



Chronicle Unserer Leute

Vol 29, Issue 3

May/June 2008

The American Historical Society of Germans from Russia is an international organization dedicated to the discovery, collection, preservation, and the dissemination of information related to the history, cultural heritage, and genealogy of Germanic settlers in the Russian Empire and their descendants.

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Oregon Chapter website with the newsletter: <http://www.ahsgroregon.com>

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our Oregon Chapter of AHSGR was well represented by a sizable group of hardy members who came out on a crispy Friday morning, April 11, 2008, to attend an outdoor ground breaking for the new **LIBRARY AND LEARNING CENTER** at **CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY**. We were welcomed by Concordia President Charles E. Schlimpert and presentations were made by speakers representing volunteers, students, and the community. Dr. Brent Mai, head of libraries, took his turn at breaking ground with a special shovel, and all AHSGR Oregon Chapter members felt a sense of pride and happiness that our Russian-German heritage will find a welcome and friendly home in the "**CENTER FOR VOLGA GERMAN STUDIES**" at the new **CONCORDIA LIBRARY AND LEARNING CENTER**. A special "thank you" to all G-R's who made the special effort to turn out for the momentous event.

And speaking of "momentous events" we are proud to announce that:

1. Our very own **ADAM SWINT** has attained the title/rank of **EAGLE SCOUT**. Congratulations to Adam for maintaining his dedication and strong sense of purpose in achieving this very special honor. Adam has a bright future ahead of him, and we are

blessed to welcome him as a special member--a young person who is happy in knowing and learning about his G-R heritage.

2. **DIANE KOCH** reminded us at our meeting on Saturday, April 20, 2008, that the **OREGON CHAPTER OF AHSGR** will celebrate its **37TH BIRTHDAY** on **APRIL 25, 2008**.

Diane brought letters and documents related to the **APRIL 25, 1971**, founding of our Oregon Chapter. Many thanks to Diane for her consistent, caring and vital input. It was also good to see Ray and Diane at our meeting again. It was equally interesting to note in the documents presented by Diane that Ray's father, the honorable Mr. Peter Koch, was our first president and a key individual in forming our chapter. The Koch humor and giving spirit has blessed this chapter for almost four decades. Many thanks to Ray and Diane for their on-going involvement and caring.

3. **DR. BRENT MAI**, with input from your Oregon Chapter Board, has offered the opportunity to hold a memorial event for the **AUGUST 28, 1941** edict by Stalin which forced our German ancestors in Russia to leave their homes in the Fall of 1941 to endure a life of forced labor, starvation and cruelty of all kinds for decades. The exact date and program will be structured in the coming weeks. Our best estimate is that sometime in October or early November will be the most likely time available. Ray Koch and Erna
(continued on page 2)

President's Message (cont'd)

Marquart have volunteered their ideas and input. All members are welcome to become involved with their talents, ideas, time, and other contributions. Call me if you want to help.

On a note of concern and prayer, we have learned that **ZANE MILLER** is experiencing serious health challenges. We missed Lela and Zane at our April meeting on Saturday and remind our membership to keep them in your prayers and thoughts. Zane and Lela hosted our chapter summer picnics at their farm for many years, and have been a major presence in all events and issues of AHSGR life and the G-R world.

We are also heartened to know that **LOIS KLAUS**, our dedicated treasurer, has emerged from an extended bout of the flu and is getting back in the swing of things. Welcome back, Lois!

Upcoming and special dates to note include:

- **MAY 4, 2008 - COUNCIL OF NORTHWEST CHAPTERS (CNC)** meeting at Ocean Shores, Washington
- **MAY 10, 2008 - REVISED DATE FOR MEETING OF AHSGR OREGON CHAPTER BOARD**
- **MAY 17, 2008 - HERITAGE FEST** (annual meeting of California Council of Chapters) **PLEASANT HILL, CALIFORNIA**
- **JULY 28 - AUGUST 3, 2008 - ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL AHSGR CONVENTION, CASPER, WYOMING**
- **OCTOBER 7, 2008 - GERMAN AMERICAN DAY**
- **OCTOBER 17, 18, 19, 2008 - CNC MEETING IN LEAVENWORTH, WASHINGTON**

If you have an interest or need info in any of the above, please give me a call at (503) 221-1827.

