

GERMAN-TEXAN HERITAGE  
SOCIETY

THE  
JOURNAL



*Founded 1978*

This publication is sponsored by funds made available  
from

The Germania Insurance Companies

Volume XXI • Number 3 • Fall 1999

ISSN 0730-3106

Price Per Issue

\$5.00 (Members) \$6.00 (Non-members)



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### President's Notes:

We have recently completed our annual meeting in Fredericksburg under the able leadership of Dr. James Feuge. James and his committee assembled an excellent program which highlighted the contributions of German Texans to agriculture. Dr. Meredith McClain spoke on the "Contributions of German Immigrants to American Agriculture" Exhibit which traveled to Texas Tech University and which, with proper funding and work, could travel to other Texas cities. Fredericksburg, as always, is an excellent convention and annual meeting site for German Texans. At our annual meeting, our new Executive Director, Sherryl Brown was introduced to the general membership. Esther Strange, Chairman of the Ehrenstern Award committee presented the Ehrenstern Award to Arlene Burges, Anita Killen and Ted Gish. Furthermore, three directors, Rodney Koenig, Dale von Rosenberg and Arliss Treybig are leaving the board. Finally, Mary Koenig is leaving as Editor of the Journal. We appreciate their service. Teresa Chavez, Dr. R. A. Neeley and Teddy Boehm are the newly elected board members. The new slate of GTHS officers elected are Karl Micklitz, President, Frances Copeland, Vice-president, Ingrid Brock, Secretary and Bette Williams, Treasurer. New individuals elected to the Advisory Board are Christa Broderick and Phil Sterzing. Finally, Dr. Terry Smart will serve as our new Journal Editor.

We are also pleased that a contract has been signed recently with W. M. Von Maszewski, the author, and the University of North Texas Press, for the publication of the Prince Solms diary. GTHS will be Co-

Publisher. We hope it will be out by our next annual meeting in Galveston in 2000.

As my term of office as your President comes to an end, I want to thank you for allowing me to serve as President for the past three years. The experience has been unique and rewarding. While I am leaving as your President, I will continue to stay involved as the author of "Leave your German Mark" and as your planned giving chairman.

As we approach the end of 1999, it is time to renew your membership for the year 2000. Consider upgrading your membership and also consider giving a GTHS membership to a child, a niece or nephew or other family member or friend as a holiday gift. Membership applications and order forms for ordering our publications are found elsewhere in this journal.

As the last few days of the 1900's quickly disappear, I wish you and all of the members of GTHS a wonderful Christmas season, a healthy and happy New Year and a glorious future to GTHS in the year 2000 and beyond!

Vieler Dank!

  
Rodney C. Koenig

## Ehrenstern Awards Presented at the 1999 GTHS Annual Convention in Fredericksburg

The GTHS members honored with the "Star of Honor" Ehrenstern Awards were:

**Arlene Tschoepe Burgess, Anita Schmedes Killen and Dr. Theodore Gish.** This prestigious award is given to members who have served the society with dedication and hard work and have made outstanding contributions to the preservation of German-Texan culture. Unfortunately the three were unable to attend, so the awards will be given to them at a later date.

**Arlene Burgess** is very deserving of this award as she has given numerous hours of her time as founding President of the German Free School Guild, from 1994-96. She was instrumental in the first crucial years, after GTHS received the building and property, in making it our headquarters. As VP of Guild Operations, her enthusiasm is inspiring; and with her charm and drive she persuades many volunteers to give numerous hours at the headquarters. As Chairman of Docents, she is good at convincing others to help. She promoted the successful annual fund raisers such as, the "Froliche Weihnachten Y'all"(Christmas Market) and Maifest. Also, Arlene has worked on many other committees of GTHS. It is because of her work and many others of the society that the Guild and GTHS received the 1998 Katherine Hart History Preservation Award of the Austin History Center Association.


**Anita Killen** is also very deserving of this honor. She is so generous with her time and work that even when she is having difficulty with her health, still she will volunteer her services. You'll find her behind the video camera shooting the programs/events of the Guild or in the GTHS library cataloguing or inputting info. in the computer; or doing the Journal Surname Index at her computer at home. Anita is Editor-in-Chief of the Guild's newsletter, *Schulhaus Reporter*. She is also the Design & Production Editor of the newsletter since its beginning in 1994.

**Theodore "Ted" Gish** has been an active member of the society for many years. He has been our Journal Editor; served on the GTHS Board as Professional Affiliation Chairman, has lectured in Germany on German-Texans and German-Americans; and last, but not least, Ted has done the translation, introduction, and notes to the GTHS published book: *The Diary of Hermann Seele and Seele's Sketches from Texas*. The Board felt that Ted is most deserving of the Ehrenstern Award.

**Our hats are off to Arlene, Anita and Ted !**

# Weihnachtsmesse

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## WAS THE TEXAS HILL COUNTRY REALLY GERMAN?

Terry L. Smart, Ph.D.

Professor of History, Trinity University

Many German-Texans today trace their ancestry to the early settlers of the Texas Hill Country who immigrated from the German principalities in Europe during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As early as the 1840s, these immigrant-pioneers had trekked into the Hill Country and were among the founders of several towns, including Fredericksburg, Boerne, Comfort and Sisterdale. Gillespie and Kendall Counties were the centers of German settlement by mid-century, and as additional newcomers arrived, many moved into the surrounding counties seeking new homes. In this way, the German population expanded into most of the Hill Country region.

Today each year thousands of visitors flock to this part of Texas, especially to Fredericksburg, to enjoy German food and cultural events or to admire the unique German-style architecture. These tourists carry away the impression that, like Fredericksburg, all the Hill Country has a German heritage. But is this historically correct? In other words, was all the Hill Country really German?

This short study offers information for a preliminary answer to that question. What follows is an analysis of data from the 1880 U.S. Census for eight counties in the Hill Country having German settlers early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>1</sup> The 1880 Census was selected for analysis because it included national origins, thus making it possible to identify the earliest German-Texans, that is, immigrants from Germany and Texans having German-born parents. From the census data, we also can determine the size of the German population for the whole of the Hill Country and for its counties and towns. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly for anyone seeking family roots in Germany, the 1880 Census names the German principality in which each immigrant was born.

