AHSGR Oregon Chapter Newsletter
Chronicle Unserer Leute

Volume 36, Issue 2
March/April 2015

Mark Your Calendar

Saturday, March 7 - 10 am
Oregon Chapter Board Meeting

Saturday, March 21 - Noon
Oregon Chapter Program
Bruno Reule Presentation / Potluck

Saturday, April 4 - 10 am
Oregon Chapter Board Meeting

Sunday, April 26 - 2 pm
Oregon Chapter Program
Tanja Schell Presentation

You are cordially invited to come and hear Bruno Reule present his own unique and personal story Saturday, March 21, 2015 “A Young Boy’s Survival In War-Torn Europe” 12 noon - Light potluck lunch 12:45—Bruno’s Presentation Discussion period follows

Join us on Sunday, April 26 at 2 pm for a wonderful presentation by Tanja Schell Concordia University Library Room 300 2800 N.E. Liberty Street Portland, Oregon

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Catherine II, the Great
Empress of Russia

AHSGR Oregon Chapter
P.O. Box 55218
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SPOTLIGHT - Lois Kathryn Klaus

One of the Original Members of our Oregon AHSGR Chapter

By Thelma Wiest

Lois Klaus is one of the long time members of AHSGR having been a member since the chapter was organized in 1971. She has been an active member during that time, most recently serving on the Board of Directors as treasurer. Recently, because of poor health, she has not been able to attend regularly but we were very happy to see her at the last Christmas Program in December and the President’s Dinner in January.

Lois was born in Portland in 1934 to Leah Matilda (Thiel) Klaus and Jacob Klaus. At the time of her birth her parents lived in a house in St. Johns. Later her father built a house on N.E. 8th and Beech. There she lived with her parents and sister Ruth Gayle, born in 1938, until her father died in 1966. Two years later she and her mother moved to the house on N.E. 67th Ave. where Lois still lives today. At the house on Beech Ave. Lois said there was a garage tall enough to house her dad’s garbage truck!

During her growing up years Lois did what a lot of school age children did in summers - worked in the fields picking strawberries. She also spent five summers living with her uncle and aunt in Ritzville helping out with the house and farm chores.

Lois does not know from where in Germany her ancestors came but she knows they traveled to Budapest on their way to Russia. Early in 2000 she and her niece visited Budapest and viewed the records of those who were married in the church there. She did not find any names of ancestors in the records.

Jacob Klaus, Lois’ father, came to the U.S. from Norka, a Volga German village in the Saratov, Russia area, in 1923 with his mother to join his brothers, John and Peter, who were living in Portland. Lois’ mother’s family first settled in the mid west after emigrating from Kolb, also a Volga German village in Russia. They later traveled to Ritzville, WA by wagon train in 1893. Leah, Lois’s mother, was the first of her family born in the U.S. Leah lived in Ritzville working for the telephone company until she married Jacob Klaus and moved to Portland. Jacob eventually went into the garbage hauling business with an Italian man and then later worked in the same business on his own. This occupation was one in which many of the German-Russian immigrants to Portland found a livelihood.

Having never married, Lois became a very successful career woman and worked for a law firm in Portland for 54 years. She started work there in 1952 at age 18 during her last year at Jefferson High School where she graduated in 1952. She worked first as a secretary and then as office manager. Having trained many other secretaries over the years she not only was a successful business woman but also a mentor and teacher of other young women wanting to learn the skills of secretarial work.

Lois has been fortunate in having been able to do extensive world travels. She has been to the Orient, the Holy Land, Turkey, as well as many countries in Europe. Hawaii has been a favorite destination - she has been there eleven times!

Lois is a musician and was church organist at Ebenezer Congregational church for 24 years. She is also an accomplished pianist.

Some of the things Lois enjoys doing now are reading and attending concerts whenever possible. She belongs to a number of organizations including the Monday Musical Group and Christian Business Women’s Association. For a number of years she volunteered at the Portland Rescue Mission doing office work and organizing meetings. She enjoyed the people she met and using her skills to serve others.

...Continued on page 3
Some of the things Lois likes most about AHSGR are the people she’s met and the fact that we all have so much in common. She has also enjoyed going to many AHSGR conventions and doing genealogy on her own family.

Lois has one niece who lives in North Carolina and is a professor of New Testament at an educational institute there. She and her niece have been able to do some traveling together which has been a great joy to Lois.

Lois displays a life well lived and is a wonderful example to the younger generation to work hard at whatever life’s work one chooses.

The Oregon Chapter of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia

New look...Wonderful content.