Enjoy the Spring.

Ed Wagner

President

Oregon Chapter of AHSGR

[Editor's note: This is the 18th installment serializing Marie Krieger's autobiography. In it we get a look at life for GR's, in both rural and urban settings, in the Pacific Northwest that spans over seven decades.]

SOMETHING OF MYSELF

by Marie Trupp Krieger
(1910-2006)

(copyright Marie Trupp Krieger)



I had shopped at Meier & Frank's department store for my kitchen utensils during the summer months. I let it be known that a bridal shower was not to my liking. I did wish to select my own necessary items. Who cared to receive ten cookie jars?

Only our immediate families were invited to our wedding service held at our house when we pledged our troth to each other in front of the fireplace. A simple reception and the serving of Cake was observed in our basement. The Rev. Paul Kalmbach performed the ceremony. I had secretly promised myself while a high school student in Odessa, Washington that Rev. Kalmbach should tie the knot if he resided in the vicinity because of his generosity and thoughtfulness shown me in the twenties. I wore the traditional white wedding dress I had purchased at Meier & Frank's, carried a bridal bouquet and borrowed the veil from Walt's sister, Amelia, but used a head piece of my own choice. My sister, Helen, had married Carl Abel on June 10, 1939. I had been her maid of honor so it was only natural that she served as my matron of honor. Carl Abel as best man, attended the groom while a Junior bridesmaid, Sylvia Bartalamay, the daughter of Adarn and Elsie Bartalamay, special friends from Odessa, Washington, completed the wedding party. The Gladys Gilbert photo studio photographed the event

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Something of Myself (cont'd)



Walter and Marie (Trupp) Krieger

on Saturday evening, October 25, 1941. A minimum number of wedding gifts pleased us. Two or three alarm time pieces were set by Walt's brother, John, to ring at different hours during the night. We didn't own a car nor did we travel anywhere for a honeymoon; Walt took Monday off work, I took the trolley bus to downtown Portland to shop for small items, among them a dishpan. I sent announcements to close friends; bridal pictures and short statements to The Oregonian and The Spokesman-Review, Spokane, Washington daily paper. My picture appeared on a random page of the Spokane paper along with other surrounding area news items. My former Superintendent of the Tonasket schools, Mr. Ed Notson clipped the picture with several attached items and pinned it on the bulletin board at the high school. One caption read, "Stole Saddles, Sent to Prison" and the other, "Plan to stock million Acres." One of my former students mailed it to me by Christmas; I'm positive the headings connected to my picture caused quite a few chuckles.

Walt worked odd hours, took a brown bag lunch giving me exclusive right to the daytime hours for much needed rest after months of work devoted to this house. Now the housework was light so I could loaf while listening to soap operas; I soon grew weary hearing similar episodes and turned to more profitable unfinished projects, a scrapbook and needlework. I had assembled a lovely "hope chest" during leisure hours while teaching school--a crocheted white bedspread in a popcorn stitch, a handmade afghan with wool yarn in rose shades, pillow cases, dresser scarfs, tablecloths, dishtowels, and handtowels were embroidered with crocheted edgings. More often than a person would think sheer persistence is the difference between success and failure. I had achieved a goal but I wasn't able to sit on my laurels very long.

On December 7th, less than two months after our "Happy Day", the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. War clouds had drifted through our back door almost destroying our navy. A shocking disaster united our beloved country; aluminum collections became popular, gasoline and food were rationed via stamps, factories tuned to defense materials, all enterprises geared to the war effort. I feared for my husband's involvement as young men left the sanctuary of their homes, perhaps never to return to the safety our nation provided. With all eyes directed to fighting a war, our family furnished the first Portland traffic fatality in January 1942 when Walt's brother-in-law, Jack Owen succumbed.