First, how large was the Hill Country's German population 120 years ago? Contrary to the Hill Country's strong association with German culture, census data indicates that immigrants from Germany were not the majority group in this sprawling region. Far from it. The total population of the Hill Country in 1880 was 30,390 persons. Of this, only 2,173 or 7.2% were German-born immigrants, and 4,125 others had parents born in Germany. The combined total of these two groups was 6,298. In other words, no more than 20% of the entire Hill Country population had a German heritage.

On the other hand, a different picture emerges if population figures are broken down county by county. German-Texans were about one-fifth of the Hill Country's population in 1880, but they were concentrated in only three counties, Gillespie, Kendall and Mason, where 80% of all German-Texans then lived. Thus, by comparison, Germans were few in number throughout the rest of the Hill Country. In the table below, the German population of each county is presented as a percentage of the county's total enumeration. This indicates how small the German population was in some parts of the Hill Country.

The 1880 Census lists the birthplaces of German-born immigrants to the Hill Country. Until 1871, Germany did not exist, at least not as a place on the map of Europe. Till then, Germany was a geographic term referring to a part of Central Europe where dozens of German-speaking states (excluding the Austrian Empire) were located. But that changed in 1871, when all these principalities, large and small, were united by Prussia to form a new country — *Deutschland*, Germany, the second German *Reich*.

The census data on birthplaces indicated that almost all the 2,173 German-born immigrants living in the Hill Country in the year 1880 had settled there sometime before Prussia's 1871 unification of Germany. Interestingly, the bulk of immigration (70%) came from only three German states: the kingdom of Prussia, the kingdom of Hanover, and the Duchy of Nassau. The remaining 30% came to Texas from twenty-two other principalities. Of the 2,173 immigrants, almost half (48.5%) were born in Prussia. (This is not surprising, for Prussia from 1815 to 1871 was the largest of the German states.) The table below lists the German states which were the birthplaces of the immigrants living in the Hill Country in 1880 along with their numbers.

German State	No.	German State	No.
Prussia	1055	Saxe Weimar-Eisenach	14
Nassau	233	Reuss Greiz & Schliez-Gera <sup>v</sup>	12
Hanover	231	Anhalt	11
Saxony	91	Bremen	6
Hesse-Darmstadt & Cassel <sup>vi</sup>	80	Oldenburg	5
Wurttemberg	79	Waldeck	3
Baden	72	Saxe-Altenburg	3
Brunswick	65	Saxe-Meiningen	2
Bavaria	51	Saxe-Gotha	2
Mecklenburg Strelitz-Schwerin <sup>vii</sup>	26	Lippe Dortmund	1
Schleswig & Holstein <sup>viii</sup>	19	Undetermined part of Germany <sup>ix</sup>	107

All the census data above suggests that the Hill Country, as a region, did not have a German heritage, nor was its population-profile Germanic. German-Texans, indeed, were the Hill Country's largest, single minority, but not a majority. Gillespie and Kendall Counties were the predominantly German parts of the Hill Country, but only Gillespie County was more than 50% German. Outside Gillespie, Kendall and Mason Counties, German-Texans were few. And what of the Hill Country towns? More than other settlers in the Hill Country, Germans lived in towns, but in only five predominantly German communities. Very few Germans lived in towns elsewhere. And lastly, the census data listed 2,173 German-born immigrants living in the Hill Country in 1880. These came from twenty-five of the German principalities in Europe, but most were natives of Prussia, Hanover or Nassau. Very few immigrated from the other principalities.



County	Population	German-Born	German-Born Parents	Total German Percentage
Bandera	2,073	2.4%	5.2%	7.6%
Blanco	3,538	5.3%	8.5%	13.8%
Burnet	6,920	0.5%	1.4%	1.9%
Gillespie	5,215	20.3%	37.6%	57.9%
Kendall	2,766	17.0%	31.0%	48.0%
Kerr	2,182	4.5%	8.0%	13.4%
Llano	4,987	1.6%	3.6%	5.1%
Mason	2,709	6.6%	15.8%	22.4%

The 1880 Census also gives some idea of the rural-urban breakdown of the 30,390 people in the Hill Country at that time. In all of the Hill Country, the Census identified only fourteen towns, (some listed as "villages" or "communities" or "neighborhoods"), and these fourteen communities had a combined population of 4,909. This means 16.2% of the Hill Country population was urban, in a loose sense of that term. Interestingly, Germans tended, more than Non-Germans, to be town-dwellers: 28.9% of them lived in towns, compared to 12.8% of Non-Germans. This perhaps explains why 37.1% of all townspeople in the Hill Country were German-Texans.

If residents of each town are divided into German and Non-German groups, there is a different picture. The number of Germans in a community varied greatly from one place to another, with predominantly German towns located in Gillespie and Kendall Counties. Sisterdale, although a small hamlet, was the most German of all Hill Country towns. Fredericksburg, too, was thoroughly German and the largest town in the region. The following table indicates, for each community, the combined total of German-Texans (those born in Germany and those whose parents were born in Germany). It also shows the German-Texans as a percentage of each town's population.

Town	Population	Total German-Texans	Percentage of German-Texans
Bandera	254	63	24.8%
Blanco	246	10	0.4%
Boerne	349	187	53.5%
Burnet	493	6	0.1%
Center Point	120	0	0.0%
Comfort	644	335	52.0%
Curry's Creek <sup>ii</sup>	535	154	28.7%
Fredericksburg	1,096	821	74.0%
Kerrville	156	36	23.0%
Llano	213	3	0.1%
Mason	579	53	9.1%
Sisterdale	131	109	83.2%
South Gabriel <sup>iii</sup>	39	5	12.8%
So. Grape Creek <sup>iv</sup>	54	40	74.0%

## Glories of the Hunt

"A nobleman he was; greatly did his hounds love him." So did one medieval minstrel apostrophize his hero, suggesting that a good hunting dog might be a duke's best friend. He was not far off. Hounds were often treated better than serfs. Huge preserves were set aside for game, and poachers were punished with mutilation or death. In fact, "venery" (the kind practiced in the field rather than the bed) even had the approval of the church, which exhorted dukes and princelings to engage in hunting to avoid the sin of indolence. In addition, the clergy often blessed the hounds before the hunt.

