



AHSGR Oregon Chapter Newsletter Chronicle Unserer Leute

Volume 45, Issue 2
April-June 2024



Mark Your Calendar

- Saturday - April 13 Monthly Meeting
- Saturday - May 18 Monthly Meeting
- June-July - No Meetings
- Saturday - August 17 Picnic
- Saturday - September 21
- Saturday - October 19
- Saturday - November 16
- December - Christmas Party?



Catherine II, the Great
Empress of Russia

AHSGR Oregon Chapter
P.O. Box 55218
Portland, OR 97238-5218

oregonahsgr.org

CAROLYN SCHOTT:

EXPANDING YOUR GERMAN RESEARCH
BEYOND ANCESTRY AND FAMILY SEARCH

APRIL 13, 2024 @ 2PM

LEAVEN COMMUNITY CENTER
SALT & LIGHT LUTHERAN CHURCH
5431 NE 20TH AVE, PORTLAND, OR
(NE KILLINGSWORTH & 20TH AVE)



NOTE: DIFFERENT LOCATION!

ON APRIL 13TH, CAROLYN SCHOTT WILL RETURN TO GIVE US
ANOTHER FINE INFORMATIVE PRESENTATION TO HELP YOU
WITH YOUR FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH.

WE HOPE YOU SEE YOU THERE!

MOBILE RESEARCH LIBRARY

AVAILABLE AT ALL OUR CHAPTER PROGRAMS ARE MANY
PUBLICATIONS OF GENERAL VOLGA-GERMAN INTEREST FOR
OUR MEMBERS.

MONTHLY MEETING IN MAY

MAY 18—LELA MILLER'S FRIEND **EMILY** WILL GIVE A FOOD
DEMONSTRATION AND PROVIDE A 12-MINUTE VIDEO. GERMAN
FOODS MAY BE PROVIDED BY BOARD MEMBERS AND GENERAL
MEMBERS.

THERE WILL BE NO CHAPTER MEETINGS IN JUNE AND JULY.
SUMMER BREAK.

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President's Message

By Donna Tetrault

According to my cherry blossom trees, Spring is just around the corner. It's a lovely time of year to be outside enjoying all that nature brings us. Whether it's working in your yard, planting flowers or a vegetable garden, taking walks, maybe even camping, I for one, am looking forward to the warmer weather ahead.

I hope you have been able to attend one of our chapter meetings. It's a good way to connect with others who share our history, culture and the preservation of our Volga German heritage. No matter the topic we cover, I always find that I learn something new whether from the program itself or from another member. I so wish I had taken the opportunity to ask my parents and other family more about their life experiences. My surviving Aunt and Uncle are currently besieged by my many questions. Thankfully they are both very patient with me and provide me with a wealth of additional knowledge. My 94 year old Aunt often has asked me why I'm so interested in the past. I tell her it's so that I can learn of their struggles and history to appreciate my own future and that of my children.

We have some exciting programs coming up that I hope you will take the time to attend. If ever there is a topic you would like to see us explore, we would so like to hear from you. We are always looking for topics that will benefit and interest you.

On April 13th at 2:00 we will be meeting at the Leaven Community Center / Salt & Light Lutheran Church, 5431 NE 20th Ave Portland, Oregon. **Please note this is a different location than normal.** Carolyn Schott will be presenting in person, "**Expanding Your German Research Beyond Ancestry and Family Search**". Carolyn has presented to our chapter in the past and is always a wealth of information. Please be sure to join us.

On May 18th we will be meeting at St. Michael's Lutheran Church and we will be having a cooking demonstration on making "Grebbeles" Be sure to attend this tasty program.

While we will not be meeting in the months of June and July, I hope to see you at the home of Lela Miller's for our annual potluck picnic on August 17th 12:00. We have always had a wonderful time of fellowship and food. As always, we thank Lela for being a gracious host.

Watch for our Facebook post, the Chapter's website and of course our newsletter for an exciting lineup of programs coming this fall.

Embrace your heritage and enjoy the day!