(continued in the next issue)

KOCH'S KOLUMN

by

Dr. Raymond P. Koch

Within four days two of our German-Russian brethren were front page news in our local paper, The Dallas Chronicle.

Russian born Carl Kramer and Edgar Ashbrenner, born in Vancouver, Washington, were saluted for having both reached the century mark.

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Koch's Kolumn (cont'd)

Both are highly regarded locally with much to be admired for by the families they raised and the contributions they have made to our society.

Our local youth playground with softball and baseball fields and soccer facilities is named Kramer Field to honor Dennis Kramer, Carl's son, for his contributions to its development.

Carl's daughter, Karleene, is the widow of Gene Morrow, the noted coach from Newport, Oregon, and once a quarterback for Oregon State College. He's a recent inductee into the Oregon Sports Hall of Fame.

Because of limited space our recognition of Ed Ashbrenner will be in our next newsletter. His career deserves more space than we have available this month.

For Carl's 95th birthday, Karleene wrote a biography for her father that can't be improved upon. He is still as active as he was when the biography was written and which follows:

Carl Kramer, 95 and Still in Love with Life

by Karleene Kramer Morrow
Newport, Oregon – September, 2003

In November 2001, Steve Schreiber invited me to write a biography of my then 93 year old father to share with other AHSGR members. I put that on the back burner, thinking, I suppose, that he was going to live forever. And well he may.

This is his story.

Carl Kramer's father, Johann Karl Kramer of Krasnoyar, was born 1882 (parents Karl Kramer, b. 1862, and Emilie Sturtz, b. 1861). At a fair in Krasnoyar, he first saw Sophia Sittner of Enders (parents David Sittner, b. 1840, and Sophia Elert/Oehlert, b. 1843). A soft spoken, reserved man, it was a surprise to his family, when he later confessed it was love at first sight. Carl and Sophia's romance progressed toward marriage, but he needed a dependable income to support a wife and future family.

The Krasnoyar Kramers were Lutheran, but J. Karl's older sister had married a Mennonite man and moved to the southern Ukraine. J. Karl was gifted in all things mechanical, so with the help of the sister and brother-in-law, he obtained a job at a Mennonite mill in Chontitza, Ekaterinaslav, where he kept steam powered machines in tune. As quickly as he was established he sent for his betrothed, and the couple were married in 1902.

Two daughters were born to the Kramers: Emilie in 1903 and Sophia in 1906. On 18 March of 1908 their first son, Karl, was born. When he was 2 years old his parents made the decision to immigrate to the United States. It is a mark to his incredible memory that he can recall a few sketchy details of the trip. The family traveled by train across Russia and Europe, and Karl can catch a glimpse of traveling through Austria and on to Rotterdam. The ship they took, The Sicilian Prince, carried over 300 immigrants in her steerage, but the Kramer families occupied one of the four state rooms, cabin #3. Karl remembers the family taking turns going up on deck, because someone had to stay in the cabin and "guard the food," a large, sturdy basket of cheese, breads, sausage and other goods that his mother carried across the continent and across the ocean. That basket resides in Carl Kramer's kitchen to this day.

The Sicilian Prince docked in Halifax, Nova Scotia, on 26 April, 1910, and from there the family traveled by train to Chicago, where their new life began. Many friends and some family from Krasnoyar, Enders, Schwed, and Roseheim settled in the Jefferson Park area, and church services were held in whatever basement the immigrants could find. Together they made it their goal to build their own place of worship, Eden Evangelical Lutheran Church, of which J. Karl Kramer was a founder and served as its first president. In later years sufficient money was raised to build the new Eden Church which still stands on the corner of Gunnison and Leclair Streets.

Sophia, who was pregnant during the voyage, gave birth to second son David on 26 September, 1910, in

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Koch's Kolumn (cont'd)

Chicago. Three more sons were born to the family, Heinrich (Henry, 1913), Friedrich (Fred, 1915) and Johann (John, 1917). Sophia's prayer book shows a last child, "Babi sohn, 13 May, 1921, died at birth."

