



AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF GERMANS FROM RUSSIA INTERNATIONAL



MEMBER HANDBOOK

Issued by :
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WILLKOMMEN TO AHSGR!

Through this Member Handbook, we want you to learn about your organization and fully utilize, become involved in, and enjoy your membership. We continue to expand our genealogy resources with many additions to the AHSGR Research Library, and are fortunate to have the largest collection of German Russian research information in the United States.

Volunteers are the heart and soul of AHSGR! These are the people who serve on the Board of Directors, Board of Trustees, as Village Coordinators, Chapter Leaders, translators of German, Russian, and Spanish documents, and who process obituaries. If there is a chapter in your area, contact them as they can help you with your genealogy research and provide opportunities to learn about the customs and traditions of *Unser Leute* (Our People). Join us in the work and fun of AHSGR!

AHSGR is a nonprofit corporation incorporated under the provisions of the State of Colorado. Its sister organization, the International Foundation American Historical Society of Germans from Russia (IFAHSGR), is also a nonprofit corporation incorporated under the provisions of the State of Colorado. By definition of the Articles of Incorporation, members in good standing of the Society are also members in good standing of the Foundation. Therefore, the two organizations serve the same membership.

The mission statements are as follows:



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

The International Foundation of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia (IFAHSGR) is responsible for exercising financial stewardship to generate, manage, and allocate resources, which advance the mission and assist in securing the future of AHSGR.



INTERNATIONAL
FOUNDATION
American
Historical Society
of Germans
from Russia

AHSGR HISTORY

The Germans from Russia story begins in 1762 with the Manifesto issued by Catherine the Great. Migrations to Russia were many and by the end of the 19th century, there were about 1.8 million Germans in Russia. In 1872, the Germans in Russia began to emigrate to the United States, Canada, Brazil, and Argentina.

With a large GR population in Nebraska, Kansas, and Colorado, there was interest in forming an organization. Thus, AHSGR was founded in 1968 and incorporated in the same year in the state of Colorado. AHSGR is an international, nonprofit educational organization engaged in researching the history of all German Russians. Volunteers and staff on both local chapter and international levels search for information, translate, and develop a store-house of knowledge useful to current and future generations.

In 1973 the AHSGR office was relocated to Lincoln, Neb. On June 15, 1983, at its 15th International Convention, AHSGR dedicated its newly constructed International Headquarters Building and Heritage Center. In 1993, at the 25th International Convention in Denver, Colorado, the complex was named the **AHSGR Cultural Heritage Research Center**. The center is between 6th and 7th streets from C to D streets, in the neighborhood known as the South Bottoms, designated by the National Park Service as a Historic District. The South Bottoms and North Bottoms neighborhoods were the principal settlements of Germans from Russia in Lincoln at the turn of the 20th century.



Statue in front of Headquarters building in Lincoln

The **Cultural Heritage Research Center** (Headquarters Complex) includes:

- The Jake Sinner Headquarters Building
- Emma Schwabenland Haynes Library Archive, which includes the following individual collections:
 1. David J. Miller Collection
 2. Lawrence A. Weigel Collection
 3. William and Edith Spady Historical Records Collection
- Arthur E. Flegel Genealogical Center
- Museum of displays and artifacts
- Business offices of the Society and its sister organization, the International Foundation of AHSGR
- German from Russia Pioneer Family Commemorative Statue, dedicated October 1998
- Historical Village buildings, which include:
 1. All Faiths Chapel
 2. General Store
 3. Blacksmith Shop
 4. Agricultural Building
 5. Summer Kitchen



All Faiths Chapel at Headquarters Complex in Lincoln

WHO ARE WE AND WHAT IS AHSGR?

Entrepreneur Phillip Anschutz. Singer John Denver. Movie actress Angie Dickinson. Argentinian soccer star Gabriel Heinze. NASA astronaut Richard Hieb. Olympic gold medallist Cindy Klassen. *USA Today* founder Al Neuharth. Canadian author Rudy Wiebe. Academy Award winner Steven Zaillian....

All of these individuals have left their mark on our modern world and yet all share something else in common. They trace their ancestry to an ethnic group known as the “Germans from Russia.” “Germans from Russia”? The name sounds like a misnomer until one delves into our people’s unusual history – a history that is still largely unknown to many.

Beginning in the 1760s, German-speaking colonists began settling deep within the Russian Empire. At the invitation of Empress Catherine the Great, they established agricultural villages but clung to the language and cultural traditions of their ancestors. More German colonists continued to pour into the Russian Empire and eventually there were sizeable German enclaves on the Volga, in the Black Sea region, as well as in Volhynia and the Caucasus.

