

Chronicle Unserer Leute

Oregon Chapter of the American Historical
Society of Germans from Russia

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July – September 2021

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President's Message

Hello everyone!

Can you see it? It's getting brighter, and we are actually getting there. Of course, you know, I'm talking about the light at the end of the tunnel. We are getting through the pandemic. There is going to be an end. Cases are down. Hospitalizations are down. Most everyone who wanted to get a vaccine has been able to. And, hopefully, by the time you are reading this, the mandates in Oregon and Washington will have been dropped. *[At the time of producing this newsletter, 65.2% of Oregonians and 68% of Washingtonians age 16 and up have received at least one dose of the vaccine. - Ed.]* Life will return to normal — or at least it will be more normal than it has been for the last 16 months. Hurray!!

With that in mind, we are planning to resume chapter meetings in the fall beginning with the first one on Sunday, September 19. Mark your calendars! We would love to see everyone. We anticipate this to be a time to just get together and reconnect after such a long time apart.

I have been fortunate in the last ten years or so to have been able to attend our AHSGR National Conventions four times. They are a lot of fun! So, it was sad last year when the 2020 convention was cancelled. And then, sad again when this summer's convention had to be turned into a virtual convention. That being said, however, I am looking forward to the online event scheduled for July 13-15. While staring at a computer screen for long hours is not nearly as enjoyable as joining everyone in a banquet hall for a live speaker and some awesome food, it is shaping up to be a varied program with many interesting speakers and interesting topics. And, one of the presenters is our own Oregon Chapter past president, Steve Schreiber! His presentations are always interesting and enjoyable, and I'm looking forward to hearing from him. Going online does make the convention more accessible for many people for whom distance and travel would be obstacles for attending, so that might be one plus for going virtual. I will just have to make my own batch of apple kuche to enjoy by myself during one of the breaks!

Celebrate JULY 4th AT Jantzen BEACH PARK

IN JANTZEN'S NEW SPORTS ARENA
JULY 3, 4, 5
DAY AND NIGHT
STARTING
Friday Night

Cowboy Contest
—INCLUDING—
WILD BUFFALO RIDING!
BRONC BUSTING
STEER RIDING
BULLDOGGING
MANY OTHER EXCITING EVENTS!

YOUR TICKET INCLUDES
FREE ADMISSION TO PARK

55¢ PER PERSON AND FREE PARKING
GRANDSTAND COVERED SEATS

- ★ **FREE FIREWORKS**
(SATURDAY NIGHT)
- ★ **FREE KIDDIES' SHOW**
(Saturday Afternoon—Nate Cohn's Stage of Tomorrow)
- ★ **FREE WATER STUNTS**
(Saturday Afternoon—Sons of Neptune—Something doing over, minor. Free Parking and Toilet Facilities)
- ★ **SWIMMING**
Swim in Jantzen's safe, crystal pure pools. Special children's pools.
- ★ **DANCE**
Eddie Fitzpatrick and his famous M.C. band playing in Jantzen's beautiful ballroom.

A Complete CELEBRATION AT ONE LOCATION

ENJOY A SAFE AND SANE 4TH!
Take Jantzen Street Car on Washington at 45th or at Broadway

SWIM - DANCE - PICNIC - PLAY

At this time of year I always feel the need to call attention to our most important national holiday, the Fourth of July, America's Independence Day. Our country is not without problems, but it is still the best country in the world — dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. And that we all have the rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and that with hard work and the opportunities available here, anything can be achieved. We are truly blessed to live in America! Because of all of this I have huge gratitude for my brave German from Russia great-grandparents who had the courage to leave all they knew behind and come to start a new life here. They are my heroes!

Have a great summer, a happy 4th of July, and see you in September!

Carole

From the Editor

As I write this, the Portland area is staring down the barrel of a record-breaking heat wave. I was born in the summer, but I have to admit I've never been able to stomach hot weather. Summer is supposed to be spent outdoors having picnics and picking berries — not huddled in a musty basement, waiting out an infernal Heat Dome.

I remember my childhood summers spent wandering around Portland's Brooklyn neighborhood, searching for free snacks off the blackberry bushes that grew in every gravelly alley. My dad was pretty hands-off during the summers, and my brother and I were largely feral children, living off the fat of the land until it was dinnertime. We'd come home dusty and sweaty, arms and legs scratched up from reaching deep into the brambles where the juiciest, sweetest berries always hid.