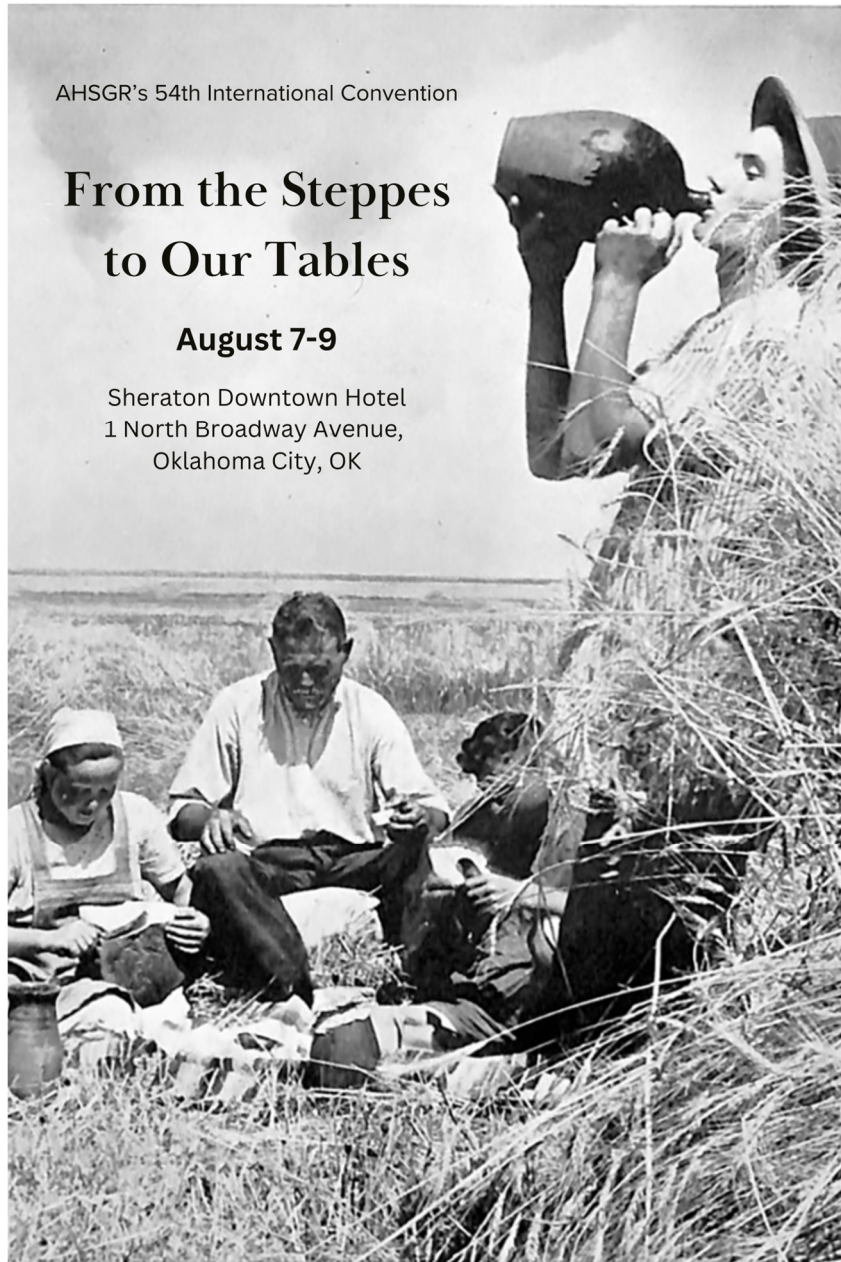
Donna Tetrault



American Historical Society of Germans from Russia
Honoring our Past
Embracing the Future



AHSGR 2024 International Convention



AHSGR's 54th International Convention

From the Steppes to Our Tables

August 7-9

Sheraton Downtown Hotel
1 North Broadway Avenue,
Oklahoma City, OK

**Oklahoma City
Oklahoma
August 7-9**



**[https://ahsgr.org/
convention-2024/](https://ahsgr.org/convention-2024/)**



If you have ideas or articles which you would like to see published, or topics you would like to see presented at out monthly meetings, please contact any officer, board member, or me, the newsletter editor, Michael Frank (dm48@comcast.net).

Volga-German Cuisine

The cuisine of Volga Germans reflected a blend of German and Russian culinary traditions, influenced by the ingredients available in the Volga region. Some typical foods of the Volga Germans included:

Borscht: A beet soup that is common in Russian cuisine, but adapted by the Volga Germans to suit their taste preferences.

Pelmeni: Dumplings filled with meat, usually beef or pork, and sometimes mixed with onions or other seasonings. They are typically served with sour cream.

Sausages and Sausages: Sausages were a staple food for the Volga Germans, often made with pork, beef, or a combination of both, seasoned with garlic, salt, and pepper.

Krautrunza: Small pastries filled with meat, cabbage or sauerkraut, potatoes, or cheese. They are typically baked and are popular.

Kuchen: A type of German cake or pastry that was often served as a dessert or sweet treat. Varieties include fruit-filled kuchen or ones topped with streusel.

Rye Bread: Bread was a dietary staple for the Volga Germans, and rye bread was commonly consumed due to the abundance of rye in the region.

Pickled Vegetables: Pickling was a common method of preserving vegetables for the winter months, and pickled cucumbers, cabbage, and other vegetables were popular additions to meals.

Dairy Products: Milk, cheese, and sour cream were important components of the Volga German diet, and these dairy products were used in various dishes and recipes.

Blini: Thin pancakes similar to crepes, typically served with sour cream, jam

Piroshki: Small, savory pastries filled with meat, potatoes, cabbage, or cheese, often baked or fried.

These are just a few examples of the foods that were commonly consumed by the Volga Germans. Over time, their cuisine evolved and adapted to the resources and influences of the region, resulting in a unique blend of German and Russian culinary traditions.

Interview Transcripts

Heather Viets (HV)

Marilyn Schleining Schultz (MSS)

Harold and Loretta Kammerzell (HK,LK)

Roy Derring (RD)

Heather Viets (HV) / Steve Schreiber (SS)

Transcribed by Heather Viets

Overseen by Steve Schreiber

The Center for Volga German Studies

Concordia University, Portland, Oregon

Steve Schreiber

I am very pleased to announce that an article titled "Volga Germans in Oregon" has been published on the Oregon Historical Society's "The Oregon Encyclopedia" website. Many thanks to my talented co-author Heather Viets.

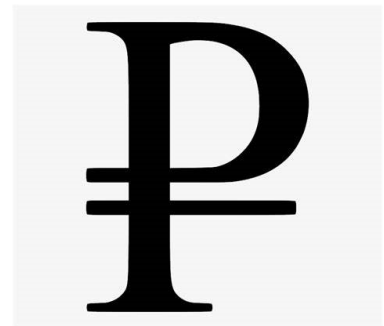
<https://www.volgagermansportland.info/uploads/3/7/7/9/37792067/schleining-derring-kammerzell-schreiber-transcript.pdf>



Doug Zier and I (among others) traveled to Russia, touring with Brent Mai and Mila Koretnikov in 2016. I purchased this 1000 Russian Ruble note from Doug Zier after returning. Looking up the value recently, I found that it is worth **\$10.83**. As I recall, back in 2016 it was worth about **\$26.00**. It's still worth the memories we all shared.