Carl was turned away from school at the start of first grade because he spoke only German. His older sisters taught him English in the evenings, and by the start of the second half of the year, he was admitted to school with a command of his new language. He was an enthusiastic learner and a natural artist. His 5th grade classroom had blackboards on three sides, as well as the teacher's board at the front of the room. Carl drew a war scene in the room, filling the blackboards with battles, guns, cannon, soldiers, bombings and victory.

When the new Eden church was built, Carl was then a young man of twenty. He painted a large oil of Christ walking on the water saving Peter, which hung above the church altar until well after the Second World War, when it was accidentally destroyed during a renovation of the church.

Due to the Great Depression, and being raised in an immigrant family of seven children, the possibility of university study was not available to Carl or his siblings. He took up the trade of sign artists, although his love of learning often found him in night classes in both art and academics. In later years he taught art classes and spent much of his leisure time working in various media: oils, acrylic, pastels, and charcoal. Carl has had many exhibits and showings of his work over the years. He paints scenes and old saws and kerosene stoves and creates beautiful Hexafus signs in the fashion of the Pennsylvania Dutch. He has done a variety of wood carvings including lifelike buffalo and ducks. A gun buff and collector, he checks gunstocks and carves hunting scenes into them, creations he does without the use of glasses. One of his many interests is the study of history with a special passion for the Civil War. He is well read and knowledgeable in these subjects, with an impressive memory for dates and details. He once told a newspaper reporter, "If I was a hundred and ninety-one, instead of ninety-one, I'd still have a lot more to learn."

After World War II broke out, Carl, wife Marjorie, and their two children, Karleene and Dennis, left Chicago to move to the West. The family settled in Oregon and in the years to follow all of his siblings, their families and his parents, came to live nearby. In 1943, Capt. Marion Carl, ace fighter pilot, was on tour raising war bonds. At a bond rally where he was guest speaker, a 4'x 8' portrait of him was exhibited, painted by Carl Kramer. It was presented to the Captain at the conclusion of the rally.

For many years Carl was active in the community Rod and Gun Club where he was called by the nickname "Shots." He holds the NRA highest medal, Expert Marksman. He stopped hunting long ago, but still likes to target shoot. He says some days he can put every shot into the bull's-eye, but laughingly adds that on other days he can barely hit the corner of the target.

At 95 he is handsome, healthy, active and interesting. He has endless stories to tell, ranging from last week to last century. A few years ago he was in a fashion show. He participated in a talent show where he did a painting on stage which was auctioned. The proceeds were donated to the city's senior center. At Oktoberfest he can still be counted on to do a face painting. Only the badgering of his daughter finally convinced him to quit riding his bicycle, but he continues the life habit of daily walks.

During the 1920's his flapper sisters taught him ballroom dancing, and it remains a favorite activity. He lost his wife in the mid 70's, but he and his long-time lady friend dance on Friday nights at a local fraternal organization. They visit a nursing home regularly where they perform their dancing and socialize with the patients. He still produces paintings on a regular basis. The photo of him on the next page shows two recent oils of Mill Creek Falls, which he was commissioned to do by two men who each wanted an original. He once did a mural on a city center wall--a 10 foot by 150 foot Civil War scene. He completed the job alone in 7 days.

Carl still drives and drives well. His insurance company sent him a Certificate of Recognition for 50

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Koch's Kolumn (cont'd)



years of safe driving. He commented dryly that they should have sent a check and shivers to think how much money he has contributed to the insurance industry.

K.K.M.

Note: Two grandsons were state champion wrestlers in high school and the eldest, Kevin Kramer, is our present high school wrestling coach and an outstanding teacher according to my grandsons.

Carl has a wonderful group of descendants.

****Upcoming Events****

MAY

NOTE: **OREGON CHAPTER BOARD MEETING** for May will be **Saturday, MAY 10 at 10:00 am**, 1830 NE 141st Avenue (and not May 3, as previously planned). Please change your calendar notation.