The chase reached a peak of sorts on the great estates of 17th century Germany. Johann Casimir, Duke of Saxe-Coburg, was renowned particularly for his great bear and boar hounds, bred to the size of yearling steers. To record his chases, Duke Casimir hired a court painter named Wolfgang Birkner. The result was one of the most complete hunting chronicles ever produced.

The original series of watercolors has since disappeared, but after Casimir's death in 1633, Birkner set about doing another hunting book as a memorial to the duke. He copied many of his own drawings from the first series, added depictions of lark netting, partridge and duck hunting. For years, this second hunting "book" lay quietly in the library of the Friedenstein castle in Gotha, East Germany. Merrill Lindsay, a Manhattan gun collector, heard about its existence while attending a conference in Rome last year. Lindsay launched what proved to be elaborate negotiations to get the book into the hands of competent printers and copied. The result is a superb facsimile edition of 39 prints, published last year in Leipzig and now in New York as *The Hunting Book of Wolfgang Birkner* (Winchester Press and October House: \$175).

Little is known about Birkner other than that he was born in Bayreuth in 1582. He was commissioned by Casimir to do eight designs for the baptismal font at the city church in Bayreuth, and between 1616 and 1630 he completed 24 oils that are now in the Coburg art collection. He

painted a portrait of himself as a rifleman, and also one of the duke. But the hunting book was his most important work. He very likely sketched from life, since he often portrays himself sitting in a corner of the picture, sketch pad in hand.

The 17th century German hunter was nothing at all like today's typical American sportsman, who tramps through the woods in wool cap and squishy boots, hoping for a lucky shot. Venery was as ritualized as the catechism. A clumsy hunter was publicly chastised by "blading," a ceremony in which he was forced to lie down across a dead stag and receive three swats from the flat of a broad knife. All the hard work was done by the peasants, who erected the high cloth barriers or rope nets into which bear or deer were driven. At dawn, the whole party set off, proceeding according to rank in carriages drawn by four or six horses. Beaters drove the game into the enclosures where the hunters waited in comfort. Nobody got any mud on his elegant boots. If the duke missed killing a boar or a bear, his retainers were at hand to protect him from the wounded quarry. No hunting diary of Casimir's has been found, but some idea of the number of game taken on such chases can be had from accounts left by two neighboring dukes, Electors Johann George I and II, who together killed no fewer than 228,478 animals, including more than 110,000 deer.

**Faithful Eye.** Birkner had none of the great compositional powers of Cranach or Velasquez, both of whom painted accounts of the chase. But Casimir could not have wished for a more faithful descriptive artist. Birkner spared no blood or gore, and no detail escaped his eye. At the same time, he had a charming ability to enhance the pageantry and develop from the hunt's complicated rituals a sense of overall design and patterning, that same delicate blend of description and naivete that marks the best of the Currier and Ives illustrations.

— *Time Magazine*, April 20, 1970 —

Copies of *The Hunting Book of Wolfgang Birkner* are sought by Donald Birkner at (512) 258-7153, collect.



## *New Perspectives on Texas Germans and the Confederacy*

WALTER D. KAMPHOEFNER\*

TEXAS, WHICH WAS HOME TO TWENTY THOUSAND OF THE SEVENTY thousand Germans residing in the eleven Confederate states, was the only place where the German element was large enough to play an appreciable role in politics and war. Just what role they played, however, still remains under dispute. In the popular press, various characterizations of Germans have portrayed them as everything from "fire-breathing secessionists" to "virtually all Unionists."<sup>1</sup> The range of scholarly opinion is nearly as broad. Older accounts often reflect the characterization of antebellum traveler Frederick Law Olmsted, who portrayed Germans as largely abolitionist in sentiment. More recent scholarship has cautioned against generalizing from a few radical forty-eighters to the bulk of ordinary German immigrants. But perhaps this scholarship has gone too far in attempting to place Texas Germans into the mainstream of the Lone Star State.

One of the most influential of these revisionists, geographer Terry Jordan, has pointed out important distinctions between East and West Texas Germans as far as attitudes toward slavery and the Civil War are concerned. Eastern settlements were older, their immigrants more acculturated to American values, and their local economy well suited for plantation agriculture and slavery. The Hill Country west of Austin, by contrast, was more recently settled. With its semiarid ranching economy it had very few slaveholders, Anglo or German. A frontier region, it faced exposure to Indian attacks should Federal military protection be withdrawn—a consideration that also promoted unionism among Hill Country Anglos. In a more recent work, Jordan outlines four "myths, or

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\* Walter D. Kamphoefner is professor of history at Texas A&M University. He has published extensively on the social and political history of German immigrants and has edited an anthology of their letters. He is currently at work on an edition of Civil War-era letters of German-Americans throughout the United States.

<sup>1</sup> "True to the Union," *Houston Chronicle*, Aug. 20, 1989, sec. E, p. 4.

stereotypes" regarding Texas Germans: that they "(1) did not own slaves, (2) favored the abolitionist cause, (3) were morally opposed to slavery, and (4) harbored Unionist sentiments," all of which he claims were "inaccurate" when applied to "many or most" ordinary Texas Germans. Jordan is certainly correct in disputing that Germans were fully united on any of these issues, but as will be shown below, he goes too far in his revisions, and exaggerates the degree to which Germans agreed with Anglo Texans on issues such as slavery, race, secession, and Civil War.<sup>2</sup> Neither Jordan nor anyone else has dug deeply into the local press for precinct-level voting returns or other evidence of German attitudes toward the Confederacy, nor has anyone examined closely patterns of German slaveholding in relation to overall property holdings.