When social unrest threatened our ancestors’ way of life in the late 1800s and early 1900s, many German-Russian colonists looked westward and made their way to the Americas. Most came as poor immigrants, carrying little more than a few basic possessions. In North America, they settled principally in the Great Plains region and in the Canadian Prairie Provinces.

The story of the Germans from Russia is one that spans whole centuries and whole continents; it is an epic story about a people whose hunger for freedom took them from the desolate steppes of the Old World to the windswept prairies of the New.

The American Historical Society of Germans from Russia (AHSGR) is an international, non-profit organization that is dedicated to preserving the story of our people. Founded in 1968, AHSGR seeks not only



Bell outside All Faiths Chapel in Lincoln

to document the story of the Germans from Russia but also to make that story better-known to the general public.

Today, long-separated German-Russian family members in the former USSR, Germany, and the Americas are finding one another again. Important Russian and Ukrainian archival collections that were closed during the Cold War era are becoming accessible to researchers. Growing numbers of people, young and old, have a renewed interest in their history, folklore, genealogy, and ethnic heritage.

Amidst so many new and exciting developments, the epic story of the Germans from Russia continues to unfold. And a primary goal of AHSGR is to insure that THE STORY IS TOLD...

Written by Dr. Timothy J. Kloberdanz in 1998 and revised by him in 2013.

SUGGESTED READING ON THE HISTORY OF GERMANS FROM RUSSIA

All the books listed below may be borrowed from the AHSGR Library via interlibrary loan, and some may be available for purchase from the AHSGR Bookstore at www.ahsgr.org.

Adam Giesinger, *From Catherine to Khrushchev*. An historian's history of Germans in Russia from the 17th century to 1970.

Hattie Plum Williams, *The Czar's Germans*. A history of the emigration from Germany to Russia with emphasis on the settlements along the Volga River.

Joseph Height, *Paradise on the Steppe and Homesteaders on the Steppe*. Histories of the development of the Catholic (Paradise) and Protestant (Homesteaders) mother colonies in the Odessa Region, South Russia.

Gottlieb Beratz, *German Colonies on the Lower Volga*. A history of the colonies from the time of Catherine the Great until 1920. This book (originally written in German) was a prime reference source for some of the works mentioned above.

George J. Walters, *Wir wollen Deutsche Bleiben*. Despite the German title, the book is in English. In writing this story of the Volga Germans from Catherine the Great through World War II, Walters used first-hand reports and information from captured German war documents on microfilm at the National Archives to make this book more personalized than the previously mentioned works.

Peter Sinner, *Germans in the Land of the Volga*. A collection of short essays, stories and poems dealing with life in the colonies from the beginning to 1920. This was originally written in German for young people.

Mela Meisner Lindsay, *The White Lamb*. A novel depicting the life of the author's mother in a Volga colony, her immigration to America, and the life of the early Germans from Russia in Kansas. This is pleasant reading enjoyed by all generations.

Robert Conquest, *Harvest of Sorrow*. A very thorough, scholarly treatise on the Soviet collectivization and the terror famine of the 1930s.

Berta Bachmann, *Memories of Kazakhstan*. An autobiography of the life of Berta as a young girl at the time of the deportation in 1941, her years in the "Trudarmee,"

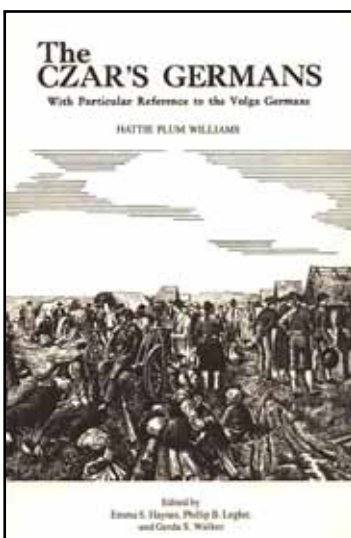
her adult years in Kazakhstan where she married Eugene Bachmann, the last surviving ordained Lutheran minister in the Soviet Union. She and her husband were able to move to Germany. Pastor Bachmann is now deceased.

Joseph Height, *Memories of the Black Sea Germans: The Odyssey of a Pioneering People*. This book contains a rich variety of topics comprising documentaries and diaries, reports and reminiscences, historical and cultural essays, stories in dialect, poems in both German and English, and a comprehensive history of a large German-Russian settlement in Western Canada. Among the important historical documents included in

this book are the complete texts, in English translations, of Catherine's famous manifesto and the rescripts of Czar Alexander I.

Ingeborge Fleischhauer, *The Soviet German: Past and Present*. This book deals with the Germans in all areas of the Soviet Union from World War II to the end of the Cold War.