New Internet Address:
http://www.oregonahsgr.org/

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Billings AHSGR Convention</th>
<th>Upcoming AHSGR Oregon Chapter Events</th>
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April 26 - Tanja Schell Presentation  
May 23 - Dr. Eric Schmaltz - Kaliningrad Enclave  
June 21 - Alex and Nancy Herzog - Impact of German Deportations  
July 12-19 - AHSGR National Convention - Billings, Montana  
August 8 - Chapter Picnic at Camp Emerald Forest |

For current & Upcoming CVGS Exhibits and Events, check out  
http://cvgs.cu-portland.edu/exhibits_events.cfm  
and http://cvgs.cu-portland.edu/events/2015Apr28.cfm
Transcribed by Michael Frank, Feb. 24, 2015. Please note that this presentation was made by my aunt Elaine Frank Davison nearly 24 years ago. A lot has happened in both the USA and in Russia since then. What the Davisons encountered during their trip may not be as relevant today.

Elaine Frank Davison

Nov 1991 and we are at the Blue Mountain Chapter of AHSGR, Christ Lutheran Church, on S. 2nd in Walla Walla, Washington.

Well, before I get into it, I just want to let you know that for the past few days as Sunday was approaching I worried over what I was going to say to you today. Where do I start? Two months ago we arrived home after 26 days in Russia to find our home demolished first by water, and then by carpenters, totally unlivable, and we had to move into a motel. A few days later we came to the AHSGR meeting here to be greeted at the door by (Lucy Lenton?) who said 'Good, you could be our program'. At that point I couldn't even put 2 plus 2 together let alone coordinated thought, from jetlag, emotional fatigue and also shock at our home. So I said "George, you're going to have to do it", and he did. He did such a good job that he asked us to come back today to tell you more. I wish we could remember what we already told you. We can't. How do you cut a 26-day trip down to a 20-minute presentation. I'll try to give you the highlights. George and I returned from 26 days in the USSR. On August 30, we landed at SeaTac in Seattle where our daughter Karla and husband Gary picked us up at the airport and took us to their home in Kent where we spent the next several hours telling them details about our exciting trip to the USSR. All six hours of this was videotaped by Karla. Later that evening, Karla told us about the extensive water damage to our home while we were gone. So we stayed in Seattle an extra day and came home on September 1st to find our home still unlivable.

We spent the next 28 days in a motel. We moved back into our home on Saturday, September the 28th but we are still more or less camping out and it will be some time yet before we get the rest of our dining room furniture back from the refinishing and touchup work is completed. Both George and I went on this trip with the feeling that it was meant to be. This sustained us through the whole trip. It was meant to be. I had prayed for months that if it was God's will, the way would be provided. The way was provided in ways we did not anticipate. The night before we left, my brother George came to our house and presented us with envelopes of money from all of my family and cousins here in Walla Walla. This was in addition to what my family had already contributed toward this trip. This was overwhelming to us, especially to realize at this moment that everyone knew this was not a selfish trip just for us. We were making this trip for all of our family and they all knew this and wanted to help. We had three large suitcases plus our carry-ons. Two of the large suitcases were filled with gifts for our relatives in the USSR. Our biggest worry is we packed everything to mix with our own clothing. What if they take these gifts away from us in customs? We had five new winter jackets with us, plus the two we were wearing. How do we explain all of this? How do we explain all these solar calculators that we are taking with us? And all of this coffee and candy...more than we could eat. But the feelings that we discussed after we got home is that we were allowed to go through customs and everything else just as though it was pre-arranged that we had no problem. We should not have worried. The way was provided.

We traveled to the USSR in a private visa, which is very different from a tourist visa. We had to have an invitation from a relative in the USSR who took responsibility for us. This relative was the son of my first cousin, Philipp Frank. We stayed in his home in Kimry, 140 km. north of Moscow. Philipp obtained the permission from the officials in Kimry for us to visit the Volga area and also in the Ural mountains. Without his invitation, we would not have been allowed to go to the areas we did. The areas we visited are not open to tourism and we were told by many people living in the area that we were the very first Americans to visit in both areas. We also were considered to be the very first outsiders to go to these areas, which means someone who was not born there. Yes, we had a memorable trip to the USSR where we were given permission to walk the land of Kautz, visit the villages of Merkel, Kratzke, and Dietel. We also were allowed to visit first cousins in Ivdal, in the Ural mountains.
We arrived in Moscow on August the 5th, where we were greeted outside the customs gate of the Moscow airport by Philipp, his wife Eugenia, their daughter Maria, Philipp's sister Lydia, and her daughter Elena who had traveled from Kyrgyzia to be with us, and Eugenia's parents, Boris and Maria Semov. This was a very emotional meeting for all of us. They presented me with flowers which were crushed in our embraces. The fact they presented me with flowers...every day somebody presented me with flowers. On August the 8th, which is three days later, we left Kimry in a rented van with a driver, headed for Kautz. It took 18 hours traveling by van from Moscow to Kautz, which also took another 18 hours on the return trip. We were fortunate that Philipp had located a German family for us to stay with while in Kratzke for the two nights and one day that we were there. This family had returned to the Volga area from Siberia in 1959. This was the man who helped us locate the landmarks in Kautz. We were told that Kautz was bulldozed and destroyed by the Russian army from 1961 to 1964. The reasons given to us was that the Russian army did not want the smaller villages to exist, and therefore they destroyed them. Kautz was one of the smaller villages. The Volga villages were evacuated in 1941 when the German people were taken to various areas in Siberia, at which time Russian families moved in to these villages. The order for this evacuation was signed in Moscow 50 years earlier (from 1991), on August 28, 1941. We were there during a very historic time.