18 May, Sunday, 2:30 pm, general meeting at Rivercrest Church.

JUNE

7 June, Saturday, 10:00 am, board meeting at 1830 NE 141st Avenue, Portland. All members welcome to attend.

21 June, Saturday, 12:00-2:00 pm, general chapter meeting and potluck at Rivercrest Church.

JULY

NO BOARD OR CHAPTER MEETING

July 28 - August 3, Joint AHSGR/GRHS Convention in Casper, Wyoming

AUGUST

23 August, Saturday, 11:00 am to 3:00 pm, Oregon Chapter picnic at Tualatin Community Park. More details in the next issue.

Meeting Directions and Information

Unless otherwise noted, all chapter meetings and genealogy workshops are held at Rivercrest Church, 3201 NE 148th, Portland, Oregon.

Rivercrest Community church is located between NE Sandy Blvd. and NE Halsey Street on NE 148th. Park in the lower parking lot and follow the directional signs to the meeting rooms.

Potluck information: Oregon Chapter meetings held on Saturdays are generally two and one-half hours in length and include a potluck lunch. Please bring an entree, salad, or dessert to share and your own plate and utensils. At the potluck lunches, \$2 for members and \$2 for non-members is requested to help defray the cost of the meeting facilities.

MEMORIES OF NORKA

by Conrad Brill
as told to George Brill
(manuscript provided by Bill Burbach)

[Former chapter member George Brill was fascinated with the history and folklore of the German-Russians. He would listen hours to his father Conrad tell stories and personal accounts of Norka. Son George wrote a paper of his father's experience on life in Norka. This is part 12.]

There was a Spady family where the grandfather was in the business of doctoring and was making good money. The story goes that when he was building a bake house he stacked his horde of silver coin in the brick threshold in front of the oven. After the old doctor died and his wife was remodeling the bake house she discovered the silver coins. The money was used to buy a mercantile store. They had no horses themselves and they would hire out persons when needed. They would call upon me and my brothers on occasions to make errands. When going to Schilling or Saratov we would always check with them to see if should bring anything back instead of coming back empty handed.

The Spadys had a son Sashja who came to Oregon and worked as a hod carrier. He got bad blisters form the brickwork and wrote home about the heavy work. His parents sent the fare for him to return to Norka. Being that we hauled for the Spady mercantile, Sashja would proposition me to take him to good fishing spots. The family could run the store without too much help from him. In the mercantile there was a metal barred cage where the Mother sat knitting and watching the store. Customers came and picked up what they wanted, than went to the cage to pay her. The son had a knack for obtaining money out of the cash drawer with a long rod tipped with sticky pitch. Unbeknownst to her he could pick money from behind her. He would pay me in cash or asked if I needed gloves, a cap or anything else from the store which he gave me for hauling him.

During the revolution the youngest son of the Spady family, Alexander, with Adam Schwartz, a Krieger who hauled filz (felt) and me would try getting out of Russia via Kiev. We went with Polish soldiers

returning to Poland from Russia where they were held during WWI. We intended going through Poland to Germany and than send for the women and children. The authorities in Kiev wouldn't consent to letting the Poles out. For three weeks we Germans posed as Poles trying to get permission to cross the border. If they were not having any luck getting out the authorities might discover that we were not Poles but Volga Germans. We decided to depart and return to Norka. Anyone trying to leave Norka was advised to go by way of Minsk (Siberia) rather than Kiev.

My brothers and I hauled lumber for coffins from the Schilling sawmills. The lumber was kept in a shed behind the pastor's horse barn. When a person's family who was short of funds died they could get lumber for a coffin. Old Mr. Mohr made coffins for people not handy enough to make their own. The going price for coffins was two rubles and if a family didn't have the funds the gemeinde would pick up the cost. When the supply of lumber was being depleted a person with a wagon going to Schilling was asked to bring some back.

