far below my ears, and mittens the size of supper plates.

The wind was blowing from the northwest, coming down a long draw that passed just west of our farm. A light snow was falling and the wind picked it up and carried it, aiming it, I thought, for my face. I could see the brown grass on the hillsides above the draw slowly turning white. Sky that had earlier been blue was now a whitish grey and the tops of farther small hills were blending into the approaching storm.

I walked over the large snow drift at the currant bushes and on up the hill. Mother had warned me to go no further than the barn. I didn't want to wander off, and I didn't want to freeze. Nonchalantly, I stepped around the side of the barn and walked to its end.

I stood there, looking north across pasture that was disappearing into a featureless gray. No, I wasn't going anywhere. I just wanted to look.

I knew this prairie, it was my playground. Beyond where I stood, a path engineered by cows led north and then down the hill to a small lake that in early summer filled the air with the smell of mint. During the rainless heat of July and August, the lake dried to a few small ponds. Spring brought snow melt and a clear sparkling stream ambling down the shallow valley to refill the lake. Sometimes I would hear the water running under snow drifts on its way down the hill.

I often walked to the lake to climb the hill that began at its eastern edge. This was the tallest and steepest hill of our farm. Reaching the flat top, I would be among three stone circles, each surrounding a depression in the prairie soil. Dad had explained these were



teepee rings where the native people would set up a summer camp to hunt deer coming to the lake for water. I liked his explanation and it became part of my solitary play. On this dry hilltop, I joined the stories. Sometimes, I saw deer that I stalked along with the small tribe's hunters.

Somewhere behind me, I heard mother's voice, “Ronny, you better get back in the house. The snow-storm is here.” She paused a few seconds and yelled again, “Ronny, can you hear me?”

I didn't answer. I took one last look before turning to follow the side of the barn to its end. One more step and I had moved into swirling snow pushed by a cold wind that froze mother's increasingly frantic calls and shattered them into little slivers. I dug my hands deep into my jacket pockets and put my head down to dodge some of the pelting snow and slowly continued down the hill, past the cottonwood tree and the currant bushes, past mother standing on the front step, and into our house.

Ghosts, I thought. I had been out looking for ghosts. Sometimes, when I was on that far hill, I could almost see them, almost hear them. If they were out there, they were shrouded in blowing snow. I heard nothing, only the growing howlings of angry wind.

Our farm was twelve miles east of Napoleon, a mostly easy drive. All but the last 1.5 miles of road was well maintained. Highway 34 between Napoleon and Gackle was cleared usually within a day of a snowstorm. The county road intersecting with 34 and the road to the farm was open within another several days. The problem was that last mile and a half: The two-rut prairie road would drift shut with hard packed snow and could be impassible for weeks. Sometimes when they were running out of food or coal, the parents would worry and dad would take the Case tractor and try to break a path through the snow.

Al and Ronny, didn't concern themselves with being snowed in. The boys had plenty to do and were good at amusing themselves. They walked to school anyway and could follow a path that was mostly swept clean of snow by the blizzard wind. And both knew, the same weather that isolated the farm behind the blocked road often created awesome sledding conditions.

Across a rambling wetland stood the farm where cousin Allen lived. Typically, prairie lakes grew and shrank, dependent as they were on snow runoff. In high precipitation years, it was a real lake with a reedy shoreline and large, open patches of water. With little snow pack, it became a mucky swamp dotted with only a few water holes large enough for a duck to at-

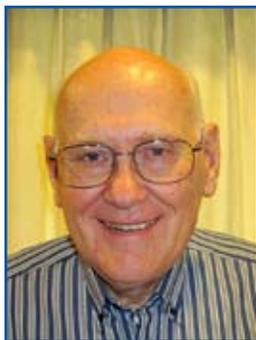
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# Genealogy Forum

## Tracing Your Ancestors Back to Russia

by Harold Lang, PhD

It is now over a hundred years since most of our ancestors came to the United States. Today many of the Germans from Russia are second, third or fourth generation descendants of those who migrated from Russia. Do you know where your ancestors lived in Russia? That is information you need to know if you are going to look for records of your ancestors in Russia.



This forum is an attempt to help you find where they lived. My father was born in the village of Kassel in the Odessa District near the Black Sea, so I was fortunate, to have learned from my father where my ancestors lived in Russia. I am sure that my children know that my father was born in Russia and may remember that he was born in Kassel. However my grandchildren may not even know that their ancestors lived in Russia much less the name of the village.

To help you find where your ancestors came from in Russia, let's consider some common sources of genealogical information.