One must beware of geographical determinism in explaining the regional differences among Texas Germans in slave ownership or support for secession. Although geographic conditions in the Hill Country may have discouraged slavery, Jordan's own work shows that in three counties where 11 percent of the Anglo families owned slaves, not a single German did. According to Jordan, lack of capital was the main factor that restricted slaveholding among Germans in eastern Texas. Indeed, a recent study has documented some sixty Germans in the older settlements in Austin, Fayette, and Colorado Counties who did own slaves between 1840 and 1865. Still, despite the strong presence of Germans in these counties they made up less than 5 percent of the local slaveowners (Table 1). Moreover, at every level of wealth, a higher proportion of Anglos than Germans owned slaves. For example, among persons worth between \$3,000 and \$6,000, more than half of the Anglos but barely 2 percent of the Germans were slaveowners. People of the servant-keeping class in Germany, especially those from the East Elbian nobility, were especially prone to slaveholding. But even among those worth more than \$15,000, only half of the Germans owned slaves, in contrast to 92 percent of the American-born in the same financial class. Moreover, Germans typically held fewer slaves; they made up 4 percent of the slaveowners but possessed only 2 percent of the slaves in the area. Granted, slaveholding was a voluntary act among Germans unless they married into an Anglo family, whereas many Anglo-Americans in Texas inherited slaves rather than purchasing them outright. But contrasts of this

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<sup>2</sup> Terry Jordan, *German Seed in Texas Soil* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1966). Jordan's later work is simply a more systematic restatement of his earlier interpretations without any additional evidence; see Jordan, "Germans and Blacks in Texas," in Randall Miller (ed.), *States of Progress: Germans and Blacks in America over 300 Years* (Philadelphia: German Society of Pennsylvania, 1989), 89-97, quote on 96. The beginnings of a reinterpretation were already signaled by Rudolph L. Biesele, *The History of the German Settlements in Texas, 1831-1861* (Austin: Von Boeckmann-Jones, 1930). See also Biesele, "German Attitudes toward the Civil War," which was apparently reprinted posthumously and unrevised in Ron C. Tyler, Douglas E. Barnett, Roy R. Barkley, Penelope C. Anderson, and Mark F. Odintz (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas* (6 vols.; Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1996), III, 138-39.

**TABLE 1**  
**SLAVEOWNERSHIP, ETHNICITY, AND WEALTH LEVELS IN FAYETTE COUNTY, TEXAS, 1860**

Total Property Value in \$1,000	Germans		Slaves owned by Germans		Anglos		Slaves owned by Anglos	
	Total N	Slaveowners N	N	Per owner	Total N	Slaveowners %	N	Per owner
0-2.999	688	2	18	9	690	8.1	172	3.1
3-5.999	47	1	2	2	151	53	228	2.9
6-8.999	19	5	17	3.4	100	61	242	4.0
9-11.999	11	5	28	5.6	50	70	210	6.0
12-14.999	2	1	4	4	38	90	292	8.6
15-147	6	3	6	2	154	92	2,341	16.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>753</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>1,183</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>3,485</b>	<b>8.3</b>

SOURCE: Adapted with additional calculations from Cornelia Küffner, "Texas-Germans' Attitudes Toward Slavery: Biedermeier Sentiments and Class Consciousness in Austin, Colorado and Fayette Counties" (M.A. thesis, University of Houston, 1994), Table 2.



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magnitude could hardly have arisen without a conscious choice by many or most Germans against human property. (Indeed, Jordan's own figures show a higher incidence of landownership among Texas Germans than among their Anglo neighbors, further evidence that it was not poverty alone that prevented them from owning slaves. My earlier work on Missouri Germans documents similar patterns.) So physical geography was important, but ethnicity and culture were more important.<sup>3</sup>

Several pieces of evidence suggest that domestic service was one of the primary reasons Germans held slaves, which the small number per owner would seem to indicate, as would the fact that several German slaveowners in Texas and Missouri were outspoken unionists and emancipationists.<sup>4</sup> People of the servant-keeping class in Germany were faced with a dilemma in the South: native whites, no matter how poor, thought domestic work was fit only for slaves or other blacks, and was therefore beneath them. Immigrant women usually filled the domestic worker gap only temporarily; given the unbalanced ethnic sex ratio, they were much in demand as marriage partners. Being true to antislavery principles often meant forcing one's wife to do without domestic help entirely. Whatever the explanation, more than just lack of capital kept the incidence and size of German slaveholdings low.

The secession referendum of February 23, 1861, provides another measure of Texas German attitudes toward southern independence and institutions. In this context, it is important to remember that German and Anglo unionists were not the natural allies one might suppose. Many of the latter had earlier expressed their nationalism in the form of nativism, especially during the Know Nothing movement of the mid-1850s. Thus Germans were faced with a devil's choice between an alliance with the Southern fire-eaters or with political opponents of the foreign-born.<sup>5</sup>

Across Texas, secession won by a landslide, with less than a quarter of the voters in opposition. In an appeal to ethnic voters, two thousand copies of the declaration of secession were printed in Spanish and two thousand in German, in addition to the ten thousand copies in English. But the German copies largely fell on deaf ears. Two German frontier counties, Gillespie and Mason, led the state with a 96 percent margin

<sup>3</sup> Jordan, *German Seed in Texas Soil*, 106-111, 180-85; Jordan, "Germans and Blacks," 89-97. Cornelia Küffner, "Texas-Germans' Attitudes Toward Slavery: Biedermeier Sentiments and Class Consciousness in Austin, Colorado and Fayette Counties" (M.A. thesis, University of Houston, 1994), 17-20, 46-68, 110-14, 123-26; the interpretations of Küffner's data are largely my own, based on further calculations from her Table 2 to more clearly reveal German-Anglo contrasts. On Texas landholdings see Jordan, *German Seed in Texas Soil*, 115-17; on Missouri see Walter D. Kamphoefner, *The Westfalians: From Germany to Missouri* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 116-17.

<sup>4</sup> Walter L. Buenger, *Secession and the Union in Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984), 84. For Missouri parallels, see Kamphoefner, *The Westfalians*, 116-17.