What could it buy today (in Russia)?

- A meal at a mid-range restaurant for one person.
- Groceries for a small household for a few days.
- A couple of movie tickets.
- Public transportation for a week in some cities.
- A few basic clothing items or accessories.



Foundation for Eastern European Family History Studies

Eastern European Genealogy Conference, August 6-9, 2024 at the Plaza Hotel and adjacent FamilySearch Library in Salt Lake City, Utah

Nationally and Internationally Recognized Speakers and Specialists

Opportunities for Individual Expert Consultations

Time to research at the FamilySearch Library

Classes on Russian Empire/USSR, Germans from Russia, Germany, Baltic States, DNA Research

Hands-on Pre-Conference Workshops on August 5 on: Finding Your Village of Origin, Cyrillic Script, All you need to Know about **MyHeritage**, Interpreting German Script, Emigration/Immigration...and more!

For more information: **FEEFHS.ORG**



This is a Main Street scene of **Kautz** in front of the Frank store. Johann George Frank (b. 09 November 1848) owned the store. His home is immediately to the right. This view is from the south, looking north by northeast. The people are unidentified. Picture contributed by Helen Lind Bethke, Ft. Collins, Colorado. Johann George Frank was an uncle to her father.

Kautz was founded on 20 May 1767 by Baron de Boffe as a Reformed Lutheran colony. There were 28 founding families, all of whom came from the Palatinate in Germany. The colony was named after its first Vorsteher (mayor), Georg Jakob Kauz. By decree on 26 February 1768, the colony received its official Russian name of Werschinka.

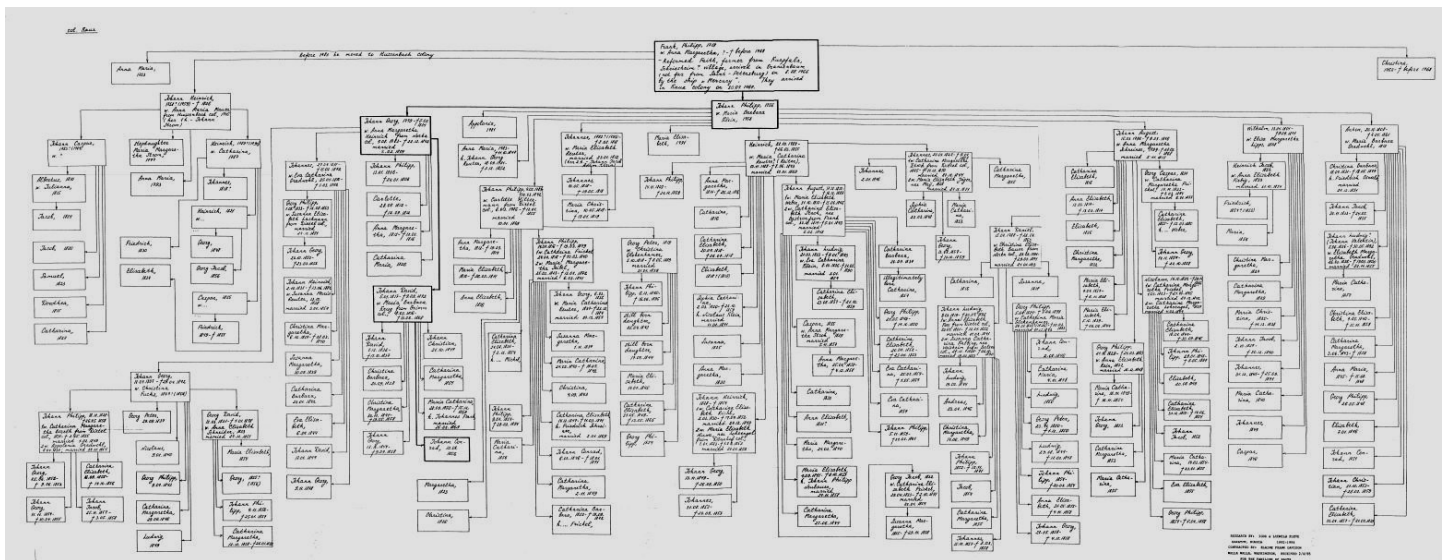
The major first families of Kautz are as follows: Frank, Frickel, Fuchs, Glockenhammer, Gradwohl, Hardt, Hermony, Kauz, Klein, Knaub, Michel, Neubauer, Ostwald, Reichert, Reuter, Riel, Reiter, Schumann, Stahly, and Weber. Before 1788, Georg Jacob Kauz, the mayor, moved his entire family to nearby Merkel colony. His descendants in Merkel were many.

KAUTZ GENEALOGY

I am where I am with Kautz genealogy today because of the efforts of my aunt, Elaine Frank Davison. She was the youngest child of Johann Conrad Frank (1884-1959) and Maria Catharina Knaub (1885-1974). Both were born in Kautz and died in Walla Walla Washington. Elaine's parents ignited a spark in her which lasted her entire lifetime. She gathered information about the 'old country' from them, other relatives from Kautz, and anyone in any way related, in Walla Walla and throughout the USA. Much of her knowledge was gathered on Thursdays, interviewing her uncle Wilhelm Frank (1897-1986), the youngest brother of Johann Conrad Frank. Wilhelm immigrated in 1913 and lived in Walla Walla also.