Amy Brungardt Toepfer and Agnes Dreiling, *Conquering the Wind*. This book deals with the development of the early Volga colonies, particularly with life in the Catholic villages. It also follows some of the families from these villages to the plains of Kansas where they settled in Ellis County.



"The Czar's Germans," by Hattie Plum Williams

MEMBER BENEFITS

ANNUAL CONVENTION

Conventions are held annually and hosted by various chapters or regions. The weeklong event includes sessions on genealogy, history, culture, folklore, international speakers, research opportunities, and updates on information available from the Russian archives. The Annual Membership Meeting is held during Convention for the purpose of transacting AHSGR business. There are reduced registration fees for members.

AUSSIEDLER PROJECT

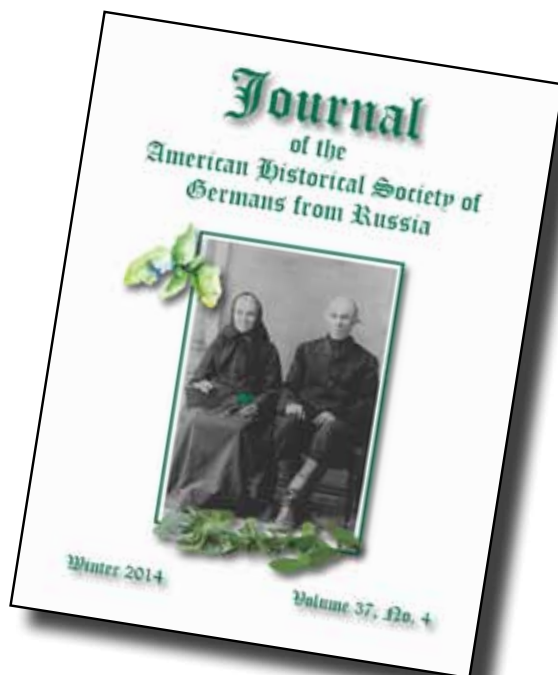
This project collects information from Soviet émigrés to Germany and assists in reuniting German-Russian families torn apart by revolution, war, and political upheaval. It is financed through the contributions of those dedicated to documenting the plight of these families by compiling and publishing a collection of memoirs and memorials based on the recollections of German-Russians who experienced the terrors of Stalinism first hand from the “dekulakization” during the period 1929 through the years of exile. A complete list of the tapes are at ahsgr.org/Get_Involved/Volunteers/Aussiedler_Project.htm.

AWARDS

Nominations for the Distinguished Service Award (for exceptional and meritorious service of a member who has made a noticeable and positive impact on the Society or Foundation in advancing their goals and purposes) and the Special Citation Award (for a one-time outstanding act or continued superior performance in a given area of responsibility) are due March 15 of each year. Any member in good standing may submit a nomination. Awards are presented at the convention. Information and criteria can be found on the website.

BOOKSTORE/AHSGR ON-LINE STORE

Members qualify for discounts on books, published historical records, maps, census lists, and other materials available for purchase from the Bookstore. The full AHSGR catalog is on the website with member and non-member prices at <https://store.ahsgr.org/default.aspx>.



CHAPTERS

Chapters can be established by ten (10) or more AHSGR members and are officially recognized through the Society’s chapter process as embracing the mission of AHSGR. Chapter dues are in addition to International dues. All chapters are listed at ahsgr.org/AHSGR_Chapters.htm. All members are encouraged to join and participate in their local chapter activities.

CLUES

Published every two or three years, *Clues* enables members who are researching similar names to engage in correspondence that can prove mutually beneficial. The Surname Exchange lists all names being researched by members. New members are encouraged to submit a Membership Data Form (ahsgr.org/Membership.htm), an Ancestral Chart (ahsgr.org/FORMS/frm-ancest.pdf) and a Family Group Chart (ahsgr.org/FORMS/frm-fam-grp.pdf) if you desire to be in the next *Clues*. AHSGR has nearly 460,000 entries in its database from members who have submitted these charts. For your convenience, an Ancestral Chart and Family Group Chart can be found in this Handbook.

AHSGR JOURNAL

This is a scholarly, quarterly publication disseminating documented information about the history, culture,

and heritage of the Germans from Russia through articles, essays, family histories, anecdotes, folklore, and book reviews. They are distributed by regular mail and electronically. Pre-1999 *Journals* may be viewed in PDF format by going to ahsgr.org/Products/Journals.htm and clicking on the *Journal* years. Those labeled “VIEW JOURNAL” may be downloaded as a PDF.

DIE JUGEND ZEITUNG

The Youth Newsletter contains stories, songs, poems, and recipes of the Germans from Russia; produced quarterly and distributed by PDF e-mail attachment.