**US Census Records:** US Census records list the place of birth of the individual and their parents, but they are not detailed enough to give you a village. For those born outside the United States, just the country is listed and for those born in the United States, just the state is listed nothing more. This could be a start but not much information.

**Death Records:** Death records list a place of birth if known. Just remember that much of the information on a death certificate was given by a family member at the time of death when they are under stress and had to give the information by instant mental recall without the opportunity to check records.

**Ship Records:** Ship records have places to list where the person was coming from and where they were going to. The information listed is varied. It may list only the country, state or district. Sometimes a town or village is listed. Remember that the destination listed on ship records may be the location of a relative or friend with whom they will stay in the US until they find a permanent place to settle. Most of the families had a number of children, so eventually they had to find land for the children which may have resulted in another move, generally north (in some cases Canada) or west.

**Jubilee Books:** Most of the communities in North and South Dakota where our ancestors settled are now over 100 years old. Over the years these communities have published Jubilee books usually starting

with their fiftieth anniversary. For example I have a copy of, Gackle, Golden Jubilee, 1904-1954, which belonged to my parents. In this book are write-ups on over 200 families, mostly the original settlers of the Gackle community (both city and rural). Most of the write-ups tell where they came from, who their parents were and a list of the children and where they lived at the time the book was published. Later editions of jubilee books were also published for the 75th and 100th anniversary. These books have information on the later residents of the community. The write-ups may be as short as a quarter of a page and as long as several pages per family and often included a picture.

The GROW Library has some of these jubilee books. Incidentally, the GROW Library should soon be back in operation in the new building.

One day I saw a copy of a Medina, ND jubilee book for sale on e-bay and bought it. My mother (single) taught church school in Median 1913-1915 and she had both Lang and Haas students. I assume that the school was taught in German. It was through these Langs and maybe a little matchmaking by a lady that my mother called grandma Haas, with whom my mother lived, that my mother first met my dad. When the Medina book arrived I was disappointed that there was no mention of Lang or Haas. The Lang and Haas families must have had closer ties with Cleveland, ND and were included in their jubilee books. I donated the Medina book to the GROW Library. Maybe you can find some of your ancestors or relatives in it.

Over 40 of these Jubilee books can be accessed on line at the Odessa Digital Library under the heading "Town History Books". There is a real advantage in using the books on line in digital format. You can do an electronic search and find every mention of a specific surname in the book. You can also print out individual family write-ups. There are also Jubilee books for communities in Canada. I have gotten information out of, Beiseker's Golden Heritage, (Beiseker, Alberta) in both in a library (in the US) and on line at *Our Future, Our Past: The Alberta Heritage Digitization Project* ([www.ourfutureourpast.ca](http://www.ourfutureourpast.ca)). I have distant relative that lived in Beiseker.

The biggest collection of jubilee books that I have seen is at the state libraries in Bismarck and Pierre. Copies of some of recently published jubilee books are available through the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection ([library.ndsu.edu/grhc](http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc)). I have found these jubilee books to be a fruitful source of information.

I have also searched census and parish records for

*Continued on page 4.*

## Snow Storm's Coming, cont.

tempt a landing.

At the lake's west end, a gentle slope descended from the shoulder of a higher plain. It wasn't much, but add snowfall and a 40 mile per hour wind blowing for a day or two and the structure changed. Now, rather than a short prairie hillside, it had character. Now it had cliffs, drop offs, and cornices. Al and cousin Allen found the sled jump years before and had ridden it often. A rider sledding down the hill could become airborne more than once if it was done at the right speed and angle.

The North Dakota winter of 1948-1949 was one of the snowiest in memory. A series of storms dumped ever more snow onto the prairies, feeding the perfect sled jump.

On a cold, crisp, sunny day in January 1949, Al and six year old Ronny stood at the top of this hillside. Al placed the well-used Flexible Flyer sled he had been carrying on the snow, sliding it back and forth a few times. And don't think for a moment that Ronny wasn't simultaneously scared and excited as he looked at the waiting sled and the long way down on the brilliantly white untouched snow. With a little luck I can make it all the way onto the lake, he thought and barely noticed a parallel thought underneath, I'm too young to die!

He lay down on the sled and put his hands on the wooden cross-piece, pulling it each way, testing the steering. He wiggled his body to get comfortable and balance his weight on the sled.

"OK," he said.

"Are you sure you're ready? Now hold on tight." Al slid the Ronny laden sled back and forth several times and then gave it a mighty shove.