On August the 9th, we walked the land of Kautz. Kautz is no more but we were able to locate where it was, with the help of Mr. Wilhelm Pister from Kratzke. The map we had of Kautz was so accurate it was unbelievable. We located the landmarks, the main streets, the side streets, the mounds of houses, the summer kitchens, and we counted the mounds until we located the home of my father and my grandfather. And that's the grandfather of half of the people in this room because you are all related to me. It's quite a moment! In fact, those of my family who helped with their financial contributions, I finally got thank you cards out. I've had a lot of other things I've had to do, but I've been waiting to do a letter to thank you all too, but the letter will come. But I sent you all a picture and that picture of me standing on the mound of our grandfather's house, where our fathers were born and your mother was born. I was holding a sack of Kautz earth in my hands. And the song that came to me at that moment was "Oh Lord, How Great Thou Art". And you think of those words in that song, and they all fit. We located where the church had once stood, as well as the cemetery, the mounds are there, but the markers have all been removed. The schoolhouse, where it once stood, the teacher's house, where it once stood, and the "Hannadamsja's Schreiner house, next to the teacher's house, that was for Ruth and Carl. We even located the paths to the Karamysch River, the fruit orchard, and found apple trees still bearing fruit. Yes, we ate apples in Kautz...and Philipp came running up to me with this one funny little apple, and he says "Looka, it's a 'dulop'! Looka 'dulop'. A dulop, I found out, is a cross between a pear and an apple, and it tastes crossed, and I remembered in very many, many years ago that my brother Bill had a nickname by the name of 'dulop' and I asked the Con Miller kids...I don't think there are any of them here today, but Al Miller told me that the reason my brother Bill had that nickname of 'dulop' is he liked green apples. And this was all explained to me in Kautz, why my brother, Bill, had a nickname of 'dulop'. But those were very, very good. The villages still in existence, those that we saw looked exactly like my father and my uncle Bill had described them, except so much of these villages have also been destroyed. There were many empty lots. And there were no churches. In Dietel, Wilhelm Pister arranged for us to meet another Volga-German, Friedrich Kramer, who led us through Dietel. Where the church once was, is placed a statue of Lenin. The map I had of Dietel, which I had gotten from Herman Michel in Laurel, Montana, was also very accurate. Mr. Kramer took us to the schoolhouse, the teacher's house, and also the building where my grandfather, Johann Conrad Frank, presided as a judge in Dietel. That building is also still there, but now is used as a government storehouse. Mr. Kramer was so knowledgeable and so happy to be with us, treating us like lost family who had returned to visit him. I wish we could have spent more time with him. In Kratzke, the church building was modified and was used as a government storehouse. Kratzke also used to be a very large village, but most of this village had been destroyed. Merkel once had 760 houses, most of which are all gone. This also was a large village.
The only modern things we saw in these villages was that they did have electricity, one light bulb in each room with visible wiring to each room. And television. All television programming originates in Moscow and is government controlled. Every home seemed to have a television antenna on top of their house. No inside running water. They still have to go to a nearby well to pump the water. The water must be boiled. No inside plumbing of any kind...in fact the outhouse is in the barnyard. I remember I asked Uncle Bill many years ago "Where was the outhouse in Kautz?". It wasn't in the floorplans he had drawn for me. He said, "What do you want to know that for?" I said, "Well, you didn't draw it in the floorplans. Where was it?" "We didn't have any". I said, "What did you do?" He said "We went with the animals". So later I went to see Mr. George Schreiner in Laurel, Montana. I said "Mr. Schreiner, were there any outhouses in Kautz?" He says "What do you want to know that for?" I said, "Because I need to know". He said "What did Uncle Bill say?" I said "He said there weren't any". "That's right". Well, later they said there were and they were in the barnyard. You had to go out in the barnyard. Well, where we were in Kratzke, we opened this gate and we patted the cow on the head as we walked past him, to where we needed to go. It was in the barnyard. We had to wash in the yard, using a basin and drawn water from the pump...all cold water. There are very few German families living in these villages who have returned from Siberia. Most of the families living in these villages are Russians who moved in after the evacuation of the Volga villages in 1941.