Her zest for family information took her to a number of churches in Walla Walla and Montana where related families congregated. There she was able to Xerox church records of family from multiple states (back when it was not frowned upon) and begin to create an extensive database, input for eventual publication of her findings. Wherever she went, she would interview related families.

She acquired about 17 Kautz Ancestral charts of founding families from Dr. Igor Pleve, back when he was available to do the work. Pleve's **Frank** chart from Kautz is shown below...



Elaine passed away in 2001. In her lifetime she was able to produce 10 volumes of Kautz genealogical information, **Unsere Leute von Kautz** (Our People from Kautz) packed with information of her findings (photos, ancestral charts, stories, family group sheets, etc.) spanning decades. She contracted with Lineages which established that the German village of Schriesheim was the ancestral village of the first Frank in Kautz, Johann Philipp Frank (b. 1719). The name of this village was previously obscured because it was written many places, phonetically, none of which matched village names on a map of Germany. Frank genealogy in Schriesheim can be traced back to Endres Frank in 1484.

She and other family members of her generation hosted numerous family reunions in Walla Walla, drawing hundreds of people from Walla Walla, the Pacific Northwest, the USA, Germany, and Russia. She was able to visit descendants of Johann Philipp Frank's family still living in Schriesheim to this day. Until recently they owned a fine German restaurant. In town. She also visited relatives in Kimry, Russia. Some of these relatives were invited and were able to attend several family reunions in Walla Walla!

Her trip to Russia in 1991 took her to Kautz, the home of her parents, grandparents and those who lived back to the founding of the village in 1767. She and her husband, Russian cousins from Kimry, and others also visited Diétel, the village adjoining Kautz.



Volume 1



Volume 2



Volume 3a



Volume 3b



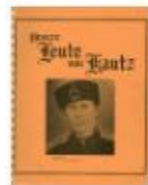
Volume 3c



Volume 4



Volume 5



Volume 6



Volume 7



Volume 8



Volume 9

Elaine published volumes 1-8 of **Unsere Leute von Kautz** on paper, 2-sided, Xeroxed and bound. After her death I scanned these volumes and electronically converted all pages to HTML (Hypertext Markup Language), which is the language of the Internet. In addition, I created a new Volume, number 9, which currently contains 320 pages. The pages in Volume 9 can be misleading. For example, one page in Volume 9, when clicked on a computer, will bring up 88 pages of Reuter descendants. I can add new pages to this volume at any time, and can create a DVD of all volumes in minutes, ready to be mailed to those interested in Kautz genealogy.

Translating Kautz Lutheran Church Records

After her death, I acquired copies from Concordia of Kautz Lutheran church records from which the Plevé charts were constructed. These I translated. Many pages were extremely hard to read because of the quality of the pages, the diversity of handwriting styles over decades, the different pastors involved, etc. Beginning in 1901 handwriting became extremely legible. Not only were the letters perfectly formed in cursive, but much of the text was duplicated in Cyrillic cursive also. Brent Mai and Mila Koretnikov were instrumental in this endeavor.

As I translated 10,350 births, marriages, and deaths, the results were entered into one EXCEL spreadsheet. In the spreadsheet, left to right, would be **Sequence Number** (the sequence by which the record was entered, the **Village** (Kautz). **Record Type** (birth, marriage, death), **Year**, **Year's Record Number**, **Birth Date**, **Marriage Date**, **Death Date**, **Burial Date**, **Chronological Date** (Birth, Marriage or Death), **Sex**, **FULL NAME** of subject, **Family Number**, **Father Name**, **Mother name**, **Father Surname**, **Mother Surname**, **Age at Death** (yyyy mm dd), and **Cause of Death**. Chronological date dependent upon the type of record (birth, marriage, death).

Names were originally handwritten in **first, given, surname** order. To be able to sort and report the name properly, an additional field of **Surname** was added for the father. In this way Johann Jacob Schreiner would be sorted under Schreiner and not Johann. So, to show the name properly, you would need to sort all names by **Surname** first. Surname was added for the mother to assist with defining family groups.

In the spreadsheet, when entering marriages, in order to properly show both parties to the marriage, I would enter the records with husband then wife, then duplicated to show wife then husband.

To show the items in the spreadsheet in the **order of entry**, you would sort by **Transcription Entry Date**

To show items by **family group**, you would sort by

Father Surname, Father, Mother Surname, Mother, Name of Individual.

To show **events of the village by date**, you would sort by **Chronological Date**

Transcription Entry Date (these are births)