The first thing Ronny hadn't anticipated was the layer of fresh light snow that sprayed up as he flew through it, blasting his face and burrowing deep within his brown coat. He had no idea where he was or what was coming towards him at supersonic speed. He heeded his brother's words and held on as tightly as he could.

Al was on all fours after pushing the sled. What he saw was a moving cloud of snow scurrying down the hill toward the drop off. For a brief moment, the cloud dissipated and he saw the Flexible Flyer and its cargo reaching for an orbit. Instead, it touched down in another massive cloud of snow, traveling even faster than before. The runners left the snow several times in the next three seconds and Al thought of a rodeo rider on a wild bull.

This is like riding a wild bull, thought Ronnie. And he held on.

Al stood up, his eyes fixed on the moving snow cloud. He's going to get killed! He held his breath as he watched Ronny headed directly for a snowed-over rock pile at the edge of the lake. A loud scraping

sound and he saw the sled cart-wheeling off to the right as a brown bullet shot through the air for a perfect landing on the lake's ice and skidded to a stop.

With a half crying, half laughing "WHEEEEE!", Ronny struggled to his feet. Al raced down through the knee deep snow to grab the sled and help his brother back up the hill.

Taking his turn, Al carefully steered away from the pile of stones that had launched his brother into free flight.

A shivering walk later and back at home, they were crawling out of their wet clothing. Mother looked at Al, "I hope you weren't down at the sled jump. Ronny's much too young for that."

## GROW Picnic, Aug. 25

This year we will be going to a new park on Sunday August 25, 2013, at 219 S Main St, Gresham City Park, which is between Main and Roberts on Powell Blvd./Highway 26 in downtown Gresham, Oregon.

We will be in a covered area called COHO with a Green Roof. We have reserved it from 9:00 to 2:30; however we will be planning to set up at 11:30 AM and commencing to eat at 12:30 PM.

Please bring your favorite beverage, table setting, and your favorite food to share amongst all of us. There are plug-ins for your hot dishes.

If anyone wants to bring a favorite game or music, feel free to do so.

You can find more information about the park by doing a web search for Main City Park, Gresham, OR, it will bring up a map and all the amenities. There is plenty of parking in two different places and restrooms. The Springwater Corridor Trail borders the park.

There are children's areas as well as for adults to use: like walking trails, horseshoes, etc. Even a Pioneer Cemetery to walk through. The setting is beautiful with lots of trees and lawn.

Come and enjoy a beautiful day sharing many memories and great fellowship.

We hope to see all of you there. Call Jan Haberman 503-252-5480 if you have questions or comments.

## Genealogy Forum, cont.

various villages in Russia to locate where people with a certain surname lived. Sometimes you have to come at it from both directions.

The final documentation of where your ancestors came from in Russia is to find a record of them in census and/or parish records in Russia. How to find these records in Russia has been the topic of previous forums.

# Germans from Russia in South America:

## New Research Frontiers in Our Group's History and Other 21st-Century Reflections (Part III)

By Dr. Eric J. Schmaltz, Associate Professor of History,  
Department of Social Sciences, Northwestern Oklahoma State University in Alva

*This part in the series touches on the origins and general development of the German-Russian colonies in South America after the 1870s. Again, some of following comments are intended to be preliminary, as my research and scriptwriting duties proceed for the upcoming documentary film produced by Prairie Public Broadcasting in collaboration with the North Dakota State University Libraries Germans from Russia Heritage Collection (Fargo).*



Like the Russian tsars who enacted vital policy changes in previous centuries, key South American politicians in the mid- to late-nineteenth century altered their own countries historical landscapes and trajectories. South American economic, political and social developments helped pave the way for German migrations from Russia into this corner of the globe at the turn of the last century.

Journalist and politician Nicolás Avellaneda (1837-1885) emerged as one such pivotal figure in Argentina when it concerned European immigration into his country. He served as the nation's president between 1874 and 1880, conducting banking and educational reforms in attempts to promote Argentina's economic expansion. Like his predecessors, he believed that European mass immigration would provide an essential ingredient in his country's overall growth. During his term in office, not only did he enact the "Avellaneda Law" encouraging European farmers to secure available lands, he also oversaw the ruthless "Conquest of the Desert" in Argentina, which nearly eliminated the indigenous populations in the Pampas by forcing them farther south into Patagonia, but in the process he opened up new territories to railroad construction, grain and livestock (agricultural) production, and European mass settlement. These interlocking economic developments coincided with the rise of refrigeration technology for transport, which became essential to Argentina's lucrative beef exports to Europe in the late nineteenth century.