RESEARCH LIBRARY

Our extensive collection includes reference books, family histories, ancestor database, censuses, ship manifests, church, birth, and funeral records, obituaries (digital database of 342,000 files), German village newsletters and file inventory, journals, surname charts, and maps. Members and non-members can use the library 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday. Members may request material through the interlibrary loan (ILL) department of their local libraries. The Library Card Catalog is at ahsgr.org/FindAncestors/ResearchMaterials/Onlinelibrary.htm.

MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN

Recruitment and retention of members is one of the most important activities as it affects the future well-being and progress of the Society. The annual membership campaign encourages current members of AHSGR to recruit new members and runs from convention to convention. A growing, active membership is vital for AHSGR to remain viable. All members are encouraged to participate in the membership campaign. The campaign flyer is on the website.

AHSGR NEWSLETTER

This quarterly publication provides information of current and upcoming activities and programs. It is mailed to members along with the *Journal*.

GENEALOGY RESEARCH SERVICES

Members qualify for discounts on a search of societal records for historical and genealogical research purposes, as well as translation services. The price list and the resources available for research are listed



The AHSGR Research Library in Lincoln includes books, family histories, an ancestor database, and more.

at ahsgr.org/Services/Genealogy_Research_Services.htm.

SURNAME ANCESTRAL CHARTS

Members who have purchased or personally produced large ancestral charts are encouraged to donate a copy of the chart to AHSGR, with the understanding the chart may be photocopied in whole and sold by AHSGR. A full list of Surname Charts, including those which can be copied and sold, are at ahsgr.org/Find_Your_Ancestors/Surname_Charts.htm.

STORYTELLING CONTEST

This annual contest is advertised in the *Newsletter* at least six months before the annual convention. Stories related to Germans from Russia by adults and youth can be fiction or non-fiction. Winning stories will be presented at the Folklore Symposium at the convention and prize money will be awarded. The Storytelling Contest form is posted on the website in English, German, Spanish, and Russian at ahsgr.org/Storytelling.htm.

VILLAGE COORDINATORS (VC)

Village Coordinators are an important element in providing benefits to members in their genealogical research. A VC is an AHSGR member engaged in the collection of historical, genealogical, cultural, geographical, and pictorial items of villages in Russia. For a complete list of Village Coordinators, go to ahsgr.org/Villages/Village_Coordinator.htm.

GENEALOGY PROGRAM AND *CLUES*

Since its founding in 1968, AHSGR has developed a strong genealogy program. Its purpose is to help individual members with their own family research and to make information we have available to all members. Identification with an ethnic heritage can best be accomplished by the study of one's own family history. There is an old saying, "You can't tell where you're going until you know where you've been."

Although it is now possible to obtain some information from the former Soviet Union, the best means available for learning more about one's family is to share information with others and receive what others are willing to share. For this reason we urge all members to complete their genealogy forms. After AHSGR receives a minimum of one each of the following three forms, that member is eligible to be listed in the Surname Exchange of our genealogical publication, *Clues*.

THE MEMBERSHIP DATA FORM reveals your personal interests regarding your research, your willingness to aid in the work of the society, and whether you wish to be listed in the Surname Exchange of *Clues*. This form is available at ahsgr.org/Membership.htm.

THE ANCESTRAL CHART shows us your direct lineage for at least four generations. Information for earlier generations may be continued on another chart. Please list YOUR name and data in the number one position. This form is available at ahsgr.org/FORMS/frm-ancest.pdf.



Ancestral artifacts are on display in the authentic Summer Kitchen on the grounds of the AHSGR Research Library and Museum in Lincoln, Nebraska.

THE FAMILY GROUP CHART provides additional information for family groups. A separate sheet is used for each family. Forms can be found at ahsgr.org/FORMS/frm-fam-grp.pdf. The more family group information we have, especially for older generations, the more we can help you and others.

The information you provide on these forms will be entered into our genealogical database and will be available for research. If you already have your genealogy charts on computer and would like to submit this information on a CD, please write or call for instructions. To facilitate your computer entry, please give all dates in this order: day, month, year. Give all place designations in this order: city/town, county/province, country (if not U.S.A.)

After we have received your genealogy forms, we will be happy to help you with your research problems by searching through the various resources located at Headquarters. This includes, but is not limited to: obituary files, passenger lists, county, city and family history records in the library; some church records, census revision lists and some naturalization records. See the **GENEALOGY RESEARCH SERVICES** page in this Handbook.



German Russian immigrants arrived with trunks and boots, on display in the Research Center and Museum.