Glass lantern slide of Oregon loganberries, ca 1910s. Photo courtesy Oregon Historical Society

Nowadays I grow all the blackberries I can eat (thornless ones, thank you very much) and am thankful I no longer have to spend my summers picking berries. I know many of you had summer berry-picking jobs as kids, and in this issue I write a little about that history. I'll share my recipe for Volga German strawberry dumplings (Erdbeerklöße) plus a handy shortcut version for getting the same flavor with less than half the effort.

And since no summer is complete without making pickles and putting up the bounty, I also share an article I wrote some years ago about the history of canning in Portland and Steinfeld's pickles, founded by Volga Germans during the Great Depression. I hope you all stay cool and healthy this summer, and I look forward to seeing your faces in September.

Warm regards (pun very much intended),
Heather



Upcoming Events

AHSGR VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

Connections: Keeping our
German Russian Heritage Alive

July 13-15 2021



International



American Historical Society of Germans From Russia 51st Annual Convention and Virtual Conference

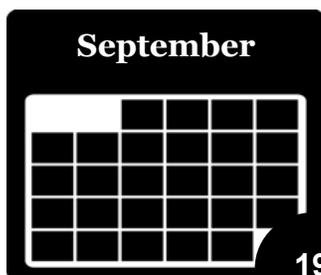
July 13-15, Zoom

You can now register for AHSGR's first ever Virtual Conference. Be prepared to be blown away with a packed schedule of amazing speakers, New insights into diving through the past and new ways to stay connected for the future to come. *\$100 for members, \$150 for non-members. Each ticket is for three days. [Register here](#) or visit www.ahsgr.org for conference details.*

Treffen Tuesday

Last Tuesday of every month on Zoom (3:30-5:30pm Pacific Standard Time)

Join AHSGR's monthly speaker series on a variety of topics. For more information and to register for attendance, visit www.ahsgr.org/news/555913/March-Treffen-Tuesday-Invitation.htm



Oregon Chapter Meeting

Sunday, September 19, 2:00pm

10201 NE 269th Avenue, Battleground, Washington

Lela Miller has graciously offered her backyard for our first in-person post-covid meeting. Come enjoy a relaxing afternoon as we reconnect with each other after our long hiatus, and feel free to bring snacks for sharing. We'll discuss the closure of Concordia University and our plans for the post-pandemic schedule of events.

New Records Available

Member Roger Burbank sends an update with a list of records he's recently acquired:

Hello again,

I am going to try to list all the Volga German records from the Russian Archives that I have, including documents for Norka, Rosenfeld, Langenfeld, Shilling and Lauwe. If I find I missed some, I will add later.

I can do lookups for anything that could help anyone looking at lists below. I have indexed some, not all.

I am always looking to buy Volga German records from Russia. I buy on my own and often my research partners chip in.

1. Complete Kulberg lists. This is a two book set. (Not translated; list is being worked on)
 2. Complete Facius list. (Not translated)
 3. Norka Census reports, copies of originals. These are copies of originals, so they're in Russian. They can be compared to translated reports that are available.
 4. Norka Births, 1834 to 1883, 1903 to 1910. (Not translated) Just received births for years 1894 to 1902 of Norka. These later birth years are important for a record of families prior to leaving for America and other destinations.
 5. Norka Marriages, 1849 to 1868. (Not translated)
 6. Norka Church book, 1834 to 1845. (Not translated)
 7. Norka Church book, 1846 to 1860. (Not translated)
 8. Norka Church book, 1876 to 1890. (Not translated)
 9. Norka Church book, 1891 to 1905. (Not translated but translated books are available)
 10. Norka missing pages for the 1891 to 1905 Church book. (Not translated)
 11. Langenfeld Births, 1892 to 1920. (Not translated, in Russian)
 12. Langenfeld Births, 1872 to 1892. (translated)
 13. Langenfeld Deaths, 1892 to 1920. (Not translated)
 14. Langenfeld Deaths, 1872 to 1892. (Translated)
- The Langenfeld records were purchased by Maggie Hein and translated by Roger and Mary Burbank.
15. Schilling Births, 1766 to 1841. (Not translated, please check with Schilling VC to see what is available that has been translated)
 16. Schilling Census, 1816. (Not translated and not complete)
 17. Schilling Census, 1834. (Not translated. This census is actually in German, which is unusual)
 18. Lauwe Births, 1794 to 1811. (Not translated)