Argentina's 1853 Constitution guaranteed the promotion of skilled immigrants, including farmers, into the country, but the young President Avellaneda a generation later proved instrumental in coming closer to realizing this expressed goal. In the mid-nineteenth century, Argentina contained a large land area, but a miniscule population covering several geographical areas. Only 1.2 million people lived in Argentina when the new federal constitution was drafted in

1853, with about 70% of them concentrated in Buenos Aires Province, and the economy based mostly on agriculture. The abundance of free, open land outside of the capital city and its surrounding area holds parallels with the United States' frontier; these provinces served as "safety-valves" for the population to expand and improve itself. By the 1870s, after two decades of political instability, serious reforms finally occurred in Argentina, including the secularization of education and reduction of illiteracy and the invitation of foreign investment, especially for railroads. Already under Avellaneda's liberal predecessor Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, the 1870 Immigration and Colonization Law sought to provide Argentina with an adequate labor pool for industry and to increase agricultural output. Much like the United States and Canada at the time, Italian, Polish, German and East Europeans, especially small-scale farmers, started to arrive in significant numbers in Argentina. Hoping to "bring in the right people," Buenos Aires took an active and direct role in encouraging new farming ideas, techniques, and technologies in the country. This effort involved quite deliberate and determined government advertising and recruitment abroad, while in the U.S. the immigration process just sort of happened, with more active encouragement from the great railroad companies, of course.

Article 25 of the 1853 Constitution made specific mention of encouraging European immigration to promote the country's level of industry, agriculture, science, and the arts, etc. The emphasis rested on Roman Catholic immigration as well, which was understandably viewed as facilitating greater cultural integration. An Office of Immigration and Colonization was established to send agents to Europe who targeted these specific populations. Moreover, a "Hotel of Immigrants" was set up in Buenos Aires at the time, offering immigrants a place to stay for a time as well as process their entry into the country, inaugurate acculturation and give advisement, etc. As political stability took hold of Argentina around this time, the railroads spread the growing number of immigrants across the country.

Meanwhile, Brazil also embarked on paths of reform and mass immigration under arguably its greatest statesman, Emperor Dom Pedro II (1825-1891) of the ruling House of Braganza. He ruled over Portugal's former colony from his early childhood in 1831 until his exile in 1889. By most accounts, Pedro II was self-educated, modest, conscientious, and hard-working, even well-respected abroad by the great personalities

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## Germans from Russia in South America, cont.

of his day. This enlightened monarch was also filled with a strong sense of duty and devotion to his country, eager to promote culture and the sciences to his people. In this manner, he helped guide Brazil into a period of internal stability and economic prosperity by the 1850s, later advocating general reforms ranging from women's rights to the abolition of slavery. With this historical backdrop came the migrations of Germans from Russia and other Europeans to Brazil in the latter decades of the nineteenth century.

In general, unlike the United States and Canada, more compact European settlements were permitted in both Argentina and Brazil, as scholar Frederick Luebke notes, thus allowing at times for a greater degree of cultural and linguistic retention for ethnic minorities. Moreover, in Latin America, more formidable cultural barriers arose between Spanish- or Portuguese-speaking peoples and the Germanic-speaking peoples from Russia, thereby delaying the assimilation process somewhat, when compared with a greater cultural and linguistic affinity between Germanic-speaking groups and the English-speaking regions of North America.

The Old World villages' traditional religious segregation by denomination (Lutheran or Catholic, for instance) and even by culture and language began to break down steadily on the North American frontier, where the creation of compact ethnic settlements had become more difficult to maintain. The Homestead Act of 1862 in the United States and its counterpart, the Dominion Lands Act of 1872 in Canada, forced many arrivals to settle under the so-called township system, which tended to scatter settlers onto individual farmsteads. The old village center with farmlands surrounding the community now had to be abandoned. Many German-Russians on the Great Plains observed this profound shift in their traditional way of life during the early years of settlement. More opportunities to establish concentrated German-Russian settlements in northeastern Argentina and southern Brazil, however, remained possible, creating a profound difference between these Diaspora communities north and south of the equator. In fact, the ethnic settlements in Argentina and Brazil still called themselves "colonies" (Kolonien/colonias) as in the old country.