Req#	Village	Birth	Year	Seq	Date of Birth	Marriage Date	Death Date	Burial Date	Chrono-logical	Sex	Person	Family	Father	Mother	Father Surname	Mother Surname
95	Kautz	Birth	1838	0												
96	Kautz	Birth	1838	1	1838 01 05		1883 09 30		1838 01 05	m	Johann Valentin Ostwald	685	Johann Friedrich Ostwald	Apollonia Gradwohl	Ostwald	Gradwohl
97	Kautz	Birth	1838	2	1838 01 06		1838 02 15		1838 01 06	f	Maria Magdalena Riel	861	Johann Friedrich Riel	Margaretha Elisabeth Müller	Riel	Müller
98	Kautz	Birth	1838	3	1838 01 06				1838 01 06	f	Christina Margaretha Riel	861	Johann Friedrich Riel	Margaretha Elisabeth Müller	Riel	Müller
99	Kautz	Birth	1838	4	1838 01 07				1838 01 07	f	Maria Catharina Neubauer	623	Johann Friedrich Neubauer	Anna Barbara Klein	Neubauer	Klein
100	Kautz	Birth	1838	5	1838 01 11		1906 01 31		1838 01 11	m	Georg Conrad Hardt	395	Johann Daniel Hardt	Eva Catharina Stahly	Hardt	Stahly
101	Kautz	Birth	1838	6	1838 01 13		1859 10 16		1838 01 13	m	Philipp Heinrich Klein	537	Johann Philipp Klein	Catharina Elisabeth Schreiner	Klein	Schreiner
102	Kautz	Birth	1838	7	1838 02 02				1838 02 02	m	Johann Georg Reuter	747	Georg Adam Reuter	Maria Catharina Weber	Reuter	Weber
103	Kautz	Birth	1838	8	1838 02 08		1838 10 27		1838 02 08	m	Georg Adam Schreiner	998	Johann Philipp Schreiner	Elisabeth Barbara Heilbrun	Schreiner	Heilbrun
104	Kautz	Birth	1838	9	1838 02 22		1846 03 25		1838 02 22	m	Johann Jacob Schumann	1044	Johann Jacob Schumann	Susanna Margaretha Reuter	Schumann	Reuter
105	Kautz	Birth	1838	10	1838 03 04				1838 03 04	f	Maria Margaretha Fuchs	220	Anton Fuchs	Elisabeth Kohler	Fuchs	Kohler
106	Kautz	Birth	1838	11	1838 03 27				1838 03 27	m	Johann Daniel Knaub	555	Johann Georg Knaub	Eva Catharina Frickel	Knaub	Frickel

Records as they were transcribed...

Family Group

Req#	Village	Birth	Year	Seq	Date of Birth	Marriage Date	Death Date	Burial Date	Chrono-logical	Sex	Person	Family	Father	Mother	Father Surname	Mother Surname
8613	Kautz	Death	1887	27	1887 03 17		1887 03 17	1887 03 19	1887 03 17	m	Johann Adam Neubauer	621	Daniel Neubauer	Catharina Elisabeth Reuter	Neubauer	Reuter
8614	Kautz	Death	1887	28	1887 03 16		1887 03 18	1887 03 19	1887 03 18	f	Elisabeth Neubauer	621	Daniel Neubauer	Catharina Elisabeth Reuter	Neubauer	Reuter
8900	Kautz	Death	1892	47	1892 04 30		1892 05 08	1892 05 10	1892 05 08	m	Georg Philipp Neubauer	621	Daniel Neubauer	Catharina Elisabeth Reuter	Neubauer	Reuter
3050	Kautz	Marriage	1879	9		1879 04 08			1879 04 08			622	David Neubauer	Eva Catharina Hermony	Neubauer	Hermony
8253	Kautz	Death	1881	20	1881 07 13		1881 07 26	1881 07 29	1881 07 26	f	Catharina Margaretha Ne	622	David Neubauer	Eva Catharina Hermony	Neubauer	Hermony
8414	Kautz	Death	1883	108	1879 09 18		1883 10 08	1883 10 10	1883 10 08	f	Eva Elisabeth Neubauer	622	David Neubauer	Eva Catharina Hermony	Neubauer	Hermony
8634	Kautz	Death	1887	48	1828 08 30		1887 08 20	1887 08 23	1887 08 20	m	Johann Philipp Neubauer	623	Friedrich Neubauer	Anna Barbara Klein	Neubauer	Klein
8671	Kautz	Death	1888	16	1831 02 01		1888 03 27	1888 03 30	1888 03 27	m	Anna Elisabeth Neubauer	623	Friedrich Neubauer	Anna Barbara Klein	Neubauer	Klein
9856	Kautz	Death	1908	21	1844 12 01		1908 09 11	1908 09 14	1908 09 11	m	Johann Georg Neubauer	623	Friedrich Neubauer	Anna Barbara Klein	Neubauer	Klein
2637	Kautz	Marriage	1849	6		1849 12 27			1849 12 27			624	Georg Christian Neubauer	Maria Catharina Frank	Neubauer	Frank
6910	Kautz	Death	1851	3	1851 01 24		1851 01 24	1851 01 27	1851 01 24	m	Stillborn Son Neubauer	624	Georg Christian Neubauer	Maria Catharina Frank	Neubauer	Frank

Report shown by Family (Unique Husbands/Wives Spreadsheet eventually used to build genealogical database.

