President’s Message

Most important of all, I need to correct my mistaken notion that we were no longer a chapter of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia. We are still a chapter of that organization.

To clarify:
In order to become a chapter, it was necessary to have at least 10 members who had a membership with the AHSGR. However, to remain a chapter, this no longer applies.

As long as we have an executive and are a registered society we are indeed still a chapter of the AHSGR.

When the group meets on a social basis only, without a board of directors, then we would not be considered a chapter.

We continue to enjoy the hospitality of Linda, as she makes her home available for the monthly meetings and also houses the library for the Victoria Germans from Russia Historical Society.

No meeting in December, but we do plan to have a social get-together in January.

Please contact Linda if you would like to return books to the library or borrow reading material from the library.

Directors

President
Anni

Vice President
Isidore

Secretary
Helen

Treasurer
Jean

Director
Leslie

Library
Linda Vogt
Leslie Volk

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Meetings are held

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Thrifty Foods - Sobey
The Smile Card Program has made it possible for us to purchase many books, journals, DVDs, CDs, etc. for our library. Please continue to shop at Thrifty Foods.

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Thrifty Foods Flyer
Check out their flyer online and see their daily specials.
"The German is like a willow. No matter which way you bend him, he will always take root again."
Aleksandr Isayevich Solzhenitsyn.

The following article was contributed by Leslie C.,
one of the members of the Victoria Germans from Russia Historical Society,

This is a photo of both the hard and soft cover of my ancestry book. It was self-published by using the web sight called “Blurb” and was quite easy and self-explanatory. Their support group is really great too if you have any questions. Unfortunately, as of December 30, 2015 however, one must have Windows 7 or greater to use it. I still use Windows XP which is super old, so my book will disappear off the site unless I upgrade my operating system to Windows 7. If one were to go to Blurb.ca and check out this free site, you’d really enjoy it. Occasionally there are time-limited, one-time-use coupons that can be used on the site to bring down the cost of your finished product. They can be found by googling “blurb coupons”. If I am not mistaken, this is the self-publishing site recommended by Family Search group (LDS).

The photo on the front cover is of my great-grandfather Andreas Hoffart and his daughter, Walburga. The ship is the Adriatic, that they sailed to North America on in 1913.

Every family member has asked me about the title of the cook. The quote comes from Aleksandr Isayevich Solzhenitsyn. He was a Russian novelist, historian and critic of Soviet Totalitarianism. He helped to raise global awareness of the gulag and the Soviet Union’s forced labor camp system. The strong, resilient German-Russian immigrants are a true example of what determination and faith can resolve, for it has been proven time and again, that “the German people, bent like a willow, will always take root again.”

Blurb   www.blurb.ca/ Create and publish a book, magazine or ebook with Blurb’s self-publishing platform.
My Ukrainian Christmas
By Leslie

I am fortunate enough to have a mother of Ukrainian ancestry. Her maiden name is Cziepla, which thankfully through the years became Chipley. There are perhaps many variations of the traditional Ukrainian Christmas dinner, but as a young child, this is how I fondly remember the occasion.

Around the age of 4 or 5, I recall taking the train to Grandma and Grandpa Chipley’s house for Christmas. Dad would drop me, my brother and mother off at the train station, which was a wooden shack by the side of the tracks on the outskirts of Saskatoon. He would drive down later to meet us when he was done work. Heated with a wooden stove, we would wait in the “station” until the train arrived to take us to Regina.

On Christmas Eve we would attend mass. It was called Midnight Mass back then, starting at 11:30 pm. I know, because my brother and I always tried to convince my parents that we would stay awake for it but never seemed to manage. No one seemed to mind all the little ones asleep in the pews.

Grandma and all of mom’s sisters would be found in the kitchen early the next morning preparing and cooking the meal everyone was anticipating. At that early an age I had no idea of the amount of work involved in this Christmas dinner. Grandma effortlessly made dozens of her perogies, while mom and the aunts toiled over the cabbage rolls and other dishes. The house was beginning to smell wonderful.