Thank you, Roger! For more information, visit Roger's Facebook page [by clicking here](https://www.facebook.com/Conrad-Burbachs-Volga-German-page-106102461668707/) or going to: <https://www.facebook.com/Conrad-Burbachs-Volga-German-page-106102461668707/>

Little Hands, Big Work

A Brief History of Picking Berries in Portland



Unknown child in a raspberry field, 1909. Photo courtesy Library of Congress

by Heather Arndt Anderson

“[T]here is no country in the known world where wild berries are so common as in Oregon,” wrote historian Herbert Lang in 1885. “In the woods and prairies of this part of the State, no less than eighteen varieties of edible berries, some of them equal in flavor to cultivated sorts, exist, abundant, large and delicious...”¹ Over the decades that followed, Oregon would secure her place on the map as one of the great berry-growing regions of the world.

Although the rolling suburbs beyond the West Hills were an expanse of wheat and other verdure, throughout Portland’s east side, families found extra income growing and harvesting berries on parcels of rural land checkering the suburban neighborhoods. Most lands to the east of 82nd Avenue were still fairly wide-open spaces in the early 1900s, and after 1915, greengrocer Nick Sunseri’s wholesale produce stand on the east bank of the Willamette meant there was a single market to sell the fruits and vegetables rather than having to peddle them door to door.

In 1904, Japanese families began pouring into the Montavilla neighborhood on the east side of Mt. Tabor, and by the close of the decade there were hundreds of Japanese residents growing and harvesting raspberries and loganberries on a thousand or so acres. By 1914, Montavilla was considered one of the most prosperous suburbs on the east side, thanks in large part to urban gardening and produce markets. The Lynch area (now known as the Centennial neighborhood) in outer Southeast was another nexus of urban berry production, and as late as the 1950s the David Douglas neighborhood consisted of nothing but berry fields, a “Piggly Wiggly store and a service station.”² Berrydale Park on 92nd and Taylor (acquired by the City of Portland in 1956) is a testament to this.



Berry picking was a way for Portland women and schoolchildren to earn extra money or to contribute to their family income. Photo ca. 1900. Courtesy of Old Oregon Photos

East Portland’s berry-growing prowess could not be denied, and the further east one traveled, the longer the berry fields remained. Gresham (adjacent to Portland to the east) was once known as the “Raspberry Capital of the World;” vines of the sweet ruby-drupes continue to line SE Stark from Park Rose to Gresham today.



Thanks to the region's rich volcanic soils, Oregon strawberries are, according to nineteenth century historian Herbert Lang, abundant, large and delicious. Hazelwood Creamery advertisement, ca. 1900s. Courtesy of Norm Gholston

In the years leading into (and during) the Great Depression, berry picking offered a way for women and children to contribute to household financial survival. In July 1922, a labor newspaper bulletin announced that in Portland “[b]erry picking is in full swing. A good family man with 13 children helping can earn as high as \$2.75 a day if he exercises strict economy and they all pick from sunrise to sunset.”³ Unfortunately, this was a reality for many Portland kids, as child labor laws and the eight-hour workday were still more than a decade away from federal enactment.

After the Depression, Portland children were still expected to pitch in during berry season; even if their families didn’t need the extra income, the work needed to be done. In 1945, berry pickers were even recruited by Portland Public Schools, who organized school picking groups to get students to and from work on school buses. During peak production, upward of 45 school groups toiled away to keep the fields picked, and thousands more acres still needed picking. Post-war, the USDA continued its recommendation that children were the perfect choice for light agricultural work, depicting in one pamphlet a Portland boy working “6 hours a day during raspberry-picking season. Youth provide ideal labor for this work.”⁴ During the sunny mid-century summers and for decades beyond, berry-picking offered Portland’s baby boomer children a way to stay out of trouble and earn a little spending cash for popcorn and chocolate malteds.