A few general remarks concerning the legacy of President Avellaneda and Emperor Dom Pedro II and their successors on the German-Russians are also necessary. On this note, Carlos Alberto Schwab of Brazil recently informed our documentary producers that southern Brazil includes "the richest and most productive States of our country, mainly because many people in the population are European descendants. Ethnicity is everything [here] and is clearly visible in the cities that have immigrants in their population." Indeed, the immigration of Volga Germans proved quite significant in the State of Parana in southern

Brazil. Author and scholar Estevão Muller of Curitiba, Brazil, offers the documentary producers another view of the immigrants' colonization in Brazil, noting that the German-Russian colonies there experienced slower socio-economic development than those in neighboring Argentina. Muller is convinced that the policies of President Avellaneda better favored immigrants when compared with the promises of Pedro II. He emphasizes the difference in socio-economic progress between Volga German settlements in the State of Parana in Brazil in 1878 and Volga German communities of Argentina founded around the same time. Though he acknowledges that Pedro II made some promises modeled on those of Tsarina Catherine the Great of Russia, the great Brazilian leader's assurances were not always carried out to fruition. Moreover, Muller states: "Our land was not appropriate for the planting of wheat and our immigrants were almost abandoned by the local authorities as you can see." In some instances, German-Russians who had settled in southern Brazil later moved to the State of Entre Rios in east-central Argentina to improve their fortunes. In Muller's estimation, then, the colonies in Parana were very poor and did not experience as much progress over one century in comparison with the Argentine colonies of Volga German immigrants. "So in Argentina," he concludes, "I have seen beautiful and rich cities and in Brasil [sic] we can see only poor colonies without progress after more than 100 years."

As mentioned before, the Argentine and Brazilian regimes both pursued intensive immigration policies abroad to entice Roman Catholic populations to settle their open lands. One could argue that, at least from a religious standpoint, German-Russians of Roman Catholic background held more in common with the dominant Latin heritage than did those of a Protestant heritage. However, the case of Mennonites migrating to South America (including Paraguay and Uruguay) demands a somewhat different interpretation of general immigration policy in the region. It is noteworthy that South American Catholic countries also welcomed a good number of Mennonites, making this Protestant sect something of an exception to the rule because of their economic capabilities and not too disruptive and pacifist attitudes toward their various neighbors.

In the next issue of the GROW Newsletter, we will continue our brief consideration of the cultural and economic progression of the German-Russian colonies in South America after the 1870s. Then we will turn our attention to contemporary trends for the group in the region.

*(To be continued.)*

*Acknowledgment: The author wishes to thank departmental colleague J. W. Platt at Northwestern Oklahoma State University for offering his expert insights into Latin America.*

# The Migration of Volhynia Germans to Southern Brazil

by Vilson Wutzke, May 14, 2013 - Translated by Adi Hartfeil

## NOTES:

Vilson Wutzke's report in German was translated by Adi Hartfeil. Adi's paternal grandparents were part of this Germans from Russia migration and are buried in this area of southern Brazil. Pastor Wutzke knows some of my cousins and second cousins who still live in this region of Brazil.

Pastor Wutzke traveled over 350 miles to be interviewed and filmed by Michael Miller and crew for the 2014 Prairie Public Television documentary film on the Germans from Russia who emigrated to southern Brazil and Argentina. He wrote this report to supplement his interview with Michael Miller.

## REASONS FOR THE MIGRATION OF VOLHYNIA GERMANS

The majority of the Volhynia Germans (Wolhynien Deutsche) came to Brazil prior to WWI. They mostly settled in the region around Santa Rosa in the state of Rio Grande do Sul.

One of the main reasons of this migration to Brazil was the wish to acquire their own land and thus enjoy a better life for themselves and all their children. In Volhynia they could not own their farmland but could only rent it and make the necessary rental payments.

To better understand their related circumstances it is necessary to examine their living circumstances which existed at that time in Russia. The economic conditions were increasingly becoming worse. To obtain rental farmland was very complicated. The value of land became more and more expensive which made it impossible to obtain land.

To find a job also become more difficult. The entire political, social and economic environment in Russia was very bad. Rumors of war were spreading and the families were worried that their sons would be conscripted in the army and be sent to war. Consequently, there was no hope for the future in Volhynia.

Through the agents who advertised and searched for immigrants to settle in Brazil, it became known in Volhynia that in Brazil fertile land was available. In this new country all cultures had a successful start and immigrants could purchase their own farmland. Many families therefore decided before WWI that they would emigrate from Russia.

From Russia to Bremerhaven in north Germany they traveled by train and there boarded a ship which took them to Brazil. After almost two months, they arrived in the Rio de Janeiro harbor; here they were transferred to an immigration shelter. Then they traveled by ship to Porto Alegre. Their trip continued on to the inner part of Brazil via a train to Ijuí and then with a horse wagon for a 100 Km (60 miles) to Guarani das Missoes. Here they were given shelter in a new governmental building.



