



# AHSGR Oregon Chapter Newsletter

## Chronicle Unserer Leute

Volume 34, issue 2

Spring 2013

March / April

### Mark Your Calendar:

#### Proposed AHSGR-OR Chapter Programs for 2013:

**Saturday, March 16<sup>th</sup> from Noon to 2:30 PM** – Potluck lunch followed by Steve Schreiber presentation on getting *Through the Brick Wall to Origins in Germany*.

**Sunday, April 21<sup>st</sup> from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm** – Lee Ann Schlager Presentation on the CVGS Library Collection.

**Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup> from Noon to 2:30 pm** – Potluck Lunch

#### Tentative...

#### Saturday-Sunday

**June 21st to 22nd** –

Mini-conference celebrating the 250th anniversary of Catherine's Manifesto - CVGS program.

#### Scheduled:

**July 7-14**

#### AHSGR International Convention

**Fort Collins, Colorado**

(no Portland chapter meeting this month).

#### Tentative...

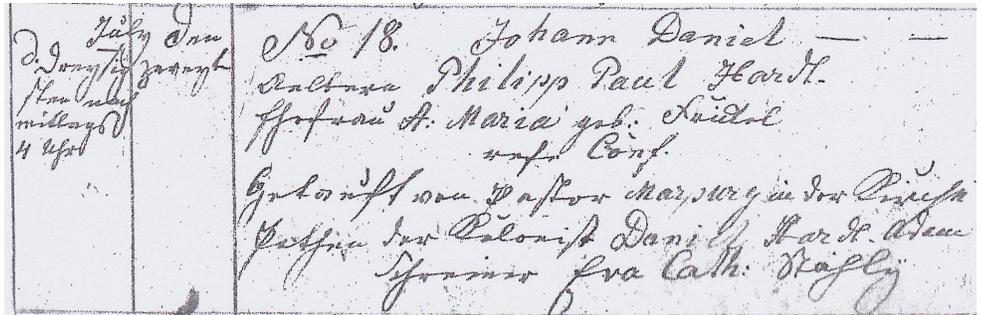
**August 17<sup>th</sup> – “Norka Day”**

at the CVGS. If you have family roots in Norka, mark your calendar for this event. More details will be shared in an upcoming newsletter.

### Oregon Chapter AHSGR

1836 NW Couch  
Portland, Oregon 97209

### Snippets of Kautz Parish Records from the Volgograd Archives



#### Birth Record (German)

Johann Daniel Hardt - Record 1836 #18

Birth: 30 Jul 1836

Father: Philipp Paul Hardt -- Mother: Anna Maria Frickel

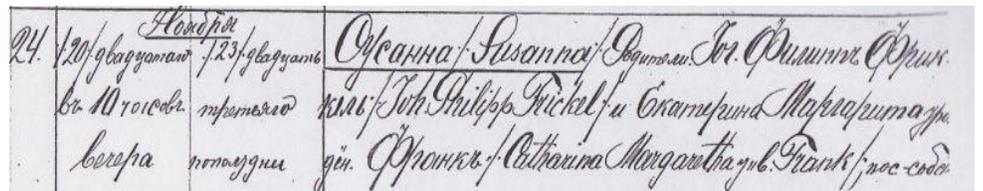


#### Marriage Records (German)

30 December 1847

George Philipp Klein with Dorothea Elisabetha Stähly – Record 1847 #7

Johann Christian Reuter with Maria Catharina Grauberger – Record 1847 #8



#### Death Record (Russian and German)

Susanna Frickel – Record 1914 #24

20 Nov 1914 – 23 Nov 1914

Father: Johann Philipp Frickel

Mother: Catharina Margaretha Frank

My thanks to Brent Mai for help so far with the acquisition of Kautz parish records, Births (1835-1849, 1899-1901), Marriages (1835-1901), Deaths (1872-1918), from the Volgograd Archives. (Writing quality varied with the Pastor).

## 1922 Confirmation Class Ebenezer Congregational Church, Portland, Oregon



The 1922 Confirmation Class of the Ebenezer Congregational Church. Unidentified class members include: Henry Miller, Adam Hahn, Raymond Miller, Anna Hahn, Emma George, Anna Klaus, Esther Weigandt, Louise Ellenberger, Elizabeth Yost.