<sup>5</sup> Buenger *Secession and the Union*, 26-33, 91-94.

against secession (Table 2). Some largely Anglo counties in this region also turned in majorities against secession, but wherever precinct-level returns are available, they show the German communities of a county to be most hostile. In Kerr County, the German community around Comfort (soon to become Kendall County) voted nearly two-thirds against secession, actually a surprisingly small margin considering its subsequent resistance to the Confederate cause. But the Anglo half of this frontier county went ten to one for secession.<sup>6</sup> Bexar County, with the largest number of Germans in the state, witnessed a narrow secessionist victory, but the city of San Antonio turned in a razor-thin margin for the Union. There, too, Germans proved to be the most consistent unionists (though they obviously had some Hispanic and even Anglo help), and even after the election, German city councilmen resisted for several months demands to turn over seized federal arms to the secessionist state.<sup>7</sup>

Even older Texas German settlements farther east show little evidence of enthusiasm for secession. The 64 percent support level in Colorado County, for example, masks an internal polarization. Three German precincts (named after immigrant founder Wilhelm Frels and home towns of Weimar and Mainz) voted 86 percent against secession, while five Anglo precincts cast all but six votes in favor; only the county seat with its mixed population fell near the average. Despite religious differences, Wendish Lutherans and German Methodists in Bastrop County were nearly unanimous in their opposition to secession. Though there were also some Anglo unionists, it was the Germans who tipped the scales to give the county a majority against secession. Similarly in Fayette County (where precinct returns are unavailable), some Anglos must have contributed to the 52 percent majority against secession. But a local paper with the telling name *State Rights Democrat* blamed the "sauerkraut dirt-eaters" (a word-play on the term "fire-eaters"). It pilloried Texas revolutionary veteran "Benedict Arnold [F. W.] Grassmeyer" for deceiving "the honest Germans of Fayette County" in the election, and for his abolitionist sympathies and friendliness toward free blacks.<sup>8</sup>

Only in Austin County did close to a majority of the Germans vote for Southern independence, still a rather lukewarm result compared to the

<sup>6</sup> Buenger, *Secession and the Union*, 67, 151, 174-75. The statement in Biesele, *German Settlements in Texas*, 206, that Comfort had voted 42-15 and neighboring Boerne 85-6 against secession, appears erroneous and exceeds the total number of votes cast in the county. See Bob Bennett, *Kerr County, Texas, 1856-1956* (San Antonio: Naylor, 1956), 136. Biesele may be referring to a preliminary vote held on December 22, 1860.

<sup>7</sup> Lawrence P. Knight, "Becoming a City and Becoming American: San Antonio, Texas, 1848-1861," (Ph.D. diss., Texas A&M University, 1997), 189-200, 267-81. The rural areas of the county had a slightly lower foreign-born percentage than the city, and probably more Anglos and fewer Hispanics as well.

<sup>8</sup> La Grange *State Rights Democrat*, 7, Mar. 21, 1861. According to a report of Nov. 13, 1863, in the *Neu Braunfelsener Zeitung*, Grassmeyer was arrested as a traitor and taken to Houston, along with four Fayette County Anglos.

TABLE 2  
 COUNTY AND PRECINCT RETURNS FROM THE FEBRUARY 23, 1861  
 TEXAS SECESSION ELECTION

County	Precinct	Ethnicity <sup>1</sup>	N For	N Against	% Against
WESTERN COUNTIES:					
Bexar <sup>2</sup>		28%	827	709	46%
	San Antonio				
	Pct. 1	Hispanic	227	146	39%
	Pct. 2	Hispanic	72	160	69%
	Pct. 3	German	124	186	60%
	rest of county	Mixed	292	147	33%
Blanco		20%	108	170	61%
Comal	(New Braunfels)	88%	239	86	26%
Gillespie	(Fredericksburg)	87%	16	398	96%
Kerr <sup>3</sup>			76	57	43%
	Pct. 2 (Comfort)	60%	34	53	64%
	rest of county	11%	42	4	9%
Mason		55%	2	75	97%
Medina <sup>4</sup>	(Castroville)	43%	140	207	60%

## NOTES:

<sup>1</sup> Percentages are based on calculations from the 1870 census, multiplying the percent of foreign parentage among whites times the percent of Germans among foreign-born. County-level votes were taken from Joe E. Timmons, "The Referendum in Texas on the Ordinance of Secession," *East Texas Historical Society Journal*, 11 (1973), 12-28.

<sup>2</sup> Lawrence P. Knight, "Becoming a City and Becoming American: San Antonio, Texas, 1848-1861" (Ph.D. diss., Texas A&M University, 1997), 267-70.

<sup>3</sup> Bob Bennett, *Kerr County, Texas, 1856-1956* (San Antonio: Naylor, 1956), 136, who states that Precinct 1 was practically the area that became Kendall County in 1862, thus the exact figures for ethnicity from the 1870 census.

<sup>4</sup> Does not include French, who in this county were primarily German-speaking Alsatians; their inclusion would have raised the German population to about two-thirds.

96 percent level in six Anglo precincts. One of the state's oldest German settlements, Industry, voted almost unanimously for secession, for which a prominent German slaveholder had "worked manfully." (Its two opposition voters were allegedly Anglos.) This initially seems to confirm Terry Jordan's assertion that over time, Germans became increasingly acculturated to the Southern way of life. Before jumping to conclusions, however, one should note that the neighboring settlement of Cat Spring, which also predated Texas independence, took a diametrically opposite position, weighing in at 93 percent against secession.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Bellville *Countryman*, Feb. 27, Mar. 17, 1861. The issue of Jan. 16, 1861, shows that New Ulm, which voted 36-30 for secession in February, had gone 52-1 against in a preliminary election on December 22, 1860, to elect state delegates, in which German slaveholder and secessionist Knolle came in last among six candidates, further evidence of Anglo suspicions. Despite the name, Shelby's (also known as Roeder's Mill) was a largely German settlement in the extreme northwest corner of Austin County; Bieseles, *German Settlements in Texas*, 52-53.