Chronological Date

Req#	Village	Birth	Year	Seq	Date of Birth	Marriage Date	Death Date	Burial Date	Chrono-logical	Sex	Person	Family	Father	Mother	Father Surname	Mother Surname
8613	Kautz	Death	1887	27	1887 03 17		1887 03 17	1887 03 19	1887 03 17	m	Johann Adam Neubauer	621	Daniel Neubauer	Catharina Elisabeth Reuter	Neubauer	Reuter
356	Kautz	Birth	1844	7	1844 03 04		1848 02 28		1844 03 04	m	Johannes Klein	520	Johann Georg Klein	Maria Barbara Lipps	Klein	Lipps
6717	Kautz	Death	1844	2	1844 03 07		1844 03 07	1844 03 09	1844 03 07	-	Stillborn Child Fuchs		Georg Fuchs	Elisabeth Margaretha Stieber	Fuchs	Stieber
357	Kautz	Birth	1844	8	1844 03 07		1844 03 07		1844 03 07	-	Stillborn child Fuchs	256	Johann Georg Fuchs	Elisabeth Margaretha Stieber	Fuchs	Stieber
6716	Kautz	Death	1844	1	1821 07 00		1844 03 08	1844 03 11	1844 03 08	f	Catharina Maria Reuter	794	Johann Georg Reuter	Anna Maria Frank	Reuter	Frank
358	Kautz	Birth	1844	9	1844 03 10				1844 03 10	f	Christina Barbara Riel	889	Philipp Heinrich Riel	Anna Catharina Maier	Riel	Maier
6718	Kautz	Death	1844	3	1805 04 01		1844 03 18	1844 03 22	1844 03 18	f	Maria Elisabeth Michel	588	Georg Joachim Michel	Eva Sibilla Richter	Michel	Richter
5252	Kautz	Wife	1844	8		1844 03 28			1844 03 28		Catharina Seibel Müller	175			Frickel	Müller
3923	Kautz	Husband	1844	8		1844 03 28			1844 03 28		Heinrich Frickel	175			Frickel	Müller
359	Kautz	Birth	1844	10	1844 03 28		1854 08 11		1844 03 28	m	Johann Georg Schreiner	961	Johann Georg Schreiner	Christina Elisabeth Bierig	Schreiner	Bierig
2583	Kautz	Marriage	1844	8		1844 03 28			1844 03 28			175	Heinrich Frickel	Catharina Müller	Frickel	Müller

From 1835 to 1918 the activities of the village can be shown by calendar date. A birth on this day, another birth, the same day someone died, a marriage occurred the next day, etc.

Unsere Leute von Kautz

Excerpts from Volume 6

Each village household was given 30 desyatiny and the Colony awarded a specific amount for increased population. These Germans paid no taxes when the towns were founded; however, after 30 years, the German settlers had to pay the same tax as their Russian counterparts. This tax was levied against each male. A family with 6 males paid six times the taxes as a family with one male. Another problem was that much of the land was suitable for only certain crops and some were great distances from the village. The Mir and the Dusch system of land distribution was adopted. In essence, all of the farmland was redistributed every 10 years by drawing lots based on an equal amount of land for each male. Twenty-four member groups drew against each other for grain, hay, cabbage, orchard, and potato lands. Woodlands, pasture, and quarry lands remained the property of the Colony. The boundaries of these parcels of land were marked by plowing a deep furrow and marking with the family initial in a corner. Males could not change residence to another village without permission from his home colony to insure all debts and obligations were paid, and it was next to impossible to become a land-sharing member in another colony. As members of the Mir, colonists were not allowed to own land or engage in trade or a profession. Those who gave up their share in the Mir and moved to another country were not allowed to rejoin the Mir; however, they were allowed to purchase and possess homes, businesses, and property.

The homesite was located in the village and measured about 150 feet wide by 300 feet deep. It contained the house across the front, a summer kitchen, a small granary, horse and cow barns, open front equipment sheds, a root cellar, on occasion an ice cellar, and a garden.

A large variety of crops were grown on the Steppes and most were grown for the colonists own consumption. Winter wheat was grown as a cash crop along with tobacco. Barley and oats were produced for fodder. Rye, millet, hemp, flax, sunflowers, potatoes, cabbage, watermelon, sugar beets, apples, cherries, pears, along with dairy and beef cattle, sheep, pigs, horses, oxen, chickens, ducks, and geese were also raised.

The hard work started with the seeding of wheat from the later part of March to the middle of April and was followed by the planting of oats, potatoes, sugar beets, sunflowers, tobacco, barley, millet, hemp, and flax. The next job was preparing the winter's fuel supply; Miststaanh (manure bricks) were utilized for cooking and heating because of the lack of trees. Putting up wild hay started with normal weather in May. Hoeing of potatoes, cabbages, and beets was followed by the year's plowing which had to be completed before the harvest started. The heaviest work of the year was concentrated during the harvest starting in Mid-July to late August; everyone participated. The first crop was rye, then wheat and the other grains. They were cut with a scythe, tied in bundles with rye straw, hauled to the threshing site and threshed with horses and a threshing stone, sacked and hauled to the granaries. Rye and winter wheat were seeded during September. September was also the time for harvesting sunflowers. They were cut, the heads allowed to dry and the seeds pounded out with a paddle; then they were cleaned, sacked, and taken to the mill to be processed into cooking oil. Potato digging came next followed by sugar beets. The beets were dug, washed and scraped, cooked, then run through a wooden press to extract the juice which was cooked down to a thick syrup and stored in large earthen crocks to be used as a sweetener. Watermelons, small and semi-ripe, were also put up in small barrels and allowed to ferment. Tea was made from licorice roots which were gathered from the wild.

The last crop to be harvested was the cabbage. The heads were sliced and packed in small barrels for fermentation to make sauerkraut. Potatoes and sauerkraut made up the largest portion of the colonist diet. Soon after the first frost and before the first snow fell, four or five days were devoted to slaughtering hogs, beef, and sheep. The meat was smoked, made into sausages, and salted to preserve it for the coming year. Chickens, ducks, and geese were butchered as needed. Geese and ducks were also valued for their feathers. About this time of year, after the slaughtering, Kerb (harvest festival) took place. The pastors and the Brotherhood disapproved of this celebration; however, the young people found a way to celebrate with dancing and drinking.