My brother George, his wife, my sister Elizabeth, her husband Jacob Schleining and many other relatives would write and tell us to sell out and move to the U.S. Here you could get a dollar a day for lying on your back greasing railway cars. Why farm and fight the elements in Russia when you could live in a big city and work for a daily or hourly pay rate. Besides our sister and brother we had my mother's four sisters and families plus many other relatives who made the move. In 1912 my brother George sent home two fares to come to Portland: one for my sister Lena and one for me. I was 17 and had discovered girls so didn't want to go. I pretended it was because I didn't want to leave my parents. My brother ten years older had been going with a girl in Norka. Her parents however had sent her with other family members previously to Portland. He therefore opted to go in my place. Conrad and Lena left Norka and came to Portland where he married his old girlfriend Mary Urbach. Sister Lena met and married John Leichner and lived in Ritzville, Washington, and later moved to Portland too. We kept doing our farm work in Russia while keeping in touch

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Memories of Norka (cont'd)

with relatives in America. Daily our neighbors and friends were leaving because of the threat of war and every male my age would be caught up in the draft. My aunt and uncle Schreiber and cousins left Norka by selling their dusche (land share) to an Adams family as did many other people. Year later after the revolution this land or the dusche would be declared null and void. The land was taken away from the people who bought dusche and returned to the original owners who were still available.

(continued in the next issue)

Street Maps of the German-Russian Community in Portland, Oregon by Bill Burbach

Many German-Russians settled in NE Portland. Street maps have been prepared showing city blocks, sites and G-R occupants. This project covers areas bounded by Fremont St., Wygant St., Cleveland Ave., 15th Ave. and Fremont St., Graham St., Union Ave., and 7th Avenue. The project includes listings from the 1921 city directory, 1938 city directory, Sanford fire maps and assessor's maps. About 650 families are identified.

[illegible]

AHSGR Oregon Chapter Membership Form

Membership fees are for a calendar year that **renews each January 1st**. Dues shown below include \$10 for an Oregon Chapter membership. The remaining fee is for membership in the AHSGR international organization. We will forward your fee to AHSGR international.

Membership Categories - Annual International and Oregon Chapter Dues

Individual & Family	\$ 60
Institutional	\$ 60
Contributing	\$ 85
Sustaining	\$110
Int'l Life Member	\$750 (may be paid in 5 annual installments--add \$10 to each installment for Chapter dues)
Int'l Life Member	\$ 10 (for fully paid International Life Members who pay only Chapter dues)
Student (15 - 24)	\$ 15 (Receive 4 newsletters, Youth Membership packet, Membership card, and discounts)
Youth (1 - 14)	\$ 8 on specially advertised books and special convention benefits.)
Newsletters Only	\$ 12 For non-members

New Member____ Renewal____ Individual____ Family____ Youth____ Student____

Membership Year 200__

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone _____ E-Mail _____

I want to receive my Oregon Chapter newsletter through the web (Adobe Acrobat format)? Yes____ No____

In order for us to service our membership more effectively, please list all of your German family names and all villages that you believe your ancestors are from. Ancestral Villages - Please specify for each member

Surnames - Please specify for each member _____

There are many opportunities to help build our chapter. Let us know if you desire to participate actively.:

Genealogy Workshops _____

Other _____

Newsletter _____

Publicity _____

Library _____

Ways & Means _____

Programs _____

Reminder Calls for Upcoming Meetings _____

Hospitality _____

Sunshine _____

Please make all checks payable to **AHSGR OREGON CHAPTER** and send your membership dues and applications to:

Lois Klaus, 111 N.E. 67th Avenue, Portland, OR 97213-5029

phone: (503) 232-3065 e-mail: lklaus@earthlink.net

**AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF GERMANS FROM RUSSIA
OREGON CHAPTER**
4616 SE Adams Street
Milwaukie, Oregon 97222-5325



CHAPTER OFFICERS & DIRECTORS 2008-2009

President:

Ed Wagner (term expires 2009)
(503) 228-0007 - Fax: (503) 228-1016

Vice-President:

Robert Thorn (term expires 2009)
(503) 635-6651 - e-mail: bobthorn@hotmail.com

Secretary:

Lela Miller (term expires 2009)
(360) 573-5628

Treasurer:

Lois Klaus (term expires 2009)
(503) 232-3065 - e-mail: kklaus@earthlink.net

Directors:

Bill Burbach (term expires 2008)
(503) 654-4694

Jene Goldhammer (term expires 2008)
(503) 771-5813 - e-mail: Gold520@aol.com

Erna Markwart (term expires 2009)
(503) 254-4454

Zane Miller (term expires 2009)
(360) 573-5628

Molly Ann Rimerman (term expires 2008)
(503) 636-1786 - e-mail: makrim@aracnet.com

Steve Schreiber (term expires Dec. 2009)
(503) 774-9753 - e-mail: steven.schreiber@gmail.com

George Swint (term expires 2008)
(503) 255-5833 - e-mail: 79scout@msn.com

Chuck Williams (term expires 2009)
(503) 252-0902 - e-mail: f26ruth@comcast.net

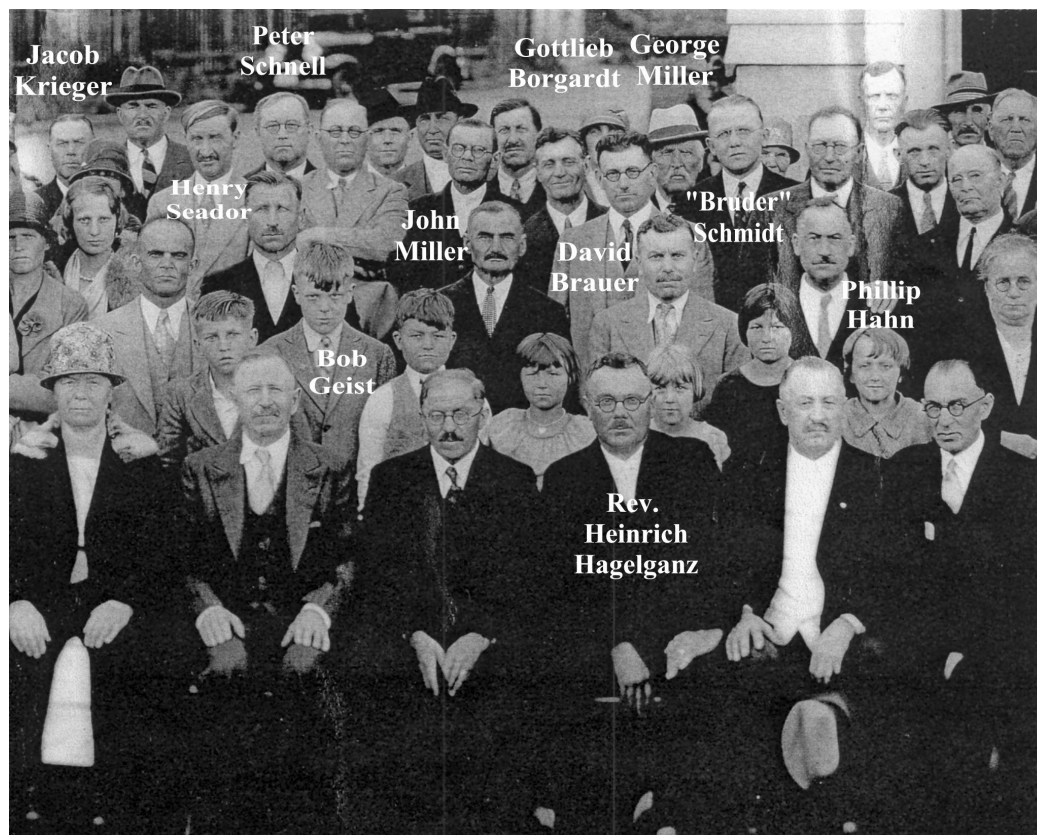


Photo portion 2 of
**Congregational
Evangelical Brethren
Church Conference in
1930**

- Jacob Krieger
- Henry Seador
- Peter Schnell
- Bob Geist
- John Miller
- Gottlieb Borgardt
- David Bauer
- Rev. Heinrich Hagelganz
- George Miller
- "Bruder" Schmidt
- Phillip Hahn

[names are centered above
head or on shoulder or chest]