**Back row** from left to right: ?, ?, ?, ?, Lena Doerr (Derr), Emilia (Amelia) Schleining

**Middle row** from left to right: ?, John Scheideman, Rev. George L. Zoicher, ?

**Front row** from left to right: ?, ?, possibly Pauline Repp, George Hinkel

Please contact Steve Schreiber (503-774-9753 or [steven.schreiber@gmail.com](mailto:steven.schreiber@gmail.com)), if you can identify any of the unknown individuals shown above.

### Sources:

Photograph courtesy of Harold Kammerzell.

[Translation of the Ebenezer Congregational Church Book 1909-1984](#). The spelling of names are as shown in the church records.

Jerry Schleining identified Amelia Schleining, Lena Derr and John Scheideman and provided alternate name spellings (in brackets).

George A. Hinkel identified his father, George Hinkel. George's father was Johannes Konrad Hinkel and his mother was Magdalena Hinkel (nee Dienes), who arrived in Portland from [Norka](#) in the spring of 1907.

## MY VILLAGE COORDINATOR ACTIVITIES

### Unsere Leute von Kautz

by Michael Frank, Kautz Village Coordinator

The village of Kautz (Russian name Werschinka) was founded on the 20th of May, 1767, with 30 emigrant families, 141 people (74 males, 67 females) from the Palatinate in Germany. Kautz was established approximately 68 miles southwest of the present city of Saratov. The population was 2,800 in 1912. The nearest village was Dietel (Oleschna).

Since I became village coordinator for Kautz in 2001, I scanned the ten paper volumes of "Our People from Kautz" produced by my aunt, Elaine Frank Davison and added an electronic volume of my own which currently contains 222 pages. The pages include photos, family group charts, memories, reports, Pleve charts, databases, descendant's charts, and much more.

A CD or DVD containing these volumes has been distributed throughout the U.S. and around the globe. Rather than print to paper, I can create a disc in about 90 seconds. The label for the disc, using Lightscribe, takes about 30 minutes. The label scene is that of Main Street Kautz with a boy on a horse, the Frank store in the background, and villagers posing for the camera. I continue to add information to Volume 9 as it becomes available.

A two-DVD set of my aunt's trip to Kautz in 1991 gives an idea of daily life in some of the former Volga-German villages and how Kautz was transformed from a working village into rubble by Russian bulldozers in the early 1960's.

Recently, I have been into Google Earth, scanning the remains of the village and nearby surrounding areas to get a feel for what it must have been like to live there. One neat thing about Google Earth, photographers occasionally visit the village areas and post photos at key points. So, from a position on Google Earth, you can see as if you're on the ground, what the area looks like. The streets of the village still can be recognized, as can the mounds where houses, summer kitchens, schools, and factories previously existed. Where the stream flowed freely, you can still see the vegetation along its route.

The number of individuals in the Kautz database is now 27,982. This includes Kautz residents and their descendants. Several years ago I was fortunate to receive copies of selected ranges of Kautz church records from Brent Mai. These records have been translated and have been integrated into the database. Many additional records for Kautz still reside at the Volgograd Archives and will hopefully be acquired at some point in the future in order to more fully complete our knowledge of the family structures of that village.

### FIND-A-GRAVE - Kautz

The cemetery for about 3,497 residents of Kautz is but bare land anymore, located northwest of the village. There remains only a small square iron fence with crude markers and a lone iron cross nearby.



To memorialize those who lived and died in the village, I set up a virtual cemetery in Find-A-Grave. From the Kautz database, I extracted the records of those who died in Kautz. Information included their name, birthdate, deathdate, father, mother, and spouse if known. These records were converted into Microsoft Excel format, and with a little tweaking, mass-incorporated into the newly-defined Find-A-Grave's Kautz cemetery. If you Google "Find-A-Grave", select cemetery, and type "Kautz", you'll see initial information about the village. Then select "View all interments" and you'll see individual records. Some records have photos of family groups of the individual.

For those Village Coordinators who are members of the Oregon Chapter, who have an interest in converting their village death records into a virtual cemetery, please contact me. I will offer assistance.