TABLE 2  
 COUNTY AND PRECINCT RETURNS FROM THE FEBRUARY 23, 1861  
 TEXAS SECESSION ELECTION

County	Precinct	Ethnicity <sup>1</sup>	N For	N Against	% Against
EASTERN COUNTIES:					
Austin <sup>5</sup>		45%	825	212	20%
	Cat Spring	German	8	99	93%
	Industry	German	86	2	2%
	New Ulm	German	36	30	45%
	Shelby's	German	16	51	76%
	sub-total	German	146	182	55%
	rest of county	Anglo	679	30	4%
Bastrop <sup>6</sup>		25%	335	352	51%
	Rabb's Creek	German/Wend	1	56	98%
	Bastrop	Mixed	158	183	54%
	rest of county	Anglo	176	113	39%
Colorado <sup>7</sup>		35%	584	330	36%
	Frelsburg	German	22	154	88%
	Mentz/Bernardo	German	10	41	80%
	Weimar	German	7	37	84%
	sub-total	German	39	232	86%
	Columbus	Mixed	201	93	32%
	rest of county	Anglo	344	6	2%
Fayette	total	37%	580	628	52%
STATE OF TEXAS		7%	46,153	14,747	24%

## NOTES:

<sup>5</sup> Bellville *Countryman*, Feb. 27, 1861.<sup>6</sup> Bill Moore, *Bastrop County, 1691-1900* (Wichita Falls, Texas: Nortex Press, 1977), 77-78.<sup>7</sup> L. R. Weyand and H. Wade, *An Early History of Fayette County* (La Grange, Texas: [n.p.], 1936), 244-45.

One local German leader also had a profound impact in heavily German Comal County, the only western county that voted strongly in favor of secession. More than anything, this stand reflected trust in the advice of the venerable Ferdinand Lindheimer and his *Neu Braunsfelser Zeitung*. What was the basis for editor Lindheimer's position: enthusiasm for slavery and the Confederacy? Although Lindheimer himself probably became a hesitant supporter of secession, he seldom attempted to sell his constituents on the merits of the secessionist case, and stressed instead the nativist antecedents of many unionists and the reprisals Germans might suffer should they be perceived as opposing it: "When in Texas, do as the Texans do. Anything else is suicide and brings tragedy to all our Texas-Germans."<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Walter L. Buenger, "Secession and the Texas German Community: Editor Lindheimer vs. Editor Flake," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 82 (Apr., 1979), 395-96; Selma Metzenthin-

In general, the factor of intimidation must be kept in mind when examining Texas German behavior in the winter of disunion. Wherever Germans fell below a certain threshold, perhaps 15 percent of a county's voters, they hardly dared take a stand against secession. Notwithstanding some scattered Germans in the plantation counties of Brazoria and Fort Bend just west of Houston, only two voters in a thousand dared oppose secession. Perhaps not coincidentally, a vigilance committee was monitoring citizen behavior there from the fall of 1860 on. Urban Germans were more acculturated to Southern society and more subject to intimidation; both factors worked against unionist voting. Although Galveston was nearly one-third German and home to unionist editor Ferdinand Flake, with a low turnout it voted 96 percent in favor of secession. Mob violence had destroyed one of Flake's presses the month before, and sent an unmistakable message to unionists.<sup>11</sup>

Jordan calls New Braunfels a "secessionist hotbed," but it was one of the few places in Texas where Confederate sympathizers were subject to intimidation. Editor Lindheimer's pragmatism was not universally appreciated. In June of 1863 he noted: "Remarkable is the hatred, which many people here now exhibit against the original secessionists." Even ninety years later, the centennial issue of his paper admitted, "Because of its strong southern tendencies during the war the *Neu Braunfelser Zeitung* attracted the bitter enmity of the loyally unionist part of the German population in West Texas and especially in Comal County, which made the further existence of the paper nearly impossible." So incensed were some New Braunfelsers that they threw the press and type into the Comal River—but Lindheimer fished it out of the clear water so that the paper did not miss an issue. His windows were also stoned in twice, and his dogs poisoned with strychnine. Throughout the war, his paper manifests a pronouncedly defensive tone in matters involving the Confederacy.<sup>12</sup>

Even with the support of the local German press, the secession cause received slightly less support at the polls in New Braunfels than in Texas as a whole. The only homogeneous German county or precinct where German support for secession exceeded the statewide average was the settlement of Industry. With respect to unionism, Terry Jordan states that Texas Germans were split, "just as Anglo-Americans were." Both were indeed split, but there the similarities end. With Anglos there was at least a three to one majority for secession, while Germans produced at

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Raunick, "One Hundred Years *Neu Braunfelser Zeitung*," *American-German Review*, 19, no. 6 (1953), 15-16; Karl J. R. Arndt and May E. Olson, *German-American Newspapers and Periodicals, 1732-1955* (2nd rev. ed.; New York: Johnson Reprint Corp., 1965), 628.

<sup>11</sup> Buenger, *Secession and the Union*, 12, 164.

<sup>12</sup> Arndt and Olson, *German Language Press*, 628; Metzenthin-Raunick, "One Hundred Years," 15-16. *Neu Braunfelser Zeitung* [hereinafter *NBZ*], June 6, July 3, 1863, and elsewhere.

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least a slim majority for the Union, and a disproportionate number of stay-at-homes as well.<sup>13</sup>

Willingness to serve in the Union or Confederate military provides yet another measure of the attitudes of Texas Germans. Published muster rolls of the 1st and 2nd Texas Union Cavalry reveal the presence of disproportionate numbers of Germans. Persons of German stock made up about 7 percent of the state's population, but over 13 percent of its Union troops, despite the fact that they were recruited largely in the Brownsville area far from centers of German settlement.<sup>14</sup> At the outbreak of the Civil War, Texas Germans faced an unenviable choice: to go or to stay. Flight from the Confederacy was theoretically possible, but the experiences of those who tried it probably gave pause to many others. It took a strong dose of ideological conviction, especially if it involved abandoning hard-earned property—farms that had been laboriously hacked out of the post oaks, for example—and leaving their wives and children to an uncertain fate or exposing them to even greater dangers in a Mexico torn between the supporters and opponents of Benito Juarez. Consequently, Texas Germans in the Union Army were obviously outnumbered by German Confederates. There is strong evidence, however, that many of the latter served reluctantly.<sup>15</sup> Although Confederate conscription was instituted earlier and enforced more stringently than the Union draft, Germans in the North were overrepresented in the Union Army relative to their share of the military-aged males. While systematic studies of Confederate recruitment are lacking, there is little doubt that the German presence in rebel ranks was even smaller than their meager presence in the Southern population. Among the underlying factors at work were both aversion to slavery and devotion to the Union.