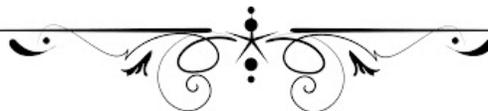
Notes:

¹ Herbert O. Lang, *History of the Willamette Valley, Being a Description of the Valley and its Resources, With an Account of its Discovery and Settlement by White Men, and its Subsequent History: Together with Personal Reminiscences of its Early Pioneers* (Portland: Himes & Lang, 1885), 570

² Howard and Grace Horner, eds., *History and Folklore of the David Douglas Community* (Portland: David Douglas Historical Society, 1989), 131

³ “Bulletin Board,” *The New Majority*, August 5, 1922. p 7

⁴ United States Department of Agriculture, *Farm Work for City Youth* (Washington, D. C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1947), 7



We Can Do It: Puttin' Up in Portland through the Years



Kanning Kitchen, Portland, Oregon

Photo of Uncle Sam's Kanning Kitchen, from For God, for Country, for Home, the National League for Woman's Service, 1920

By Heather Arndt Anderson

In Portland, Oregon, “we can pickle that” has become a joke, but maybe it’s not totally out of left field. By the time pioneers began to arrive in the 1840s, many brought their tools and methods of preservation with them. There were salt barrels and glazed clay crocks filled lovingly with pickles and fruit preserves, kept for leaner times in dark, cool cellars and holes in the ground. When Portland was beginning its transformation from a muddy trading outpost to a destination for settlers and their families in the 1850s, a few potters set up shop in the area, including Chevalier Richardson, who made lead-glazed jam jars and butter churns until he succumbed to lead poisoning and wandered off the map, never to be seen or heard from again.

Kerr Sets the Standard

Then, on one fateful day in 1858, a man by the name of John Landis Mason filed a patent for his molded glass jars with screw-top zinc lids. Not only would they keep food safer for longer (and with considerably less lead), but the process of canning became nearly foolproof. The years that followed saw a surge in home canning, coinciding with the birth of domestic science — that discipline that aimed to apply the same scientific mindset to work inside the home as to work outside it.

Few changes to Mason's design were developed, but in 1903, a wholesale grocer named Alexander Kerr set up his Hermetic Fruit Jar Company in Portland, Oregon, selling a variety of home-canning supplies, including Kerr jars. Kerr's innovation was the lid: the two-piece flat, metal disk with rubber gasket and separate steel band that most home canners still use today. Fruit preserving was now "a pleasure, not a drudgery," promised the advertisements, noting that the product "will pay for itself in the fruit it will save." Within a few years, the USDA launched its first instructions for home canners.

Portland's Canneries

While salmon canneries were primarily sited out near the source in Astoria, Portland focused on fruit canneries. In the late 1800s, Oregon was producing more fruit than it knew what to do with, and between 1900 and 1910, fruit production nearly quadrupled while the prices soared by 268 percent. Because of its ideal position at the nexus of fruit production and shipping ports, Portland soon became a regional epicenter for fruit canneries. By the turn of the 20th century, several fruit and vegetable canneries and packing plants were scattered around town. Roseland Preserving Company sat at the corner of SE 50th and Powell Boulevard, on what is now a Taco Bell parking lot. Mutual Fruit had a plant in the middle of produce row on SE 3rd and Morrison, where the streets are still half-cobblestone and old rail lines lurch from the pavement.

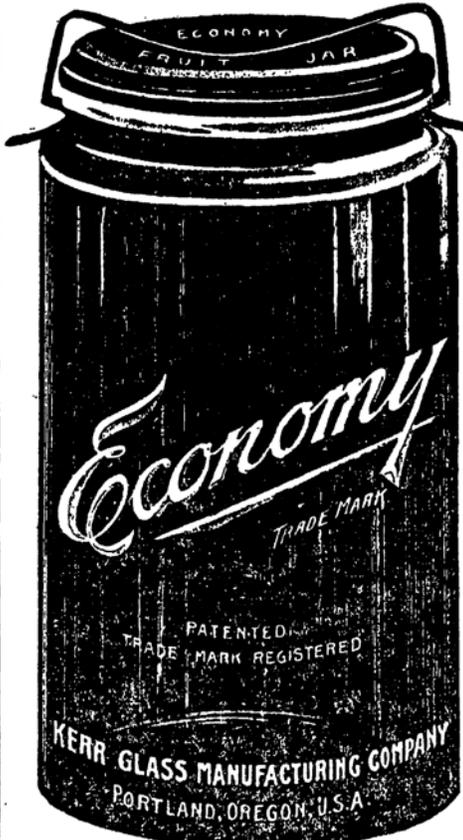
Oregon Packing Company sat where Grand Central Bowling is today on