Types of transportation used to go to church in Nova Santa Rosa, in the state of Parana. Photo was taken in 1959. The wooden structure in the background is a Baptist church.

## THE FIRST HOMES AND FURNITURE

Many Volhynians were given land from the government; other refugees bought land through installment payments. The roads into the jungle to their new purchased land had to be constructed by themselves. Next preliminary housing was built with split palm beams and then palm branches used for cover. Later wood beams and boards were made by the use of hand saws and better houses were built.

The interior house arrangement was simple: they only had one table, a couple shelves on the wall to store food items and a few kitchen utensils which they owned. To cook they stuck two braces in the ground to support the iron kettle pot which then hung over a fire. Later stoves were built from bricks with an iron plate on the surface.

Bread was made and baked mainly with corn flour. The dough was made from corn flour, water and salt. The dough was put in a pan which was placed in the fire coals. Later when fire bricks were available a baking oven was built. Beds were constructed in a marginal manner. A box was made with boards and sunk a little into the ground. Straw was then placed inside the box and covered with a cloth. Later sacks full of straw were used.

## THE LAND CULTIVATION, SOWING AND HARVEST WORK

First the bush was removed from the jungle and then the trees were felled with axe and saw. The felled trees were then burned and cleared. The first crops which were planted were corn, manioc, beans, pumpkin, potatoes, rice and later soybeans. In the second year the land was ready to be plowed with oxen or horses and in the third year the land cultivation then

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## The Migration of Volhynia Germans to Southern Brazil, cont.

became easier. Poison and other such control items were not used at that time.

The harvest was done all by hand. The grain was separated by the use of a hand-held wooden threshermallet; later threshing machines were used. Then the grain harvest was moved by trucks to one place and then there threshed.

In the 1960s farming became more mechanized. The stumps were pulled out of the ground and the wood was burned. From this point the farming became more advanced. Oxen and horses were replaced by tractors and the grain harvesting was done by using combines.

### FIRST MARKET TRANSACTIONS

Since there was no market trading in the first years, the planting was only done to sustain the family. After the building of the first roads, trading slowly started to develop. The first major trade occurred by selling the wooden railroad ties which were handmade by using an axe.

Businesses were established which bought edible beans and butter. Pigs were butchered in order to sell the lard. From this income one could then buy the essential groceries like salt, sugar, and cloth material which was used to make clothes to wear.

Later, as the fields were well developed and had a good yield and the farmers had increased their livestock, a strong inflation set in which caused great hardships to the farmers. The farmer's products had no value. It took one sack of corn to buy a sack of salt. The farmers worked hard but whenever they could sell their product they almost received nothing for it. But when they had to buy anything, they had to pay premium prices.

### CHURCHES

The Germans who came from Volhynia to Brazil brought to this new homeland a strong ambition to work to overcome hardships, to save their money, to keep their language and above all to practice their religion and to keep their belief in God. Overall they were very religious. Many families began their day with a religious service and ended it with an evening service. A prayer before meals was a general custom. The children learned their first words by saying a prayer. On Sundays and holidays old and young went to church. The Sunday was held holy and strictly observed. On Sundays no type of work was done.

The majority of the Germans who came from Volhynia had an Evangelical religion but others were Baptists or had other religious beliefs. At the very beginning church services were conducted in homes and later churches were built.

Besides the normal church services on Sunday, special programs were held with the kids for Christmas when the kids sang Christmas songs and presented

Christmas poems. At the end of these special services each child received a package with candies, chocolates and other sweet items. When the kids arrived home, they found gifts which their parents explained as having been delivered by Santa Claus (Weihnachtsmann). That brought a special joy to the kids because Christmas was the only time they received gifts and candies.

The immigrants loved music and singing. They sang while attending birthday celebrations, marriages and church services. Also a lot of singing was done at home. After dinner the family got together to sing. Some families had somebody with an instrument who could accompany the singing. Church songs as well as folk songs which they brought with them from their Volhynia homeland were sung.

In the evening with poor lighting the Bible was read and sometimes even handwork was done. They used a lard lamp. The lard was placed in a dish and a piece of cloth was used as a wick.

Just about all churches had a trumpet choir, a guitar choir and a singing choir which made the service nicer and more interesting. The church services which were conducted in the German language were always well visited; the churches were always over-filled. At special church events not enough room was available for everyone; many had to stay outside. Many families took their horse wagons or walked to church. The kids went along with their parents to church services.