For example, there were three German companies in Waul's Legion, two largely from Austin County. But they were not formed until the Confederacy had instituted conscription; the first Austin County company, mustered in on October 20, 1861, was virtually devoid of Germans. When service appeared inevitable, Germans enlisted in order to serve with comrades and under officers they knew and trusted, more than from dedication to the Confederate cause. Even one of the sergeants,

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<sup>13</sup> Similar patterns show up in a statewide quantitative analysis of the secession referendum. Lutherans, the confession most unambiguously German, were estimated to have given no votes for secession and at least 80 percent against. Catholics, ethnically mixed with a considerable German component, showed the highest proportion of stay-at-homes, at least two-thirds. The largest Anglo-Protestant denominations, Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian, all gave around 50 percent support to secession and only 6 to 12 percent opposition, the other 40 percent or so did not vote. Robin E. Baker and Dale Baum, "The Texas Voter and the Crisis of the Union, 1859-1862," *Journal of Southern History*, 53, (Aug., 1987), 395-420, especially Table 10.

<sup>14</sup> James Marten, *Texas Divided: Loyalty and Dissent in the Lone Star State, 1856-1874* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1990), 26, 76-77.

<sup>15</sup> Charles Nagel, *A Boy's Civil War Story* (St. Louis: n.p., 1935). Buenger, *Secession and the Union*, 83.



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Wilhelm Hander, proves in his diary entries to be at odds with the basis of Southern civilization: "Several plantations [ . . . ] made a pleasant scene but certainly not inviting when one thinks of the Negro whips that are so often used." One German captain wrote home in February 1863, "the Germans in general and here with us in [another] company, who are mostly from our neighborhood, conduct themselves on various occasions so, that one has to be ashamed." His company was on detached service at the fall of Vicksburg, and instead of being paroled, ended up in Union prisons. There a number of Germans "took the oath" to the Union, including the captain himself in February 1865.<sup>16</sup>

According to Terry Jordan, "many or most" Texas Germans became "inaccurately" stereotyped as unionists because of a single incident, the 1862 shoot-out on the Nueces involving Hill Country refugees from the Confederacy attempting to escape to Union lines via Mexico, and commemorated by the "Treue der Union" monument in Comfort. But here too, regional contrasts of Texas Germans can be exaggerated. It was not only Gillespie or Kendall Counties in the Hill Country, but the eastern counties of Austin, Fayette, and Colorado that were placed under martial law in January 1863 because of German draft resistance. A list of thirty-two draft resisters from Austin County included only four with Anglo names. A resistance meeting held over the 1863 New Year's holidays at the central location of Roeder's Mill (present-day Shelby) in northwest Austin County attracted four to six hundred Germans from five counties.<sup>17</sup>

Victoria and DeWitt Counties, inland from Corpus Christi near the coast, produced only a 15 percent opposition on the secession vote despite a German population share probably twice that high. They also contributed one and a half companies to the 6th Texas Infantry. But here too a closer examination reveals contrasts between Germans and other Texans. In January 1863 when the regiment was captured at Arkansas Post, 152 of its men, mostly Germans and Poles, took an oath of allegiance to the United States. Capt. C. P. Nauheim resigned his commission because his German Company I had virtually disappeared. The rest of the regiment was exchanged and served to the bitter end in

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<sup>16</sup> Muster rolls of Voigt's, Wickland's, and Nathusius' companies, Waul's Legion, Texas State Archives, Austin. The complete muster roll of Capt. J. W. McDade's Austin County company was published by the *Bellville Countryman*, Mar. 8, 1862. William Hander, letters and diary in C.W. Hander Papers, Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin; cited hereafter as CAH. Quote from diary entry of Feb. 7, 1863; see also entry of Feb. 28, 1863. Letter of Robert Voigt, Feb. 10, 1863, Robert H. Voigt Family Papers, CAH. See also letters of Dec. 18, 1862, and Mar. 31, 1863. Additional soldier testimony is presented in Walter D. Kamphoefner, "Texas Germans and Civil War Issues: The Evidence from Immigrant Letters," *German-Texan Heritage Society Journal*, 13 (1991), 16-23.

<sup>17</sup> Jordan, "Germans and Blacks," 92; Claude Elliott, "Union Sentiment in Texas, 1861-1865," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 50 (Apr., 1947), 472-74. Contemporary accounts are given in the *Bellville Countryman*, Jan. 10 and Mar. 28, 1863; *NBZ*, Jan. 2 and Mar. 13, 1863.

the Army of Tennessee.<sup>18</sup> The standard work on "galvanized Yankees," rebel captives who volunteered for Union service, professes to find no ethnic distinctions setting these men apart, but only because the author failed to look closely enough. The only monument to unionists erected by local residents on the soil of the former Confederacy is the "Treue der Union" memorial at Comfort.<sup>19</sup>

The contrasts between German and Anglo Texans persisted into the Reconstruction era and sometimes beyond.<sup>20</sup> Whatever their position during the war, New Braunfels residents took a distinctively un-Southern view of the occupying federal troops in its aftermath—had General Sheridan made his headquarters there, he might have preferred Texas to hell after all. When one Anglo Yankee from the 59th Illinois said goodbye in December 1865, he noted in his diary, "Some of them shed tears almost. I never felt so bad at leaving any place as that[,] except home in 1861. Farewell Braunfels." Two days later he recorded, "presents from New Braunfels friends received." His was not an isolated case; at least two other Anglo members of his regiment married local girls and settled permanently in the community. Less than three months after Lee's surrender, New Braunfels celebrated the Fourth of July in what sounded like a huge sigh of relief: the Stars and Stripes was unfurled from the highest hill, a marching band led a well-attended parade throughout the town, and a number of dances rounded out the evening and the next day.<sup>21</sup>

The political attitudes of Texas Germans in the aftermath of war likewise set them apart from the bulk of their Anglo counterparts. There is very little of a political nature in the minutes of the Cat Spring Agricultural Society, located in Austin County at one of the earliest Texas-German settlements. However, the April 1866 meeting found members preparing a report to be published in papers back in Germany, among other things warning prospective immigrants not to sign labor contracts with former slaveholders. The month's minutes conclude: "It

<sup>18</sup> Charles D. Spurlin (ed.), *The Civil War Diary of Charles A. Leuschner* (Austin: Eakin Press, 1992), 12–14, 60, 93–96.