8th and Belmont; it was the location of a 200-woman labor strike that lasted weeks during the summer of 1913—the only cannery strike in the West.

By the time the U.S. entered World War I, Portland women combined their forces in "Uncle Sam's Kanning Kitchen." The kitchen was a community workspace where dozens of women volunteered their many hands to make light work of canning to assist the federal Food Administration in conserving produce for the war. An astonishing 15,000 quarts were put up and sent off to the battlefield, giving the boys on the front lines a taste of home.

One long-time Portland company was among the first cottage businesses built on home canning with Kerr's jars. Steinfeld's Pickle was founded in 1922 when the Steinfelds (Germans from Russia who'd initially settled in Winnipeg, Canada) lost their poultry farm to avian illness. Drawing from Barbara Steinfeld's past experience

ECONOMY FRUIT JAR



Will pay for itself in the fruit it will save.

Self Sealing. Easy to open.

So easy, quick and simple a child can seal and open it.

No cutting or burning of fingers. No spoiling of fruit.

No rubber ring required.

Fruit preserving a pleasure, not a drudgery as it is with all other jars.

The cheapest and most economical fruit jar in the world.

Made in pints, quarts and half gallons of strong, clear white flint glass, with three-inch wide mouth of smooth surface, permitting the preserving of fruit whole or in layers.

ASK YOUR GROCER FOR THEM

Wadhams & Kerr Bros.

Wholesale Grocers and
Coffee Roasters,
81-83-85 FRONT STREET
PORTLAND, OREGON

Kerr Glass ad that appeared in The Oregonian, June 27, 1905

in a Canadian pickle plant, the Steinfelds began growing cucumbers and cabbage on a 4.5-acre site in the St Johns area of North Portland. Sold door-to-door for 10 cents a pint and 15 cents a quart, Barbara's pickles and sauerkraut were a smash. Soon they began selling their wares at the Yamhill Farmer's Market and did well enough to support themselves throughout the Great Depression. In 1934 they were able to upgrade their operations a few miles north in Scappoose.



Barbara and Henry Steinfeld at their pickle plant in Scappoose. Photo courtesy Scappoose Historical Society

The company was sold to multinational Dean Foods Company in 2000 and closed in 2008, nearly a century after the Steinfelds first arrived in Portland. Though their pickles are long gone, many Portlanders remember Steinfeld's kraut, sweet pickles, and garlicky homestyle dills.

Notes:

¹ Blaine A. Schmeer, *Cold Kilns: Oregon Potters in the 19th Century* (West Linn, 2010), 17-19

² Patent filed by John. L. Mason: <https://todayinsci.com/Events/Patent/MasonJar22186.htm>

³ *The Morning Oregonian*, June 9, 1904, page 8

⁴ Oregon Board of Horticulture, *Biennial Report, Volume 12* (Salem, 1913), 77

⁵ Oregon Bureau of Labor, *Biennial Report and Industrial Directory of the Bureau of Labor and State Wage and Hour Commission of the State of Oregon*, (Salem, 1914), 95; addresses updated using <https://www.pastportland.com/>

⁶ "Conservation Becomes Second Nature," Oregon State Archives, <http://sos.oregon.gov/archives/exhibits/ww1/Pages/home-front-conservation.aspx>

⁷ "The Steinfeld Family," The Volga Germans in Portland, <http://www.volgagermansportland.info/the-steinfeld-family.html>