After we returned to Kimy from Kautz, Philipp told me that had he known how well we would be treated in Kratzke by the Pisters, he would have taken the van for another three days, but it was too late to change the plans after we were there. One day was not enough, but it was better than nothing. We are sure the reason these areas are not open to tourism is because there are no conveniences of any kind. You take what you find, eat what they eat. No restaurants. We had to carry our own food while traveling. No hotels in these areas either. You would have to know someone living in the Volga area who would take the chance to go to the officials and make out the necessary documents for the official invitation. And that would mean that you would stay with them while you're there. My cousin took this chance and he was entirely responsible for us all the while we were with him. He had to rent a van and a driver to take us to the Volga villages. And we did nothing to create curiosity or draw a crowd. We took many photos, but only when my cousin said it was OK to do so. There were many places and areas we were not allowed to photograph, such as railroad stations. I wish I had somebody who could draw what I tell them there. Or the airport. Or anything that might embarrass the Russians or disclose military or government activity. We found much we would have liked to photograph, but we were not allowed to do so.

On August the 14th, we again left Kimy by van for the 2 1/2 hour trip to Moscow where we would take the train to the Ural mountains. This was to take the most of 3 days and 2 nights by train from Moscow to Sverdlovsk, and another 15 hours by car from Sverdlovsk to Ivdel. As we sat in the railroad station with all of our luggage on the floor in front of us, the scene was indescribable. The train station could be very beautiful if it were not so dirty. So many, many people everywhere. We sat across from two men who got out their bread and their cheese and their tomatoes and their boiled eggs, and proceeded to cut bread with a pocket knife and eat. Our food mainstay during our entire trip was just like this, along with potatoes and canned meat from Bulgaria, four times a day. The train ride itself is another experience, which is entirely another subject. We were met at the train station in Sverdlovsk at 9:30 pm on August the 16th by Philipp's brother Victor and his cousin Heinrich and two other men, and they had two cars. They couldn't get a loan of a car big enough for all of us. They had traveled 15 hours to meet us. So we had to travel throughout the night and we arrived in Ivdel at 2:30 the next afternoon. The first meeting with our relatives in Ivdel was also very emotional. Seeing my cousins Heinrich and Amalia was something I had dreamed about for so many years and they both kept saying that they didn't actually believe it could really happen. That we were actually coming. And yet, there we were. It was harder yet to say goodbye. To them three days later we brought Kautz earth with us from Kautz. And on Sunday morning the whole family piled into an old school bus and we traveled to the cemetery, where I finally saw my aunt Dinis' grave and also Philipp's father and mother's graves. And we sprinkled Kautz earth on all the graves. Saying goodbye to our relatives in Ivdel on the 20th of August was very hard as we all knew this was final...that we would never see each other again. Many rode with us to Serov in an old school bus where we were to catch the train again for our return trip to Moscow.

While we were in Ivdel, the coup was taking place in Moscow, although we did not know it at the time. It wasn't until we were on our way back to Moscow by train did we learn of any of the events that had taken place, and then very few details. Since we were not tourists, we could obtain no help at an Intourist hotel...in fact we couldn't even get into a hotel due to guards at the door who requested proof that we were registered there. Since we were not registered there they refused to answer any of our questions. When I contacted the American Embassy by phone they did not want to know my name, where we were staying, or with whom we were staying. They said if we needed help we were to come directly to the embassy. Philipp would not go near the American Embassy due to fear for himself, and we feel from our experiences that phone calls were subject to being bugged and that a
Russian citizen entering an American Embassy would be subjected to possible KGB investigation. Since there is essentially no private enterprise in the USSR with no American-type freedoms everyone is subject to Russian laws, which appeared to us to be strict and unforgiving for anyone should you be investigated for any reason. We also had obtained permission to go to Saratov but we did not get there. It meant another long trip by auto and since we would not be allowed to stay in a hotel, we did not go. Philipp did not know anyone we would be able to stay with while there, so he said "It's impossible, we cannot go". I had so hoped to search the archives in Saratov, but it was not meant to be.