The woman of the household was the foundation on which the social and economic structure was built. Her day started before sunrise with the milking of two or more cows. This had to be accomplished before the cowherd came by her house to take the cattle to the communal pasture. Then followed the swineherd who took the hogs to graze in a separate pasture. In the evening the livestock were returned to their homes. Saturday was always her bake day. She baked the week's supply of bread (rye and white), pastries (sheet cakes topped with cherries, diced plums, apple slices), and sugar-crumbs (rivvels) in the masonry oven. Monday was washday; she would boil the clothes in homemade soap, then carry them to the creek for the final washing and rinsing using a paddle to beat the clothes on a platform at about water level. While most homes on the west side had wells, most were too salty and water had to be carried from a communal well for drinking.

Agriculture was the primary trade of 97% of the Volga Germans, but this was not the case when these people left Germany. However due to the Mir system, every man had to farm. He also had to know a second trade such as wheelwright, blacksmith, woodworker, shoemaker, or any of the other crafts which are required in a community. These crafts were practiced during the long winters and passed from craftsman to craftsman. It also made the village self-sufficient. The largest export was flour made from the wheat raised by the colonists. Sunflower-seed oil and tobacco were also important cash crops. Sarpinka, a fine gingham material woven from dyed cotton yarn was widespread. Nearly every home on the Volga had a loom and engaged in the manufacture of this textile. Although weaving woolen cloth was important, it was never a commercial undertaking.

In 1871 the Russian government revoked the military service law. They were to allow 10 years before they would draft the first Germans into the Army, but the first Germans were called up in 1874. The term of service had been cut from 25 years to 16 years and later was cut to 5 years. This, added to overcrowded conditions, lack of farmland, and the growing animosity of the Russian people toward the Germans, started these people looking for new places to immigrate. The transcontinental railroad in the United States opened up huge areas of land. The railroads were granted 130,000,000 acres of land along their routes and needed productive agricultural settlers to create a profitable volume of two-way traffic and these people fit the bill. Emigration to the United States started in 1876 to the Kansas and Nebraska areas. By 1889 the sugar beet industry had made a start and was growing. Because growing sugar beets was very toilsome and punishing, field labor was difficult to find. The Volga Germans were accustomed to this hard work and every family was experienced in growing sugar beets.

Unsere Leute von Kautz

Excerpts from Volume 6, continued

One hundred and four colonies were established by 30,000 Germans on both sides of the Volga River. On the west side was the Bergseite (hill side) and on the east side, the Wiensenseite (plain side). Both Kautz and Grimm were on the Bergseite and the capital was Saratov. The German name of a colony was taken from the name of the first Mayor who had been the manager of the group when they left Germany. The Russian name was chosen from some geological feature such as a stream, vale, or ravine on which the colony was situated.

While religious freedom was granted, Catholics and Protestants were separated, a total of 31 Catholic and 71 Protestant colonies were established. Two were bi-confessional. The soil on the west side is much richer than that on the east side. It has topsoil running from 3 to 5 feet deep over layers of clay and sand. The Volga River at Saratov is about sea level and is 28 meters below sea level as it enters the Caspian Sea 475 miles downstream. On the Bergseite the elevation reaches 300 meters and drains on the east side into the Volga river and on the west side into the Medveditsa river. The Wiesenseite reaches an elevation of only 20 meters. On the west side there were small clumps of woods here and there, however not enough for building houses or heating homes. On the east side there were no woods at all. The climate would be severe most of the time and there was a constant wind. Temperatures in the summer were as high as 120 degrees and in the winter 30 degrees below zero was not uncommon. Rainfall on the east side was abundant; however 50% of it came from October to March.

The Bergseite colonies were established on small streams and creeks from 4 to 50 miles inland. The Wiesenseite colonies were established along the Volga above the flood plain. The Mayor in each town handled the internal government of that town and coordinated with the Provincial Governor on matters relating to external government. The schoolmaster generally held three titles: Deacon (there were only roving pastors who appeared about once a year); Registrar for the town; and on occasion in smaller towns he was also the town Health Officer.

The children started elementary school at the age of 7 and graduated at the age of 14. The school year started in October and ended on Easter. Religion, Reading, 'Ritin', and `Rithmetic, in that order, were taught. The classrooms were sparse, equipped with wooden benches, sometimes with backrests on which writing surfaces were attached. The classes were large, 200 to 400 for one instructor. In 1865 there were 175 schools, 214 teachers, and 43,269 students in the Volga Colonies. The Grimm Volkshule in 1860 had an enrollment of 700 pupils with two teachers. Two institutions of higher learning called Central Schools, one in Grimm and one in Katharinenstadt were supported by the Germans. The students had to be 14 years of age and the school term was 6 years. They were taught languages, Russian and High-German, arithmetic into fractions, religion, penmanship, and hymnal music.

These schools provided the Schoolmasters, Deacons, Clerks, and copyists for the local towns. Some students went on to Russian Colleges and Universities. Discipline was strict and the schoolmaster was supported by the parent. A whipping at school generally brought more severe punishment at home for blemishing the good family name. However the Volga brand of discipline was never known to impede the normal development of one's personality or individuality. Respect for elders, parents, and superiors was accepted and followed from a very early age. Most towns did not have a jail; in fact, the German word for jail, Gefaengnis, was unknown. In 1909 there were only 5 homicides in the Volga population of 583,650 and these were a result of personal conflicts.