My brother Tom and I were responsible for looking for, and finding, the first star of the night. It represented the star that guided the wise men to the Christ child in the manger. It was only then that we could start to eat dinner. Straw was laid on the table, reminding us of the manger where Jesus was born, then Grandma’s colorful hand embroidered tablecloth laid on top of that. There were twelve dishes served, representing the twelve apostles. If I recall correctly, some of them were borscht soup, sauerkraut with tiny hot red peppers in it, cabbage rolls (holopchi) stuffed with rice and hamburger, potato and cheddar perogies, cottage cheese perogies and my favorite, sauerkraut perogies. Along with that we also had perishke which were potato and dough dumplings cooked in a cream and dill sauce, cheese crepes called Nalysnyky (sp) and various sausages, cold and heated up. For dessert we feasted on plum perogies and poppy seed cake, which I called “dirt cake” because of all the seeds. Apparently it was not my favorite. Grandma made a variety of homemade pickles, including pickled lettuce, which I have tried duplicating over the years without success.

I consider myself to be blessed to be born into a family with immigrant ancestors, complete with their traditions and foods. The amount of time spent in the kitchen preparing these dishes and the love that went into them must have been very rewarding for my grandmother, mother and aunts, as every year it was repeated until Grandma passed. After that, the menu became smaller and the gatherings fewer, but these happy memories will last forever.
Changes to the SOAR Project       Saving Our Ancestors Records

The AHSGR SOAR website closed on the AHSGR as of March 1, 2014. Over 451 (except the German language obituaries) have been transitioned to the Family Search website. That search engine allows searching for complete name of the deceased. Visit the “Research your German Russian Ancestors” web page to begin your research using the most recent information: http://www.ahsgr.org/GR-Research.htm
The AHSGR obituaries are now available on the Family web page:
Search – Records: https://familysearch.org/search/collection/2367299

United States, Obituaries, American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, 1899-2012
Index and images of obituaries collected by the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia.

The Society continues to collect obituaries and the index and images for these records will be added as they become available.

Obituaries: https://familysearch.org/search/collection/2367299

As of Tuesday, July 1st, 99% of our obituaries had "published" on FamilySearch. This is over 451,000 obituaries. All of the English language obituaries that were previously on SOAR are now available under FamilySearch. The German language obituaries, (approximately 50,000) will be indexed starting in the near future and will be made available as soon as possible.

Cemetery Records: http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi

(The three cemeteries that were on the previous version of SOAR are available as well as many others.) For detailed instructions please view: findagravehowto.pdf


(the homestead final affidavits that were on the previous version of SOAR are available as well as all other land in the "western" states that was purchased directly from the Federal government. The homestead process consists of multiple stages each of which can have documentation and a date associated with it. Theses stages include the declaration of intention, homestead proof, and a final affidavit.

Passenger Lists: https://familysearch.org/search

(Many of the passenger lists we have available on SOAR are in this database. We will be working on a plan to add the rest as quickly as possible. in addition, there are records such as the Hamburg Departure Lists in this data base that we did not have in SOAR.)
On search screen, first click restrict records by: "Type" and then click "Immigration and Naturalization".


The 1978- 1998 AHSGR Journals are now available for viewing and searching online as PDF files.
The Mennonites sent deputation after deputation to St. Petersburg to secure release from military duty. When this effort seemed to be futile, the great emigration of Russian Mennonites ensued.
MAID in Canada

Mennonite Archival Image Database [http://archives.mhsc.ca/](http://archives.mhsc.ca/)

Discover photographs of Mennonite life in Canada and around the world.

MAID is a partnership of:

- Mennonite Historical Society of Canada
- Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies
- Mennonite Archives of Ontario
- Mennonite Heritage Centre
- Plett Foundation and the
- Mennonite Historical Societies of Alberta, British Columbia & Saskatchewan

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**Welcome to Lost Cousins:**  [http://www.lostcousins.com/](http://www.lostcousins.com/)

Simply enter the relatives on your family tree who were recorded in selected US, Canadian, British, or Irish Censuses - then click the **Search** button. Accurate automated matching means that nobody else needs to see your information - yet when you do find a 'lost cousin', you can be certain you're related!

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**Quotable Quotes – Words of Wisdom**

"When the people fear their government, there is tyranny;
When the government fears the people, there is liberty."  
Thomas Jefferson.

"Man is not free unless government is limited."

Ronald Reagan.

Words are things; and a small drop of ink
Falling like dew upon a thought, produces
That which makes thousands, perhaps millions, think.