### FACEBOOK Kautz Group

In 2012 I set up my first personal Facebook account. Shortly thereafter, I followed up with the setup of a Facebook Group called "Kautz Russia Genealogy (Werschinka) and loaded it up with many good photos of Kautz families and their descendants. New contacts who are related have found good information through this process.

**SEARCHING . . SEEKING . . SHARING**

**SEEKING. Please contribute.**

Consider contributing items to the newsletter  
 Like photos, stories, births, birthdays, honors,  
 New careers, trips, milestones, anniversaries,  
 And obituaries.

**Send to Editor: Michael Frank**  
 2201 NE 156<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver, WA 98684

[dm48@comcast.net](mailto:dm48@comcast.net)  
 360-601-7361



**Johann George Gratwohl -- Kautz, Russia**  
**1863-1889**

Death records from Kautz received via email 5/9/2000  
 from Igor Pleve, Saratov, Russia, documents date of  
 birth and date of death, age 26 years 1 month 21 days.

Johann George died from frozen legs and feet while  
 serving in the Russian Army.

(Great-granduncle to the editor...)

From Unserer Leute von Kautz, Volume 6

**THE ARCHIVIST**

**March 21, 1976**

**PROGRAM**

Pledge of Allegiance . . . . Chapter Audience  
 Invocation . . . . .Rev. J.N. Sauer  
 Featured Soloist . . . . .Mr. Patrick Hergert  
 Accompanist . . . . . Mrs. Melba Y. Clarke  
 Special Speaker . . . . .Mr. George T. Taylor,  
 Chairman on Americanism for American Legion,  
 State of Oregon

I am sure none of you will want to miss the  
 wonderful and inspiring message of the "Freedom  
 Train" that Mr. Taylor has for us. ALSO, we will  
 have the **RARE PRIVILEGE** of hearing the beautiful  
 voice of Pat Hergert, who will favor us with  
 appropriate selections for the occasion, with the  
 able accompaniment of our very own Melba  
 Clarke. Pat formerly sang with the Oregon Singers  
 and is an outstanding vocalist.

Let's have a whopping SUPER turn-out for "Unser  
 Leite."

**IMPORTANT:**

Please be sure and bring this Notice with you, as  
 we will be using the Pledge of Allegiance at all of  
 our meetings this BICENTENNIAL YEAR. The  
 program will follow the potluck **PROMPTLY** at 2:30  
 pm.

Lee Ann Schlager



## The Volga Germans in Portland Ludwig and Katherine Miller

From a posting in Steve Schreiber's

website: <http://www.volgagermans.net/portland/>

Katherine Elizabeth Repp was born on November 5, 1871 and her future husband, Ludwig Müller, was born in the same village of Norka, Russia three days later on November 8th. Shortly before his 21st birthday, Ludwig decided to leave Russia and make a new life for himself in America. He departed from the port of Hamburg, Germany on June 3, 1892 aboard the steamship Normannia and arrived in New York on June 13, 1892. He was unmarried at the time and traveling with a group of people from Norka.

Katherine arrived in the United States in 1891 with her parents, Heinrich and Margretha (nee Fink), and five siblings according to the Ebenezer Congregational Church records. Katherine was a first cousin of noted humanitarian, George Repp, whose family had immigrated in 1886 and settled in Portland about 1890. It's possible that Katherine's father and uncle Konrad coordinated their reunion in Portland.

Ludwig and Katherine were married in the Ebenezer Congregational Church in Portland, Oregon on February 11, 1893 by Pastor Edmond Grieb. The 1900 U.S. Census shows the Miller family (surname changed to a more Anglicized spelling) living at 790 8th Street, next to Henry and Margaret Repp family - Katherine's parents.

After his arrival in Portland, Ludwig initially worked as a laborer, but he clearly had the spirit of an entrepreneur. About 1908, he opened a Dry Goods & Notions Store located at Union Avenue and Fremont Street.

The 1909 Portland City Directory shows Ludwig working as a bartender for H. J. Helzer. After learning the business, Ludwig established his own saloon located at 740 Union Avenue (at the intersection with Fargo Street) beginning about 1910. By the time the 1910 census was taken, the family had moved to 800 Grand Avenue North.