Recipe: *Erdbeerklöße*



Recipe and photos by Heather Arndt Anderson

Though our people didn't take many culinary lessons from their Russian neighbors, they did seem to adopt nearly every dumpling that they encountered. Bierocks are just our version of piroshki, after all, and it turns out these Erdbeerklöße — strawberry dumplings — are a spitting image of the strawberry or sour cherry vareniki common to the Ukraine. Despite appearances, these aren't very sweet, and they're best served with sour cream and sausages. (If you can't find the time or patience to fold dumplings one at a time, there's a shortcut: just cut the dough into thick noodles and simmer them in the berries; however, these dumplings freeze well, and you can always recruit help. Many hands make light work!) Makes 32 dumplings (6-8 servings)

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups all-purpose flour	2 pints fresh strawberries
1 egg	1/4 cup sugar
2 tbsp sour cream	
3/4 cup lukewarm water	sour cream for serving
1 tsp kosher salt	

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine the flour, egg, sour cream, water, and salt and knead, adding extra flour as needed, until a pliable dough is formed. Cover the dough with a damp towel or overturned bowl and allow to rest for 30 minutes. While the dough is resting, hull and dice the strawberries and mix with the sugar.

Divide the dough into quarters, then divide each quarter into quarters (for 16 pieces). Divide each piece in half (for 32 pieces). Roll each lump of dough into a ball, then working one at a time, roll each ball into a flat circle, as thin as possible (1/8" thick).

Place 1 tablespoon of strawberries in the center of the dough, then fold the dough in half, gently pressing out the air as you seal the edges. Pinch the edges together to seal, folding and crimping as you go. (If you want to freeze these for later, lay the Erdbeerklöße on a sheet pan lined with wax paper and freeze them flat, then transfer the frozen dumplings to a gallon-sized Ziplock for storage.)

To cook the dumplings, bring a pot of water to a boil and gently add a few dumplings at a time. Boil until the dumplings float, then serve with a dollop of sour cream. It's traditional to serve these as a side dish to a savory entree, but you can also sprinkle extra sugar on top and have them for dessert!

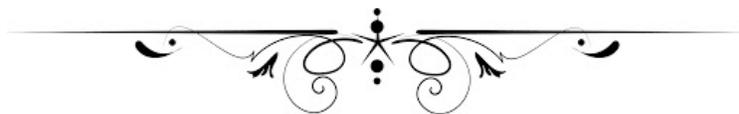


If you'd like to bypass all the nonsense of pinching dumplings, here's a **lazy version** (more like the style of dumplings used for chicken soup) that tastes exactly the same:

Prepare the dough as instructed, and while the dough is resting, bring the hulled/diced strawberries to a simmer in a heavy-bottomed pan over medium-low heat.

Quarter the dough and roll each dough ball into a long, flat sheet 1/8" thick. Using a pizza cutter or knife, cut the dough into noodles 4 or 5 inches long.

Simmer the dumplings in the strawberry sauce until cooked, about 3-5 minutes.



AHSGR Oregon Chapter Membership Renewal Form

Membership fees are for a calendar year that renews each January 1st. Annual dues for the AHSGR Oregon Chapter membership are \$25.

Membership Year 20____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

I want my Oregon Chapter newsletter delivered electronically. Yes _____ No _____

I want to receive my Oregon Chapter newsletter in the mail (paper copy). Yes _____ No _____

In order for us to serve our membership more effectively, please list all of your German-Russian family surnames and all of the villages that you believe your ancestors are from:

Villages

Surnames

Annual Dues: \$25.00

Annual Donation: \$

Total Enclosed: \$

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

AHSGR OREGON CHAPTER

P.O. Box 55218

Portland, Oregon 97238-5218

You can also send dues and donations electronically via PayPal to our chapter email address:

oregonahsgr@gmail.com

The Oregon Chapter of AHSGR is a tax-exempt non-profit organization organized under the Internal Revenue Code 501 (c)(3). As such, your dues are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. (Federal Tax ID # 93-1313164)

PLEASE NOTE: Additional dues are required for membership in the AHSGR International Organization. (See www.ahsgr.org/membership.htm for current International membership levels and dues.) Please remit International dues directly to AHSGR Headquarters at: 631 D Street, Lincoln,

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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.

The Chronicle Unserer Leute (Chronicle of Our People) is published bimonthly by the Oregon Chapter of AHSGR. Keep up to date with the latest news and events from the Oregon Chapter of AHSGR on our website: www.oregonahsgr.org
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