GENEALOGY RESEARCH SERVICES

AHSGR serves as a collection point for information about Germanic settlers in the Russian Empire, from the Black Sea to the Volga River. Through the years we have accumulated a vast collection of resources that is unavailable elsewhere. Our extensive collection includes reference books, family histories, censuses, ship manifests, church, birth, and funeral records, obituaries, village newsletters, journals, surname charts, maps, an ancestor database and documents that have been digitized.

AHSGR charges fees for research services. Over the years, we have retrieved and translated a lot of material from Russia, and we continue to do so by actively seeking out and bringing new research to America. This is costly, which is the primary reason we charge for research services. All fees we collect are used to discover and translate materials to add to our collection. AHSGR is a non-profit organization and does not receive any government or public funding.

FEES

The base fee is applicable even if the research staff is unable to find information pertinent to the request because considerable time and effort is still required.

Base Fee	Members	\$10
	Non-Members	\$30
Research Time (prorated in 15-minute increments)	Members	\$30 per hour
	Non-Members	\$90 per hour
Translations	Members	\$25 per hour
	Non-Members	\$75 per hour plus \$25 per hour thereafter
Photocopies (includes microfilm and microfiche)	Members	25 cents per copy
	Non-Members	50 cents per copy
Digital Copies	Members	Base fee plus 10 cents per page
	Non-Members	Base fee plus 10 cents per page
Surname Charts (available formats include paper, CD, email scan/attachment)	Members	Single chart: \$50
	Non-Members	Single chart: \$100
	Members	Two-piece chart: \$70
	Non-Members	Two-piece chart: \$120
Genealogy (GEDCOM)	Members	\$10 plus 10 cents per individual
	Non-Members	\$20 plus 25 cents per individual
Interlibrary Loan (ILL) (United States only)	Members	\$5 per book
	Non-Members	\$5 per book

GENEALOGY RESEARCH SERVICES FORM

- Limit your research request to one surname and/or village per sheet.
- Indicate the amount of money you wish to spend so we can focus on efforts to your advantage.
- Payment is required before research is sent.
- Allow at least 8-12 weeks for your request to be completed.
- Complete and mail to: AHSGR, Attn: Reference Archivist, 631 D Street, Lincoln, NE 68502-1199.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

SURNAME (limit one) _____

VILLAGE (limit one) _____

AHSGR MEMBER: YES _____ NO _____ MONETARY LIMIT: _____

TODAY'S DATE _____

Indicate, in order of preference, which of the following items you would like the research staff to search, bearing in mind there may be time to search multiple resources. Additional items to research are listed at http://ahsgr.org/Services/Genealogy_Research_Services.htm

_____ 1913-1915 Census of German Russians in Lincoln, Nebraska

_____ Ancestor Database (PAF)

_____ Russian Village Censuses

_____ Cemetery Lists

_____ Church Records

_____ Family Histories

_____ Maps

_____ Naturalization Indices

_____ Obituaries

_____ Passenger Ship Lists

_____ Select Surname Charts

_____ Surname Exchange List in CLUES (members only)

_____ Village Files Inventory

_____ Other (please indicate) _____

Additional information relevant to your request: _____

DONOR OPPORTUNITIES

We are grateful to the many people who have donated time and funds to make AHSGR what it is today. However, we can't stop with what we have. There is much more to be learned about our heritage. Your support will help our Society to continue its quest to preserve our rich cultural heritage, thereby reaching out from the past to the present and on to future generations to come. Please consider the following ways to help.

AHSGR VISA CARD

First International Bank and Trust will donate a royalty to AHSGR every time the card is used to make a purchase! Call AHSGR at (402) 474-3363 for an application or call First International Bank and Trust toll-free at (888) 848-3428 and apply for the card.

AHSGR PROJECTS

Members may donate funds to specific committees for current, ongoing and future projects. AHSGR committees and projects are listed earlier in this Handbook.

ANNUAL FUND-RAISING CAMPAIGN

The Foundation develops a major fund-raising program, usually from convention to convention. The Trustees determine the length of the campaign (annual, two-year, etc.) Donors are listed in the *Honor Roll of Donors* booklet.

ARCHIVE FUND

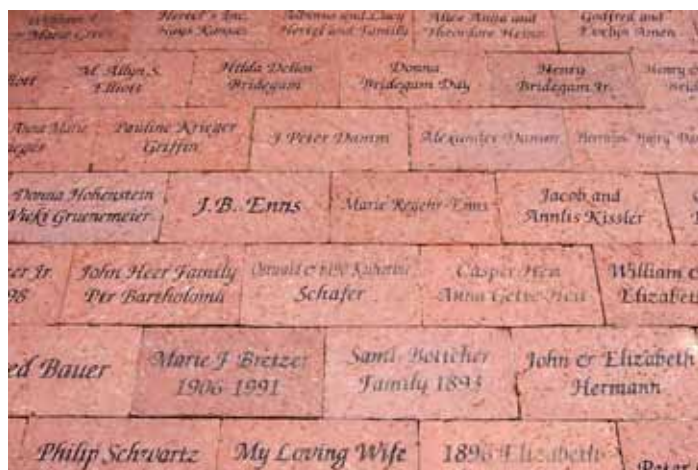
Provides funds to obtain valuable documents and resources from the Russian Archives. These funds are only used to obtain the documents, not for translation of the documents. Funds may be designated for a certain village, archive, general use, or project. Without such donations, we are unable to obtain future records.