Ludwig died in 1913 at the age of 42 and was buried at the Rose City Cemetery in Portland. Katherine's parents, who died after Ludwig, are buried with him. Katherine remarried another widower from Norka, Conrad Bauer, on June 24, 1919.

*The Ludwig Miller family portrait in front of the L. Miller Dry Goods & Notions store circa 1908.*

*Back row from left to right: Katherine, Christina and Elizabeth.*

*Front row from left to right: Anna Maria, Mary, Henry and Ludwig.*

*Photograph courtesy of Shanna Minarik.*



## Our Trip To The German Volga River Region

From *Unsere Leute von Kautz*, Volume 9, page 210

### OUR TRIP TO THE GERMAN VOLGA RIVER REGION

Charles & Janice Baker

#### 9/30/02-Monday

Left home at 10 a.m. for Moscow

#### 10/01/02 - Tuesday

Arrived at the Moscow Airport from Frankfurt, Germany at 4 p.m. We were picked up at the airport by the personnel from the Bible Institute. We stayed for the next 2 weeks at Dyedovsk (20 miles west of Moscow).

#### 10/02/02-Wednesday

We left our apartment at 7:30 a.m. with our American friend, (Ron Brewer), a Russian van driver and a 19 year old Ukrainian fellow who speaks Russian, Ukrainian and English (our translator), five of us. We knew the trip would be long, but it proved to be longer than we anticipated. We enjoyed the scenery on the way between Moscow and Saratov. Birch trees lined the 2 lane highway the whole way. The highway was very rough with pot-holes and we lost some time when we were stopped on three occasions by the police to check documents. The van driver took care of that each time. We got tired bottoms real fast and as it began to turn dark, it became apparent that we would not make it to our destination, Saratov. We stopped in Petrovsk to seek lodging. Finally, we found a hotel. They were willing to rent us rooms, but first we had to register our presence at the local police station. That we did. The whole process took close to an hour. Finally, we got back to the hotel, approximately 10 p.m. They assured us that Chuck & I were getting one of the best rooms (very luxurious)! We had our own bathroom with a bathtub - tin lined with spider webs. There was no hot water and no t.p. Fortunately we did bring own own. The only towels were two small non-absorbent hand towels. It was a good thing that we did have our own soap too. If this was one of the better rooms, we're glad we didn't get anything worse! There was no heat, but we were exhausted and made do.

#### 10/03/02-Thursday

We got up at 5 a.m., skipped a bath and went out to find a place for breakfast. We found a roadside cafe and ordered omelets (per the menu), but got fried eggs, vegetables (green pepper slices, tomato slices, black olives), bread and hot tea. Then we headed south towards Saratov. The van stopped running and it turned out to be a fuel pump problem. The driver replaced it and we were on our way again. We arrived on the western edge of Saratov around 9:30 a.m. Vladimir, our 19 yr. old translator, asked for directions to the German villages not really knowing where we were going. We knew the villages were around 70 miles southwest, but we did not know how to find them. They now have Russian names, except for the village of Kratzke which is the one we zeroed in on. We ended up in New (Neu) Frank, which was quite a bit west of where we wanted to be. There was a schoolhouse there and the teacher invited us in to look at a map on the wall of the library, but it didn't prove to be too helpful.



After seeking more direction, we proceeded over a very bumpy dirt road for many miles, asked more people walking on the road, but still got no real answers. To the Russians - if they haven't heard of such & such a place, to them it doesn't exist. We finally came upon a couple of teen boys and asked them if they knew where Kratzke was and they pointed to a small village down the road. We had arrived at our destination! This is now 6 p.m. We were able to locate an elderly German couple, Anthony Pister and his wife (the cousin of Wilhelm Pister whom Elaine Davison stayed with). His home is two houses from Wilhelm's. We were invited into their home and learned more from them about the colonies. We asked Mr. Pister if he could show us where Kautz used to be as we were fast losing the light. He agreed and got into the van with us. After about a five mile trip, we arrived at the site of Kautz - nothing there but a wall of the grist mill. It was cold and windy (I believe it is always windy there). Kautz sat behind a small hill and I'm sure that added to the wind. Dietel is nearby - in fact Dietel is between Kratzke & Kautz. The Russian army destroyed Kautz in the early 1960's. The reason: it was one of the smaller colonies. We regret that we didn't get there earlier and walk the land as Elaine did, but it just didn't work out that way. The Karamysh River runs behind Kautz, Dietel & Kratzke (it looked like that, anyway). The land looks very rich...dark earth with rolling hills and actually like the big sky country of Montana! - except the land isn't being farmed. We only saw one good sized tractor and a few oil wells before we got to Kratzke. We saw a field of sunflowers probably ready for harvest because they were dry, dark & brittle. (Wilhelm Pister and his wife went to Germany in 1998 and he died there; his wife still lives in Germany).