### SCHOOLS

At the beginning of the Germans from Russia immigration, the Brazil government had no plans for schools. On their own initiative the immigrants organized German schools because they knew the value of an education for the development of their children. At a minimum they needed to learn how read, write and do math.

Since no Portuguese teachers were available who could teach in German, immigrants who were good in reading, writing and math were selected as teachers. Instructions in German were conducted until the Second World War. The school was built on church property. At the beginning, the numbers of years in school were few and often interrupted by the need to do farm work.

Only one school room was available which many times had as many as 60 kids participating, divided in four classes and taught by just one teacher. The students had to walk up to 6 Km (about 3.5 miles) barefoot to their first school, even during cold days when there was frost in the morning. In their earliest years kids had to work but had time to do their homework and to play.

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*Continued on page 9.*

## Volhynia Germans, cont.

### LANGUAGE FOR COMMUNICATION

The immigrants brought the German language with them. In many homes the families spoke a "Plattdeutsch" dialect (used in areas close to the German North Sea). Instruction in the schools and churches was conducted in the German language. The German word vocabulary was not large and mixed with Russian, Polish and Jewish influences. In Brazil this language was further mixed with Portuguese words.

The German language still exists despite leaving Volhynia more than a hundred years ago. Today this language is still spoken by the kids and youth in some families. But generally, it is clear that the present generation understands little or nothing of the German language. It is important to add that German was passed on for all these many years primarily orally from parents to their kids without formal instructions. The Plattdeutsch dialect was only taught during the first generation of Germans from Russia in Brazil.

Because of the outbreak of the Second World War, the government by decree outlawed the German immigrants and their offspring from speaking their mother's language. Many were arrested and mistreated just because they spoke German at home. Some were jailed as criminals.

Bibles, books and other documents were buried by the German immigrants so that they did not have to hand them over. Consequently, so many of these important documents have been lost.

### MEDICAL CARE

At the beginning the immigrants had no nearby medical care. If a hospital was available it was far away. Because of bad roads, limited transportation means with mainly horse wagons available, little money; a doctor's help was the last resort and consequently many times too late. Thus for these difficult reasons, they used home remedies which they had learned from their families and friends. As a result, the death rate was high, especially with the children.

The children were born at home. The midwife was an older woman but without any technical schooling. They had knowledge of folk medicine, different teas and house products. Sometimes if the birth was very difficult the woman was transported to a hospital. But hospitals were too far away and many times they got there too late, with medical complications leading to the death of the child, the mother, or both.

Even with all these enormous difficulties, the German from Russia immigrants did not lose their courage. All felt peaceful and lucky because they now had their own land and everything they planted produced great yields.

*Continued on page 11.*

## GROW Board of Directors

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In Memory—Maxine Daily, Director Emeritus  
In Memory—Clifford Haberman, Director Emeritus  
Robert Majhor, Director Emeritus  
Ed Weber, Director Emeritus

# GROW QUARTERLY CALENDAR

JULY 2013						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4 Independence Day	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
<b>43rd Annual Germans from Russia Heritage Society International Convention</b>						
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



**Chapter Meetings are held at:**

**New Deutsches Haus**  
(formerly the Fellowship Masonic Center)  
5626 NE Alameda St., Portland, OR  
(57th & Sandy Blvd.)

**Directions:**

From the North taking I-205 or I-5,  
Take Columbia Exit and go to Cully, turn South  
until you come to Sandy Blvd. & 57th/NE Alameda.

From the South on I-205 take Halsey Exit,  
go West to 57th, make Right to Sandy/Alameda.

From I-5, take I-84 to 60th, turn North to Halsey,  
Left to 57th, North to Sandy & Alameda.

38 car parking across from the Deutsches Haus.

**Doors open at 1 pm • Meeting 2-5 pm**

## Chapter Meetings

**23 June**

Russian Folk Singer Natalia Hougen

**25 August**

GROW Picnic - Main City Park, Gresham, OR

**22 September**

Presenter: Larry Kuntz & Convention Reports

AUGUST 2013						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
GROW PICNIC						

SEPTEMBER 2013						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Newsletter Deadline	Labor Day					
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
		Board Meeting				
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Chapter Meeting	GENEALOGY WORKSHOP					
29	30					

## Fundraising Opportunities—

**At No Cost To You!!**

- Electronic Newsletters. Receive your newsletters via email, and save GROW in postage costs. Thank You!