The little things in life which we take for granted are a major item in the USSR. We stood in line with our relatives while we looked for bread. We have a new meaning for freedom since we returned and much more appreciation of the little things of life in America. There is so much more we could tell you, but you'd have to have 26 days to listen to us. Each day was a different day and new experiences. We experienced the absolute high end emotion as we saw my relatives for the first time, walked the land of Kautz, and visited in the Volga villages. We also experienced the absolute low in emotion and disgust at much of what we saw and experienced. There are no neighborhood gas stations. No roadside rest areas. Very few road signs, and then those are in Russian. There are very few highways marked with a center line and many potholes and very rough roads. Our driver even got lost a couple of times. Obtaining gasoline was a major problem and meant waiting in line for hours only to find they'd closed for lunch or a rest period or just plain run out of gas. When we traveled by auto from Moscow to the Volga area we carried extra gasoline which was fortunate as we could not purchase gas when we wanted it. We were fortunate to find enough gas for the return trip while in Dietel.

The people are used to waiting in line for everything. Roadside rest areas meant looking for a "gute platz", a good place, hopefully with some privacy and not filthy from hundreds who had been there before us. One time as George came walking across the road, I said "did you find a gute platz, honey"? He said "Yes, but I wasn't the first". Our language communication was in German with my relatives, but the main language there is Russian. I have listened to hours of Russian going on and I got about maybe 15 minutes of German explanation. Things were not explained to us and we just had to take it as it came. George would wait patiently for the little bit of English that I managed to get through to him. There is no way we could have gone to the USSR on our own and accomplish all that we did. Saying goodbye at Moscow airport on the 29th of August to Philipp, Eugenia, Maria and Boris was very hard. We had bonded so very well. It was as though we were saying a final goodbye, although I had promised Philipp we would try to get permission for them to visit us here in Walla Walla next year for our family reunion. Several days earlier in a very serious conversation with Philipp, we gave him several hundred American dollars which we had carried with us. We told him that we had accepted all he had made possible for us and that this money was from all of his American relatives, not just from us. We had already told him that our family had helped us come. He knew we weren't rich. He would not let us spend any money while we were there. And we told him that the American dollars which we were leaving with him was to help him when they get to Germany. He accepted under those conditions. Now with the way things are going there he might have to use this money just to exist. We feel so fortunate to have been able to make this trip to walk the land of Kautz and to take a step back in time at least a hundred years because that's what it was. I never thought that I would be granted this miracle in my lifetime. Thank you!

Addendum to Elaine's Trip  
By Tanja Schell  
Prior to final publication of this newsletter, Tanja graciously offered up her thoughts in a long e-mail to me. They can be summarized into a number of points: 1) the areas visited by Elaine were mainly rural with limited plumbing, like rural areas of the USA 2) The August 1991 coup in Russia brought hope that the country would move towards a better life for its citizens. She is still optimistic about Russia's future. 3) The larger cities are as cosmopolitan as any in the world. 4) Tourist infrastructure is now much better along major highways, including availability of gasoline, and restrooms. 5) When visiting, try staying closer to the villages and commuting less, like at a hotel in Zhirnovsk, about 25 miles from Kautz, or paying to stay with families in the villages where there would otherwise be little or no amenities. 6) New laws mandate more complex and restrictive bureaucratic access to Russian archives. 7) Consider flying more instead of driving for long periods at a time. 8) When renting a car, invest in a driver who knows the area. 9) The town of Lviv was close to some of the largest labor camp sites where some of our ancestors were sent during and after WWII. ~~~Tanja is excited about her upcoming trip to Portland in April.
Mary Troudt Mills
1932–2014

Age 82, passed away 2/4/2015. She is preceded in death by her beloved husband of 59 years Christian Mills. She is survived by her sons Glen (Diane) and Gary (Laurie) Mills and 4 grandchildren Jonathan, Mark, Stephanie and Jessica. Mary was an active member in AHSGR and a passionate genealogist. Visitation will be 12noon Sunday, February 8, 2015 with funeral service to follow at 2pm both at Olinger Chapel Hill, 6601 S. Colorado Blvd., Centennial, Colorado. (Published in the Denver Post on Feb. 6, 2015)

Some of her accomplishments:

1992 - History and church records of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Windsor, Colorado, 1909-1992
1993 - History and church records of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Windsor, Colorado 1909-1992
1993 - History & church records of Trinity Lutheran Church, Sterling, Colorado : 1912-1992
1993 - History and church records of Faith United Church of Christ, Windsor, Colorado
1993 - History and church records of Christ Lutheran Church, Eaton, Colorado, 1914-1965
1993 - History & church records of Grace Lutheran Church, Sugar City, Colorado
1993 - Records of German Congregational Church, Milliken, Colorado, 1918-1976
1993 - History & church records of First German Congregational Church, Loveland, Colorado, 1902-1992
1993 - The Hill family of Walter : genealogies of various Hill families who settled in the Volga German colony of Walter, Russia
1993 - Church records of Plymouth Congregational Church, Fort Collins, Colorado, formerly German Congregational Church
1994 - History & church records of Trinity Lutheran Church, Sterling, Colorado 1912-1992
1994 - History and church records of First German Congregational Church, Loveland, Colorado, 1902-1992
1997 - History & church records of Saint Peter's Lutheran Church, Sugar City, Colorado, 1913-1926
1999 - History & records of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Sugar City, Colorado, 1901-1997
1999 - Gretchinnaja Luka Buckwheat meadow : a history of the German colonies of Walter and Walter Khutor in Russia's Volga River Region
2001 - History & church records of Zion Congregational Church, Brighton, Colorado
2010 - History and church records of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Windsor, Colorado 1909-1992

I located Mary Troudt Mills obit and video by googling Mary Mills obit Colorado. I went through my library and noted she located 26 Colorado Germans from Russia Church books and translated them with the help of volunteers and published them with the help of her husband. She also extracted and published the 1910 Colorado U.S. Census, the petitions and naturalizations which took place in Colorado of Germans from Russia and a Eulogy and Obituary collection of Rev. Abraham Brenning. Additionally, for many years she was the Frank Village Coordinator. There's no doubt about it, she accomplished more in her lifetime than most of us think about doing. Without her leadership all of this material would have been lost!

...Lee Ann Schlager
I am very sad to share the news that Judy Curtis, our long-time Norka Database Coordinator, passed away on Friday morning. Judy worked passionately and tirelessly for many years to put together a database that included the original settlers in Norka and many of their descendants. Judy helped a significant number of people learn about their family history over the years, a great gift to all who received it. Judy's work will live on and continue to benefit many people in the future. She will be dearly missed. The following was sent to me by Judy's husband, Ted Curtis.  

(Posted in the Facebook page for Norka).

Judith Ann Elbourn Curtis
Sunrise 1 Nov 1943 – Sunset 6 Feb 2015

It is with sadness that I announce that my wife Judy passed away Friday Morning, Feb 6, 2015 at 3:00 am.

Since 8 Jan 2015 Judy was under the care of Hospice of the Valley and stayed at the Caring Heart Terrace Assisted Living Home at 2705 East Emelita in Mesa.

Funeral services are at 11:00 am Thursday 12 Feb 2015 at the LDS Corona Chapel located on Knox Road in Tempe, Arizona. Drive South from Warner Road on Rural Road, then East on Knox Road to the chapel, located just East of Corona del Sol High School). A viewing will be held at 9:30 am in the same building. Lunch will be served after the funeral in Tempe; please RSVP so that the number who will attend can be known.

A second funeral will be held in the Snowflake Stake Center Chapel on 9th South and 2nd West at 12:00 noon Friday 13 Feb 2015. Thereafter Judy will be buried in the Snowflake Cemetery located at 4th West and 4th South. Lunch will be served after the funeral in Snowflake; please RSVP so that the number who will attend can be known.

Judy was born 1 Nov 1943 to Merlin Alane Elbourn and Leona Marie Brown in Omaha, Nebraska. She married Evan H. "Ted" Curtis on 28 May 1965 and their children are Michael E. Curtis and Heather Marie Curtis Borrego. The children of Mike and Susie are Tyler, Justin, Natalie and Sydni. The daughters of David and Heather Borrego are Meagan, Taytem, and Rylann.

Judy often talked of the love she felt for her grandmother Brown and her grandchildren. She and her parents lived with her widowed grandfather Brown when she was age 9 to 12. Since he was retired, they often went visiting to various relatives. Judy loved her relatives and spend many years working on searching for her Elbourns from Eastern Shore Maryland and the genealogy of her German ancestors who lived in the German colony of Norka in Russia. In lieu of flowers, Judy’s wish is that a contribution be sent to the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia (AHSGR) at 631 D Street in Lincoln, Nebraska. http://ahsgr.org/index.htm. Judy’s research combined information on Norka residents into a living database of about 35,000 names that will continue to be used to provide family links over several generations from now back through Russia to Germany. Like so many things she did in life, she did it to love and help others.

Albina
Vancouver Avenue and Russel Streets
Who are we?

Wer sind wir?

Кто мы?

See Page 13 for answers...
James R. Griess (1941 - 2014)
The German Russians:
Those Who Came to Sutton (Nebraska)

James R. Griess (Jim) was born on April 12, 1941 on a farm in southwest York County, Nebraska. He was the oldest son of Ruben A. Griess and Erna M. Griess (Ehly). He had two brothers, Theodore J. and Ruben A. Jr. His sister Joanne is married to Loren Hock. All four sets of his of great grandparents were German Russians who settled in the area of Sutton, Nebraska, in the last quarter of the 19th century, coming from both the Volga and Black Sea regions of Russia.