We drove the streets of Dietel (now the Russian town of Oleshna. We left Kratzke at about 9 p.m. and headed down the dirt road and came upon Merkel colony. Just a few houses left there now.

#### 10/03/02-Friday

We made our way back to Saratov and then decided to return to Moscow - driving all night and half of the next day - (we didn't want to register with the police again). The night of driving was brutal. We lost about 45 minutes with a flat tire, but finally we made it back to Moscow. We got back to the apartment around 2pm on Friday, October 4. We were exhausted and slept well that night. It was a bittersweet experience. Glad we were there, but wished we could have "walked the land" as I had hoped we would.

**Charles & Janice Baker**  
Pinole, California

## Grocery and Meat Markets Portland

"There were several of our fellow Volga Germans, or Russian Germans, as some preferred to be called, in the grocery and/or meat business. Like most grocers of those days, they did most of their business on credit, or on the books. Usually it depended on a person's job and how often he had paydays, which determined how often he paid his grocery bill. There was very little cash and carry business, which came into being mostly with the so-called supermarkets in the late thirties. Most employers paid their employees twice a month or every two weeks, then it was usually on Friday. When you paid your grocery bill, you usually got a cigar and a sack of penny candy to take home to the children if you had them, but which German family didn't? The grocer had wooden barrels of dill pickles, sauerkraut, pickled pigs feet, drums of kerosene, 100 pound bags of potatoes, sugar, flour, rice and beans. He bought from wholesalers, farmers and even neighbors who had good fruit, berries or vegetables. Farmers brought eggs and live chickens usually on Thursday afternoon or Friday morning. My son killed and plucked about 50 chickens in a store basement every Friday night after the store closed, which were sold to our noodle soup makers on Saturday. He and his employer also made about 200 pounds of bratwurst on Friday afternoon before killing the chickens.

They would sack up potatoes, which were sold by the peck, or bushel, rather than the pound. Fruit was sold that way too. There were hundreds of Grade A raw milk dairies around and the price of milk was six cents a quart. Any bulk items, which came in barrels, could be bought by any amount you wanted, scooped into a grocery bag. Some of our countrymen in the grocery/meat business were Repp Brothers, Danewolf's, and Krombein's. During Prohibition you could even buy a little bootlegged whiskey at some stores. Usually it was put in a sack under a peck of potatoes and the supplier wasn't stupid enough to sell to someone he couldn't trust."

**Conrad Brill, from his memoirs titled**

*Memories of Norka*

## COLD STORAGE LOCKER IN PORTLAND

The mention of that cold storage locker brings back fond memories for me. Before it became a cold storage locker, there was a [Brown's Market](#) in that same building, on the Southwest corner of 10th and Beech. I vaguely remember that Market as not being very busy, which may have been the reason for the conversion to a cold storage locker. Back then, we lived about a block-and-a-half from that locker, at 3816 N.E. 11th Avenue, on the East side of the street, near Failing. For added orientation, our neighbor to the South was Krieger and our neighbor to the North was Axt.

During one Highland Grade School summer vacation, I can recall working for the two men who built that cold storage food locker. I believe they were brothers and their last name was either Simmons or Simon. Most vivid, is my memory of the first job I had of loosely stuffing shredded redwood bark into the open spaces in the newly constructed cold room walls. That was the preferred method of insulating at the time; many years before fiberglass insulation became popular. Because the redwood bark came in compressed bundles, it had to be finely shredded, prior to hand stuffing into the open wall spaces. The in-door mechanical shredding process that we used was very messy. Accordingly, to provide some protection against the minute particles that flew everywhere, I wore a handkerchief across my nose and mouth. Most annoying, however, were the fine particles that became imbedded in my hair and clothes. I itched for days!