Lord Byron, (1788-1824)

Happiness keeps you Sweet...Trials keep you Strong...Sorrows keep you Human...Failures keep you Humble...Success keeps you Glowing...But Only Friends and Faith keep you Going.

"Those who take no interest in the deeds of their ancestors are not likely to do anything worthy to be remembered by their descendants."

-Unknown.

We are made wise not by the recollection of our past, but by the responsibility for our future.

George Bernard Shaw

In the end, it’s not the years in your life that count. It’s the life in your years.

Abraham Lincoln
Potato Bacon Cheddar Tart

By Chef Michael Smith

Yield: Makes 8 servings

2 pounds (1 kg) of room-temperature bacon
Lots of freshly ground pepper
4 cups (1L) of shredded aged cheddar
5 or 6 large baking potatoes (unpeeled)
A sprinkle or two of sea salt
and freshly grated pepper
1 onion, minced
4 cloves of garlic, minced

Preheat your oven to 350°F (180°C).

Carefully arrange the bacon in a radial pattern from the center of the bottom of a 10- or 12-inch (25 or 30 cm) round non-stick baking pan; arrange the bacon so that it fits along the bottom of the pan, continuing up and over the sides. Let the ends hang over. The slices should overlap slightly around the sides of the pan. To reduce the thickness of the bacon in the center, stagger every other piece, starting it 2 inches (5 cm) from the center and extending it further than the adjacent slices. Alternative: Use a square or rectangular pan as well.

With the palm of your hand, flatten the center area, leaving no gaps in the bacon. Season the bacon with lots of pepper and then sprinkle on several spoonfuls of the shredded cheddar.

Slice the potatoes as thinly and uniformly as you can, about 1/4 inch (6 mm) thick. Arrange a circular pattern of overlapping slices around the inside bottom edge of the pan. Continue arranging overlapping layers of the potatoes until the bottom is evenly covered. Season the potatoes with salt and pepper.

Mix together the onion and garlic and sprinkle some of the mixture onto the potatoes. Continue with a layer of the shredded cheese. Cover with another layer of the potato, pressing it down firmly before continuing with alternate layers of the potatoes, onion mixture and cheese, inserting each a bit from the edge of the pan until the top is 1 inch (2.5 cm) or so higher than the pan’s rim. Fold the overhanging bacon neatly up and over the top of the potatoes.

Trim a small piece of parchment paper and place it in between an ovenproof lid and the bacon. This will prevent the bacon’s ends from pulling back and shrinking during cooking.

Place the pan on a baking sheet and bake for at least 2 1/2 to 3 hours. You’ll know it’s done when a small, thin bladed knife inserts easily.

Pour off as much of the fat around the edges as possible. Let the tart stand for 15 minutes and then invert it onto a cutting surface. Slice into wedges and serve immediately.

Variation
Try mixing a few spoonfuls of your favourite fresh herb into the onion mixture.
Thyme, rosemary and tarragon all work well.

Note: You could use a square or rectangular dish as well.
"KEEPING OUR LEGACY ALIVE"
2016 AHSGR CONVENTION - Concord, California - July 13 – 16, 2016
“Our past is in the archives and records from villages in Russia, Ukraine and the Black sea.”
http://ahsgr.org/Conventions/Convention_2016.htm

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Germans from Russia Heritage Society  GRHS
46th Annual International Convention will be held September 7 - 11, 2016
at the Ramkota in Rapid City, South Dakota
Hosted by the Black Hills Chapter
http://www.grhs.org/

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The Society for German Genealogy in Eastern Europe  SGGEE
The Master Pedigree Database has just been updated as of July 30, 2015.
This version includes 523,289 records.
Many improvements have been made since the last version SGGEE focuses on the
genealogy of Germans from Russian Poland and Volhynia with some help for related regions.
https://www.sggee.org/

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East European Genealogical Society  EEGS
Visit the EEGS Facebook Page
Countries: Austria, Belorus, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary,
Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Ukraine
Ethnic groups: German, Ukrainian, Polish, Czech, Slovakian, Jewish, Mennonite, Romanian,
Religions: Roman and Greek Catholic, Lutheran, Judaic, Mennonite, Ukrainian and Russian
Orthodox, Bohemian / Moravian Brethren
http://www.eegsociety.org/

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Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year in 2016