### **Other Opportunities to Help...**

- **Oscar Geisler** is recycling inkjet and laser cartridges. Bring your empty cartridges to Chapter Meetings or contact Oscar directly. He can also help you receive approximately 50% discount on refilled cartridges.
- Visit **Cathy Lobb** before/after the Chapter Meetings to view the fascinating collection of books, audio CDs, videos, etc. that are available for sale. Also take a look at the tote bags, key chains and magnets, all with the GROW logo.
- **Family Heritage Recipe Book** - \$12.50 at Chapter Meeting or add \$4.00 s/h for mailing. Call 503-659-8248, rahaas@q.com

# Volhynia Germans, cont.

## Map of South Brazil, States Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina and Parana

Supplied by Vilson Wutzke, May 20, 2013

The Volhynia Germans first settled in the Santa Rosa area. Most of them still live in this region. In 1953 new German settlements were started in the western jungles of the state of Parana.

Many Germans who had little land in Rio Grande do Sul went to the state of Parana, because there in the jungle land was cheap. Therefore they were able to buy more land for themselves and their children. They again cleared the jungle with a hand saw, axe and bush whacker/sickle. They settled in Toledo, Marechal Candido Rondon, Nova Santa Rosa and Maripa. Later a few went to Ipiranga and to Ponta Grossa.

In 1975 some of the German immigrants went from the state of Parana to Paraguay. Again it was for the same reason. Those who had little land sold it and then by resettling could buy more land for themselves and their kids. Again they felled the trees, cleared the land for planting, build some huts and then later on established a better home and life.

At the beginning of 1980 some Germans moved to the states of Mato Grosso do Sul and Mato Grosso.



Now there were other reasons to become a large scale farmer. The jungle no longer needed to be cleared by hand because now tractors were used. On an average these Germans bought 400 to 1000 hectares and even more.

### NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS WELCOMED!

Please send articles, photos, stories, anecdotes, recipes, etc. to:

Janice Prunier, Editor • 1218 Pacific Ave., Everett, WA 98201

NEW EMAIL ADDRESS - [grownnewslettereditor@gmail.com](mailto:grownnewslettereditor@gmail.com)

Deadline for next issue is September 1, 2013.



## GROW Membership Application

### Germans from Russia Oregon and Washington



Years of Membership \_\_\_\_\_  New  Renewal

Birth Month (optional) \_\_\_\_\_ Anniversary Month (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (include area code) \_\_\_\_\_ Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Name of ancestral village(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Family surnames \_\_\_\_\_

Names of adults in household desiring membership cards \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my remittance of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Membership fees are due annually on January 1.

GROW Newsletter/Operation Donation (minimum \$5.00)

GRHS Membership \$50.00 • GRHS Lifetime Membership \$1000.00 (\$200.00 per year)

Make checks payable to GROW - US Currency Only • Mail to: Adi Hartfeil, 4230 S. Terra Vista Ct., West Linn, OR 97068

Please send email updates and address corrections to Adi Hartfeil - [abhartfeil@comcast.net](mailto:abhartfeil@comcast.net)

**GROW Quarterly Newsletter Deadlines: September 1 • December 1 • March 1 • June 1**

All submissions are welcome. If you would like materials returned, please include a SASE.

Send articles to: [grownnewslettereditor@gmail.com](mailto:grownnewslettereditor@gmail.com) or by mail to: Janice Prunier, 1218 Pacific Ave., Everett, WA 98201

## Resources for Aiding in Your Research

### Organization Websites:

AHSGR Library  
ahsgr.org

G-R Heritage Collection  
lib.ndsu.nodak.edu/grhc

GRHS Library  
grhs.org

EEGS - East European Genealogical Soc, Inc.  
eegsociety.org

FEEFHS - Fed of E. European Family His Soc  
eefhs.org

LDS Family History Library  
familysearch.org

National Genealogical Society  
nsgenealogy.org

### Archive Websites:

National Archives (US)  
archives.gov/aas/

Odessa Archives (Pixel)  
odessa3.org

Ellis Island  
ellisland.org

Canadian National Archives  
archives.ca

# GENEALOGY WORKSHOP

## Germans from Russia

Sunnyside Seventh-day Adventist Church

**10501 SE Market Street • Room 21**

(Just east of the Adventist Medical Center) Portland, OR

**Starting September 23**

**7:00 to 8:30 pm**

*2nd & 4th Monday  
of each month*

**Sept. 23 • Oct. 14, 28**

**Nov. 11, 25 • Dec. 9**

For more information, how to find the church,  
and how to get into the church contact:  
Harold Lang, vhlang@q.com, 503-251-2948



Germans from Russia Heritage Society

## GROW Chapter

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