In our neighborhood, at that time, when an opportunity arose to earn any amount of money, youth had no limitations; and being an overly ambitious youth, I fit right in.

After the insulation was in place and the interior walls finished and painted, a more favorable job followed. That job entailed the use of a jig, wherein I align wooden slats before nailing them together to form rigid, latticed panels. After a couple of days on that project, and evaluating other considerations, we agreed that I should be paid for each panel that I assembled, that is, piecework; instead of being paid by the hour. That arrangement was definitely to my advantage, because I was inherently fast and very efficient; which produced an excellent hourly wage for me. Those open panels then became the walls and doors for the individual lockers. That openness not only allowed for the circulation of frigid air throughout the interior of the cold room; it also provided an opportunity for your neighbors to know what you were eating.

I do not know how many years that cold storage food locker was open for business. Nevertheless, with the advent of home freezers, it is likely they were forced to close sometime during the 1950s or 60s. Today, at that same 936 N.E. Beech Street address, you will find the [New Freedom Assembly Church of God In Christ](#).

Because I was recognized for being fast, efficient, and reliable, the two men hired me again, when they began building another cold storage food locker. I am not certain as to its exact location, but it was most likely on the Northwest corner of Fargo Street, facing North Williams Avenue, just a few short blocks from Dawson Park.

Sometime later, though I am unable to recall the specifics, those brothers hired me for the third time; to help with the construction of a new home they were building on either N.E. 16th or 17th Street, between Mason and Skidmore Avenues. In retrospect, what I learned during the course of those three exciting projects, I still carry to this day.

The recollection and writing about this wonderful, youthful, life episode; still makes me ITCH!

Story contributed by [Melvin \(Mel\) Cook](#). October 9, 2012

## AHSGR Oregon Chapter Membership Form

Memberships fees are for one calendar year and you are responsible for renewing each January 1<sup>st</sup>.  
 \*\*\*\$75 will include your membership to the AHSGR Oregon Chapter and the International Chapter and you will receive both the Oregon Chapter Chronicle Unserer Leute and the International Newsletter.

*New Member* \_\_\_\_\_ *Renewal* \_\_\_\_\_ *Individual* \_\_\_\_\_ *Family* \_\_\_\_\_

*Membership Year(s) 2013* \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

**I would like my Unserer Leute Oregon Chapter newsletter delivered by e-mail** Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
 No \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*The total Annual membership fees are \$75 (AHSGR Oregon Chapter \$25 and AHSGR International \$50). The total \$75. will include your annual membership for the AHSGR Oregon Chapter and a Standard Membership in the AHSGR International Society.

For other International membership levels are available and for more information you can go to:

<http://www.ahsgr.org/membership.htm> or contact Lois Klaus.

**Please make checks payable to AHSGR OREGON CHAPTER and remember to include your application:**

**Lois Klaus 111 N.E. 67 Ave. Portland OR 97213-5209**

**503-232-3065 e-mail: [lklaus@gmail.com](mailto:lklaus@gmail.com)**

**Ask Lois about becoming a lifetime member!**

**Chronical Unserer Leute**  
**Calendar of Events and Meetings**  
**~ March 2013 ~**

Volume 34,  
 Issue 2

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 10:00 am - AHSGR Board Meeting at CVGS
3	4	5 CVGS Library Open	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 CVGS Library Open	13	14	15	16 Noon- 2:30 Potluck lunch followed by Steve Schreiber presentation, "Getting through the brick wall to origins in Germany".
17	18	19 CVGS Library Open	20	21	22	23
24	25	26 CVGS Library Open	27	28	29	30
31						

~ April 2013 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 CVGS Library Open	3	4	5	6 10:00 am - AHSGR Board Meeting at CVGS
7	8	9 CVGS Library Open	10	11	12	13
14	15	16 CVGS Library Open	17	18	19	20
21 AHSGR – 2pm Lee Ann Schlager – Presentation on the CVGS Library Collection	22	23 CVGS Library Open	24	25	26	27
28	29	30 CVGS Library Open				

**OREGON CHAPTER AHSGR**  
**1836 N.W. Couch**  
**Portland, Oregon 97209**

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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.

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