ARCHIVAL DOCUMENT TRANSLATION

Funds are used to translate the different documents we have received from the various archives, if no volunteer translator can be found. Funds may be used for specific projects, villages, or general translation use.

ARTHUR E. AND CLEORA FLEGEL LIVING LEGACY FUND

This fund was established by formal written agreement between Arthur Flegel and IFAHSGR, and created to provide additional annual income that furthers the mission of AHSGR. The principal is to remain intact.



Recognize your family's German Russian heritage by purchasing a brick for the walkway at AHSGR Headquarters.

CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY

A contract between the Foundation and the donor that provides for 1) a gift from the donor to the Foundation and 2) lifetime annuity payments from the Foundation to the donor. Annuity payout rates generally exceed bank certificates of deposit (CDs) and similar instruments and are accompanied by generous tax advantages. To find out more and get a proposal tailored to your specific situation, call AHSGR Headquarters at (402) 474-3363.

ENDOWMENT FUND

This fund is funded by donor gifts to grow with no ceiling on the maximum amount. It is separate from all other funds, with the purpose to provide income to perpetuate the goals of AHSGR. The principal reflects actual contributions and shall remain intact.

GOLD BRICK PROGRAM

Purchase a brick for the walkway surrounding the German from Russia Pioneer Family statue in front of the

Donor Opportunities continued on page 12

Donor Opportunities continued from page 11

Cultural Heritage Research Center in Lincoln, Nebraska. What better way to recognize your family for their German Russian Heritage? The donation form can be found at www.ahsgr.org/Support_Us/Gold_Brick_Program.htm.

HERITAGE CLUB

The purpose of the Heritage Club is to promote planned giving by providing special recognition to members who have participated in the Charitable Gift Annuity program or have made a provision to include AHSGR or IFAHSGR in their will.

IMMIGRANT PLAQUE PROGRAM

Purchase a plaque for an immigrant or family for the *Our Immigrant Ancestors* display in the Headquarters entryway. A one-page biography for the immigrant or family will be added to the book near the wall of plaques. The form is at www.ahsgr.org/Support_Us/Immigrant_Plaque_Program.htm

LIVING LEGACY FUND

Donors determine the amount of their donations as well as the program they wish to support. Additional funds are requested in the donor's honor. The fund provides IFAHSGR with additional income to further the mission of AHSGR with the principal remaining intact.

MILESTONE PROGRAM

Members may honor family and friends who reach different milestones in their lives, such as birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, weddings, retirements, etc. Through your donation, you share in their joy and celebration as well as support the work of AHSGR. The form can be found on www.ahsgr.org

MUSEUM ACTIVITIES FUND

This fund provides support for museum-related activities and purposes. When visiting Lincoln, Nebraska, members are encouraged to visit the museum on the second floor of the Cultural Heritage Research Center.

PLANNED GIFTS

NOTE: Donors may choose to restrict the use of their planned gifts to any purpose consistent with the charitable purposes of the Foundation.



A wall display of plaques in the Headquarters entryway honors individual immigrants and families.

Bargain Sales

An outright gift of part of the value of property because the donor's sale price is less than the fair market value; a donor sells property to the Foundation and the Foundation, in turn, sells the property to another buyer.

Bequests

Gifts of personal property made by will. The Foundation may act as trustee for charitable trusts and gift annuities established by will.

Charitable Remainder Trusts

Contact AHSGR Headquarters for details.

Life Estate Contracts

Contract allows a donor to make a gift of the remainder interest (that which is left after the donor's lifetime) in a personal residence or farm to the Foundation, and reserve to him or herself a life estate (the privilege to live in the home for life).

Life Insurance

A donor may give a paid up life insurance policy to the Foundation, naming the Foundation as both owner and irrevocable beneficiary.

*"We make a living by what we get.
We make a life by what we give."*

-- Winston Churchill

IMPORTANT DATES IN THE HISTORY OF GERMAN RUSSIANS

April 21, 1729: Sophia Augusta Fred-
erica of Anhalt-Zerbst born in Germa-
ny, later to rule Russia under the name
Catherine II (Catherine the Great).