Jim was baptized and confirmed at Hope Reformed Church, Sutton, and was a member of Holy Savior Lutheran Church LCMS, Lincoln, Nebraska. He attended public school in Sutton, Nebraska, and graduated in 1959. He attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the University of Wyoming, and the University of Nebraska-Kearney where he earned both his BA and MA in Education.

In 1963, he began his teaching career in Overton, Nebraska. There he taught science and history. In 1966, he joined the staff of Hastings Senior High, Hastings, Nebraska, and taught American History. Then in 1973, he joined the staff of the Nebraska State Education Association. He held a variety of positions. From 1991 to the end of 2006, Jim served as Executive Director of the Association. He retired in 2007 and lived in rural Lancaster County (Malcolm) with his wife Polly (Newman), who passed away in 2011. Jim and Polly had two children, Rosalyn LeAnn Beckman (husband John) and Maj. Gabriel James Griess, who is a career officer in the United States Air Force. Jim and Polly had one grandchild, Lucas John Beckman.

Jim contributed articles to numerous publications. He was a member of the Nebraska State Historical Society, the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, Lincoln, the Germans from Russia Heritage Society of North Dakota and the Nebraska State Education Association-Retired.

Jim Griess, one of the two AHSGR village coordinators for Rohrbach and Worms, passed away 21 March 2014. I (Michael Frank) only recently found out. I had the opportunity to work with Jim on development of the website for his two villages. Most of our interaction was by E-mail and some by phone. After many years of contact, we met personally, as friends, for the first time at an AHSGR convention in Lincoln, Nebraska. He was a remarkable person, well-read, well-liked, and down-to-earth. He is missed.

Rohrbach/Worms Website:  http://home.comcast.net/~dm48/rohrbach/rohrbach.htm

From Celia McCann
Posted in Facebook’s Volga Germans Group

For anyone who speaks, or has studied a little bit of, Russian -- I had the sweetest elderly gentleman as my Russian language teacher, Edward Ney. He was actually from Estonia. Anyway, he told us a Russian language joke one time (going back now 40 years) -- A man was walking on the street. He walked under a furniture store sign and one of the letters fell off onto his head. Folks rushed up, asking him if he was ok. "Ah," he said, "sure I'm ok! It was only the soft sign!" In order to 'get' this little joke you have to know how to spell FURNITURE in Russian: мебель -- the last 'letter' of which is not really a letter, but what is termed the 'soft sign' -- Мягкий знак -- which lets the speaker know how to pronounce the L sound in that word. This has always been a fun memory of mine, from when I was trying to learn how to speak Russian!
Newsletter Mailing Costs
The chapter incurs considerable costs in providing paper copies of this newsletter to chapter members. If at all possible, and you are able to view the newsletters electronically, please let the newsletter editor know (Michael Frank, dm48@comcast.net, 360/601-7361), and we’ll save some trees and $$$ in the process. Be aware that the electronic copies are in color, whereas the mailed copies are in black-and-white. Also, you are able to increase the viewing size of the electronic version using the free software Adobe Reader. If you have a computer and printer, you can always print your own archival copy in color or black and white. Copies of past newsletters are also available for viewing or printing at the chapter website, http://www.oregonahsgr.org/.

Genealogy Tip:
Now is the time to go through old photographs and make certain they are properly identified!

!!! Making A Donation !!!
We are fortunate to have many individuals who have shown their commitment by making a donation to the Oregon Chapter of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia (AHSGR), allowing us to further our mission of collecting, preserving, and presenting the history of Germans from Russia in Oregon and Southwest Washington.

Please consider supporting us through a financial contribution. The Oregon Chapter of AHSGR is a private, tax exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (Federal tax ID number 93-1313164). Your donation is tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

To donate, please send your check (payable to Oregon Chapter AHSGR) to:
  Jim Holstein
  Treasurer, AHSGR Oregon Chapter
  PO Box 55218
  Portland, OR 97238-5218

Please contact Jim by email (jimholstein@gmail.com) or at (503) 367-1757 if you have any questions. Your support is greatly appreciated!
Grab Your Genealogy by the Horns: Five Ways to Take Control of Your Research in 2015

Can you believe that it is almost 2015? It is now time to evaluate what we accomplished during the previous 12 months, and set new goals for the coming year. “Out with the old and in with the new.” In the Chinese New Year, 2015 is designated as the year of the Goat (also translated as “Sheep” or “Ram”).