Catholics and Lutherans did not share the same villages; however, Lutherans and Reformed Lutherans did. At times it was more acceptable to some members of either Lutheran group to receive the sacraments of marriage, baptism, and communion from a Catholic priest than from a Protestant pastor of the opposing faith. Churches were built in every colony, normally one church in a colony. Some were large enough to accommodate 1,000 or more. Grimm, with a population of 11,000 in 1900, had a church which could seat 1,200 persons. Both Catholic and Lutheran churches had carved high altars and pulpits, stained-glass windows, altar statues of Christ, and religious ceiling murals. The Reformed Church allowed none of these trappings. The Brotherhood was a part of every Protestant colony, and while its members were required to be active members of an established church, they were forbidden to perform sacramental functions or to preach. The Brotherhood met two to four times a week for prayer and the singing of hymns in a private home or in the school house, but seldom, if ever, in a church.

Most of the weddings took place during late fall and winter. After a serious courtship and when the parties reached an understanding, the young man obtained his father's approval. Then two relatives or friends would approach the girl's father; after some customary verbal feinting and sparring the girl was asked if she was willing and the wedding date was set. Confirmation was required prior to marriage. The couple was also required to recite the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, and the Lord's Prayer and to explain the basic principles of their faith. The wedding celebration differed from village to village depending on the influence of the Brotherhood and how deep piety ran in that village. For some it was a subdued family affair in the man's home; for others the dancing, toasting, singing, and snacking would last for three days. The newlyweds generally had children on a regular basis as large families were desirable to share the work. With three or four sons and their families all living under one roof, these crowded conditions contributed to an epidemic of childhood diseases and could mean the loss of 4, 5, or 6 children in less than a week. The church bell sounded three strokes on the small bell for someone under puberty, three strokes on the middle bell for a middle-aged person and so on, and then all three bells were rung. Children's caskets were painted white and adult's were painted dark brown or black.

Reading the Bible and visiting were the most popular pastimes. An abundant labor supply allowed the men to retire at an early age (late 40s). These seniors would gather in small groups at various homes for afternoon discussions, debates, solving current problems, and to catch up on the latest gossip. Long winter evenings were passed by the younger adults in the same way. The men would gather in one room, smoking their pipes, serving refreshments of Suessholz tea (licorice-root) and Kuche (white flour, single layer cakes with fruit or sugar-crumbs topping). The women would gather in another part of the room or house and visit in the same way eating sunflower seeds, and always keeping their hands busy with needlework, knitting, or a spinning wheel. Cards were not unknown but not well accepted. The Russians had prohibited the Volga Germans from brewing beer or wine, so the most common alcoholic drink was vodka taken straight in a small, sparkling glass accompanied with a small cut of red or liver sausage.

Greater Seattle/ Washington State AHSGR Chapter

Mike Heil President & Marie Carroll Vice President

<https://ahsgr.org/about/chapters/greater-seattle-chapter/>

Greetings all and Guten Tag!

2024 Calendar

This is our 2024 Calendar for Washington State American Historical Society of Germans from Russia. We hope to keep you informed and would love to have you join us at our meetings around the state when possible. We always have good food and "Gemütlichkeit"

March 2, 2024 Potluck at Faith Lutheran Church 8208 18th Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98115

11:00 AM. Bring your favorite German from Russia dish for the Potluck Lunch at noon. Guten Appetit!

Program: "Visiting my Mill Family German Ancestral Villages- miracles that lead me to the church door"
Marie Carroll shares experiences from her recent trip to Germany exploring the beautiful villages of her heritage.

June 8, 2024 -12:00 - 2:00 pm Fort Walla Walla Museum. 755 N E Myra Rd, Walla Walla, WA 99362

Come celebrate and share the German from Russia History in the area of Eastern Washington. Learn about the Deutsche Ecke in Walla Walla. Bring your favorite picnic or German from Russia Potluck dish and recipe.

August 7-9, 2024 AHSGR National convention Oklahoma City. Register online.

August 2024 Potluck Picnic, Maple Valley, Washington

Bunnock game

September 19-22, 2024

Deutsches Fest Odessa, WA

Come meet with the local Germans from Russia. Indulge in Kraut Runza - Bierocks, Bratwurst, Kuchen and kick up your heels to German music. We will have a group get-together.

October 12, 2024 11:00- 2:00 pm

Harvest Fest Potluck at Faith Lutheran Church 8208 18th Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98115

Program to be announced.

December/January Holiday Dinner

German Restaurant

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 202__

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
_____	_____	Additional	
_____	_____	Donation:	
_____	_____		
_____	_____	TOTAL	
_____	_____	ENCLOSED:	\$

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

AHSGR Oregon Chapter
PO Box 55218
Portland, OR 97238-5218

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

oregonahsgr@gmail.com

The Oregon Chapter of AHSGR is a tax-exempt nonprofit 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).

Additional dues are required for [membership in the AHSGR International Organization](#).

(See <http://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, NE. 68502-1199.

AHSGR OREGON CHAPTER
P.O. Box 55218
Portland, Oregon 97238-5218

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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.

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Members can find the current schedule of chapter events and newsletters on our Facebook page at:
facebook.com/groups/AHSGR.Oregon/

Oregon Chapter Website
oregonahsgr.org

Chapter Officers

President:
Donna Tetrault
junebaby59@comcast.net

First Vice President:
Ed Wagner

Secretary:
Marilyn Schultz

Treasurer:
Jim Holstein
503-367-1757
Jimholstein@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor:
Michael Frank
dm48@comcast.net

Directors

Michael Frank

Carole Hayden

Joan Porter

Roz Rockweit

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Vacant