1756-1763: Seven Years' War, an im-
portant factor in bringing Germans to
Lower Volga to establish colonies.

June 28, 1762: Catherine II ascends
throne of Russia.

Dec. 4, 1762: Catherine II issues First
Manifesto inviting foreigners to come to
Russia. It brings few results.

July 22, 1763: Catherine issues second
manifesto, spelling out conditions under
which they could immigrate and grant-
ing special rights and privileges. Large
numbers of German peasants accepted.

1764-1767: Founding of German colo-
nies along the Lower Volga River.

1771-1774: Kirghiz Raids and
Pugachev's rebellion, called the
Pugachevshchina, ravishes the Volga
colonies.

1786: Mennonites from West Prussia
begin immigrating to Russia due to 1772
Partition of Poland, threatening their
military service exemption as conscien-
tious objectors. Settlements are estab-
lished primarily in the Taurida region of
South Russia.

1793: Second Partition of Poland grants
area of Volhynia to Russia and Polish
landowners invite German peasants to
lease land for cultivation.

Nov. 6, 1796: Death of Catherine II at
age 67.

1796-1801: Reign of Czar Paul I, son of
Catherine II.

1801-1825: Reign of Tsar Alexander I,
the beloved grandson of Catherine II.

Feb. 20, 1804: Alexander I modifies and
reissues manifesto of Catherine II, invit-
ing foreigners to settle in New Russia.

1825-1855: Reign of Tsar Nicholas I,
grandson of Catherine II, brother of Al-
exander I.

1830: Polish Insurrection brings about
immigration of many Polish Germans
to the Bessarabia and Volga Region.

1855-1881: Reign of Tsar Alexander II,
great-grandson of Catherine II, son of
Nicholas I.

1860s: Another wave of Germans im-
migrate to Volhynia, prompted by 1861
abolition of serfdom, causing significant
drain on work force. Second Polish In-
surrection of 1863 brings more Polish
Germans to Volhynia and other areas.

1871: Germany unifies as a nation for
the first time, creating unease among
European nations and Russia. Increased
animosity towards foreigners in Russia
due to Slavophile movement and na-
tionalism.

June 4, 1871: Imperial Russian Govern-
ment issues decree repealing the Mani-
festo of Catherine II and Alexander I,
terminating special privileges of Ger-
man colonists.

Jan. 13, 1874: Imperial Russian Gov-
ernment issues second decree amending
the previous one and instituting com-
pulsory military conscription for Ger-
man colonists. Thousands of German
Russians eventually leave for North and
South America.

1881-1917: Reign of Tsar Nicholas II,
descendant of Catherine II and last
monarch to rule Russia. He abdicates
during World War I, and on July 16,
1918, the Bolsheviks execute him and
his family.

July 28, 1914: Outbreak of World War I.

1915: Advancement of Eastern front.
Volhynian Germans deported to Volga
and South Russia.

Dec. 13, 1916: Volga Germans ordered

to be banished. Order never carried out
because of internal troubles in Russia.

Nov. 7, 1917: Bolshevik Revolution in
Russia led by Vladimir Lenin and be-
ginning of Communist regime (Oct. 25,
1917, by old-style Russian Calendar).

June 29, 1918: Lenin establishes Auton-
omous Volga German Workers' Com-
mune, forerunner to the ASSR of the
Volga Germans, founded in 1924.

1920-1923: Famine in Russia caus-
ing death by starvation of an estimat-
ed 166,000 in Volga German colonies
alone, one third of the population.
American Relief Administration pro-
vided assistance.

January 1924: Autonomous Socialistic
Soviet Republic of the Volga Germans
established.

1928-1933: Second period of famine
claims many lives throughout Russia.

1928-1940: German farms and prop-
erty expropriated by Soviet government.
Germans forced into collective farms or
migrate to the cities. Period of Staliniza-
tion.

Sept. 1, 1939: Outbreak of World War
II.

June 22, 1941: Nazi Germany invades
Soviet Russia.

Aug. 20, 1941: Beginning of the banish-
ment and exile of the German popula-
tion in Russia. Crimean Germans de-
ported.

Aug. 28, 1941: Decree ordering depor-
tation of Volga Germans to northeast-
ern part of Soviet Union, Middle Asia
and Siberia.

October 1941: Germans in the North
and South Caucasus deported. St. Pe-
tersburg Germans also deported.

1991: Fall of Soviet Union.