Perhaps, like me, you have a list of genealogy-related tasks you plan to work on. If you want to grab your genealogy by the horns, here are five ways to take control of your research in 2015.

1. Define your goals. List all the tasks you hope to accomplish with your genealogy research in 2015 (find elusive ancestors, break down brick walls, start writing your family history, scan your photographs, organize your digital and paper files, etc.). Next, take your list a step further and break those items you’ve listed down—into weekly, monthly, quarterly, annual goals—to help set benchmarks for completing them. When you track your success, you will feel a sense of accomplishment. Once you declare your goals, don’t let them stay buried in a journal, or become part of your digital clutter. Print out your list and hang it in your office where you can see the goals and focus on them each day.

2. Let go of old habits. Genealogists are often creatures of habit. We often search the same databases in the same way or get distracted by the latest technology tools or apps. Some of our habits may also be hurting our research progress (for example, not keeping a research log, letting our filing get backlogged, or neglecting to copy down a source citation for records or documents we find. This year, identify your problem areas and make a point to do better.

3. Get organized. To do your best research, you need to set yourself up for success. Perhaps you need to clean up your genealogy database, create a template for your research log, file that stack of papers, scan those photographs, or locate the materials you need to write about your ancestors. Shop for supplies purchase or download software or apps you need. For help with organizing your materials, pick up a copy of the book, How to Archive Family Keepsakes by Denise May Levenick (aka The Family Curator). If scanning photographs is on your list, then another “must have” is Geoff Rasmussen’s book Digital Imaging Essentials.

4. Don’t go it alone. No genealogist is an island. As genealogists we are accustomed to working solo. Find a research partner who understands the challenges of chasing down ancestors, someone who can help you stay focused on your goals, and keep you motivated to make 2015 a great year for your genealogy. There are groups you can join too on Facebook or Google Plus. Check out the “Genealogy on Facebook” List compiled by Katherine R. Willson, to find a group that fits your interests. You don’t have to solve your brick wall problems alone when you have genea-friends who share the same passion, frustrations, and successes as you.

5. Hit the reset button. When you began your genealogy were you just a name collector? Do you question the validity of some of your data? Have you been inconsistent with source documentation? Do you practice start and stop genealogy and forget where you left off? If you find that your genealogy documentation is completely out of control, or discover major holes in your research, perhaps you need to step back, regroup and start again. If so, join professional genealogist Thomas MacEntee for the Genealogy Do-Over. There is a Facebook group (search for Genealogy Do-Over) you can join if you are planning to be a part of the Genealogy Do-Over, or if you just want to watch and track participant progress and learn new research tricks - this is the place for you to ask questions and also share advice about the Genealogy Do-Over. This is a 13-week program, broken down into specific tasks each week. The schedule of topics is posted at GeneaBloggers. The list is representative and your mileage may differ . . . meaning that your research habits and specific research projects may warrant different areas of concentration in terms of skill building. Participants (and viewers) may agree or disagree with the topics or the order of the topics, so you can add or remove topics that you feel are not relevant to your specific genealogy research project. Each week, a post will appear at GeneaBloggers covering the Genealogy Do-Over topics. Posts will include tips, advice and resources.

I am ready to make 2015 my best genealogy year ever. How about you?

Who are we? (from page 10)
AHSGR Oregon Chapter Membership Form

Membership fees are for one calendar year that renew each January 1st.

Annual dues for the AHSGR Oregon Chapter membership are $25.

Membership Year 20____

New Member _____ Renewal _____ Individual _____ Family_______

Name(s) ____________________________________________________________

Address ____________________________________________________________________________

City __________________________ State ___________ Zip Code ______

Telephone ______________________ E-Mail __________________________

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

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

In order for us to service 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:

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

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

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

Questions? Contact Jim Holstein at jimholstein@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.

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.
## March 2015

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### March 2015 Notes
- 7 Chapter Board Meeting 10 am
- 10 CVGS hours 9:30 - 3:00
- 17 CVGS hours 9:30 - 3:00
- 21 Bruno Reule Presentation - Noon - Potluck
- 24 CVGS hours 9:30 - 3:00
- 31 CVGS hours 9:30 - 3:00

## April 2015

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### April 2015 Notes
- 4 Chapter Board Meeting 10 am
- 7 CVGS hours 9:30 - 3:00
- 14 CVGS hours 9:30 - 3:00
- 21 CVGS hours 9:30 - 3:00
- 26 Tanja Schell Presentation - 2 pm
- 28 CVGS hours 9:30 - 3:00
AHSGR OREGON CHAPTER
P.O. Box 55218
Portland, Oregon 97238-5218

Address

Address

City

State, Zip

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.

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

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