AHSGR COMMITTEE STRUCTURE & RESPONSIBILITIES

The AHSGR mission provides the framework for selecting and prioritizing programs, projects, and activities. All programs are founded on scholarship and developed to support the mission and goals of AHSGR. The organization bylaws, available at ahsgr.org/Organization/Bylaws.htm, describe the committee structure established to achieve the mission statement.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (BOD)

Thirty (30) members are elected from the Representation Districts within AHSGR. They meet three (3) times a year, spring, fall, and at the convention, and serve without remuneration. The BOD elects the officers: president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer, at their post-convention meeting immediately following the convention.

FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Responsible for the budget, audit, financial reports, Society investment portfolio, dues schedule, and personnel policies.

EDITORIAL & PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Promotes the development, publication, and dissemination of AHSGR publications, videos, and electronic media; reviews all items prior to sale in the AHSGR Bookstore.

HISTORICAL RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Collects and preserves historical documents and materials relating to Germans from Russia; provides for appropriate displays at the AHSGR Heritage Center; identifies books/articles for translation; shares archive and museum collection information with the members.

GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH & SERVICE COMMITTEE

Collects and coordinates the AHSGR family history database, library and its collections, and the Village Coordinator (VC) Program to provide accurate and accessible family history information to the membership; provides oversight and development of *Clues*.

MEMBERSHIP & PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Promotes programs to increase membership in AHSGR, including the development of new Chapters; provides policy/procedures for volunteers; determines AHSGR award recipients

TECHNOLOGY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Monitors and maintains the web pages, as well as reviews technological holdings of the society to assure effective and efficient technology to achieve the society's goals and mission. Oversees the on-line databases, including approval of future additions and security.

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Develops and maintains relationships with the various archives of Russia to obtain records pertaining to the German Settlements.

CONVENTION PLANNING COMMITTEE

Develops and maintains guidelines and procedures for conventions and serves as a liaison between the local convention organizing committees and AHSGR.

NOMINATING AND ELECTION COMMITTEE

Submits board of directors candidates for election at the annual membership meeting.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Manages the offices, employees and daily operations of AHSGR; responsible to the Board of Directors who appoints and sets the salary; monitors the physical condition of all the buildings and grounds of the AHSGR Cultural Heritage Research Center in Lincoln, Nebraska; reports condition and needs to Board of Directors.

INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION OF THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF GERMANS FROM RUSSIA

IFAHSGR was formed in Colorado and incorporated under the Colorado Nonprofit Corporation Act in March 24, 1974, and is designated as a 501c3 tax-exempt organization by the IRS. All funds will be held for the use and benefit of AHSGR in perpetuity. Members of AHSGR are also members of the Foundation and invited to attend the Foundation luncheon and membership meeting held during annual AHSGR conventions. The Foundation has an ethical, as well as legal obligation to donors in its capacity as a trustee and follow the Nebraska Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act. The IFAHSGR bylaws, available at www.ahsgr.org/Organization/Bylaws.htm, describe the committee structure to achieve the mission statement.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES (BOT)

There are 15 elected members from the Representative Districts within AHSGR. Trustees serve without remuneration. Officers (president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer) are elected by the trustees at the Reorganization Board Meeting following the convention. The Annual Membership Meeting is held during convention to transact business, specifically to elect trustees and approve amendments to the bylaws.

FUND RAISING COMMITTEE

Responsible for raising monies to meet the needs of AHSGR and the Foundation; coordinates activities with the AHSGR BOD and assures legal compliance in those states requiring registration.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Studies market trends to seek the highest returns on investments in accordance with the approved investment policy. Responsible for developing the budget, assuring an audit, and preparing financial reports to reflect the financial condition of the Foundation.



A threshing stone is on display in one of the outbuildings at the Research Library and Museum in Lincoln.



Historical farm tools and equipment are on display in the Agricultural Building at the museum in Lincoln.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE

Submits trustee candidates for election at the annual membership meeting.

GRANTS COMMITTEE

Identifies potential sources for grant money and makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees; assures grants do not jeopardize tax-exempt status of the Foundation nor vary from the Articles of Incorporation.

BYLAWS AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

Reviews the bylaws and policies and procedures manual on a regular basis to assure accuracy and compliance.

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Prepares and reviews the strategic plan for progress and course of action; coordinates planning activities with AHSGR BOD.

American Historical Society of Germans From Russia Ancestral Chart

DATE _____
 PERSON SUBMITTING CHART _____
 STREET ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE IN BLACK INK
 WRITE DATES THUS:
 DAY, MONTH, YEAR
 1 JAN. 1976

B
 PL
 M
 PL
 D
 PL

NAME OF HUSBAND OR WIFE _____

KEY
 B = BORN
 M = MARRIED
 D = DIED
 PL = PLACE
 DA = DATE
 USE BLACK INK

AHSGR Form #G-2