<sup>19</sup> Richard N. Current, *Lincoln's Loyalists: Union Soldiers from the Confederacy* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1992), 136–7. The most complete compilations of accounts of the Battle of Nueces is contained in Guido E. Ransleben, *A Hundred Years of Comfort in Texas: A Centennial History* (San Antonio: Naylor, 1954), 79–126.

<sup>20</sup> The importance of viewing the period from 1846 through 1876 as a whole, rather than as three separate eras, is emphasized by Randolph B. Campbell, "Statehood, Civil War, and Reconstruction, 1846–1876," in *Texas Through Time: Evolving Interpretations*, ed. Walter L. Buenger and Robert A. Calvert (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1991), 165–66.

<sup>21</sup> Chesley A. Mosman, *The Rough Side of War* (Garden City: Basin Publishing Co., 1987), 399–401. See also Oscar Haas, *History of New Braunfels and Comal County, Texas, 1844–1946* (Austin: Steck, 1968), 196–97. NBZ, July 14, 1865; also reporting a piece from the San Antonio *News* of July 7. The fact that even San Antonio, with its considerable unionist element, did not risk an official celebration shows how unusual the New Braunfels festivities were. In Vicksburg, admittedly somewhat of a special case, the first time the Fourth of July was celebrated after the Civil War was 1942.

was deemed necessary that the Union men of [Austin] county make preparations . . . to organize and hold a convention for the purpose of putting up or accepting a ticket . . ."<sup>22</sup>

Forty-eighter Edward Degener, who lost two sons in the Nueces Massacre, represented the San Antonio area as a Republican in the first Texas congressional delegation during Reconstruction. Even in areas farther east where it required considerable cooperation with blacks, Germans were among the strongest white supporters of the Republican Party. When the legislature took up public education in August of 1870, one saw the German names of Prissick, Schlickum, Schlottmann, Schutze, Zapp, and Zoeller lining up with the two black house members in an effort to table an amendment requiring racial separation in schools. The measure came within one vote of being tabled; if there had been no blacks or Germans in the legislature, it would not have even been close.<sup>23</sup>

Two adjacent eastern counties, Colorado and Washington, remained under Republican control well beyond Reconstruction and into the 1880s, in both instances largely as a result of black-German coalitions. In the postwar era, the first time Colorado County went Democratic in a gubernatorial or presidential race was 1888, and it did not elect a Democratic county judge until 1890. Lower level Republican officeholders included a number of blacks and Germans, and even the Germans who were Democrats tended to be of the moderate sort.<sup>24</sup>

Washington County, with close to a black majority and a sizeable German minority in its population, was represented in the first reconstruction Texas legislature by a black, Matt Gaines, in the senate and an immigrant (and Confederate veteran) William Schlottmann in the house, both "radical" Republicans. Support for this coalition in the local German press is reflected in the comment of its rabidly anti-black and anti-Republican rival, the *Brenham Banner* in a January 1876 column: "What does the *Volksbote*" think of idea of consolidating the "German vote of this county with negro-radico swindlers" when six prominent Germans "come forward and identify themselves with the democracy in opposition to free negro domination." Apparently this did not signal a wholesale shift in German allegiance. Washington County remained under Republican control until 1884, supported by the bulk of the blacks, about half of the Germans, and a few Anglos, often of unionist background. As long as they held on, blacks served as deputy sheriffs and on grand and petit juries, which gave them a relatively fair shake in

<sup>22</sup> Cat Spring Agricultural Society, *A Century of Agricultural Progress, 1856-1956: Minutes of the Cat Spring Agricultural Society* (Cat Spring, Texas: Cat Spring Agricultural Society, 1956), 31-32.

<sup>23</sup> *House Journal of the 12th Legislature of the State of Texas, First Session* (Austin, 1870), 803.

<sup>24</sup> Randolph B. Campbell, *Grass-Roots Reconstruction in Texas, 1865-1880* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997), 27-62, 220, 222, 229.



the local justice system. A Democratic takeover in 1884 only was accomplished through violence and intimidation against blacks, and an attempted Republican comeback in the extremely close election of 1886 was foiled when Democrats stole three Republican ballot boxes, lynched three black Republicans, and ran three of their prominent white allies out of the county. At least one of the exiled whites was German: Carl Schutze, who had been the Radical or Republican candidate for county attorney in 1876.<sup>25</sup>

In June 1888 Schutze wrote from his California exile to a Texas friend, "it's totally different for me here than back there. Here it is no crime to be a Republican and they don't sling mud at you for it. . . . The Republican party in Washington County is done for once and for all; the mobsters have complete control and everything will probably be quiet and still." In an August letter he went into more detail:

I fear that in this election the mob will put on the same show that we experienced two years ago. Violence and intimidation will be their main weapons again, with which they intimidate the Negroes and if need be control the ballot boxes. What does the mob need to worry about the consequences? The officials [i.e. of the county] are all the main instigators and leaders of the murderous gang . . . . I can imagine that these are just the rascals who are doing their best to play themselves up as the friends of the Germans and to stir up the Germans against the Negroes, just as they stir up the Negroes against the Germans. . . . You feel entirely different out here than in Texas. . . . Besides, here you live among respectable people and don't have to deal with rowdies and murderers."<sup>26</sup>

If anything, the Germans farther west in Texas stood apart even more from their Anglo neighbors in political and racial attitudes. Beginning in 1920, Harry Wurzbach served for over a decade representing the San Antonio-Seguin area in the U.S. House, the only Republican congressman from Texas during this era, and the first of his party to be re-elected.<sup>27</sup> New Braunfels, with only a 2 percent black population due to its low rate of slaveholding a century earlier, integrated its schools immediately in 1954 when ordered to do so by the Supreme Court.<sup>21</sup> Gillespie, the most heavily German county in the Hill Country, remained an undeviating Republican stronghold. Except for during the Depression in

<sup>25</sup> Donald G. Niemann, "Black Political Power and Criminal Justice: Washington County, Texas, 1868-1884," *Journal of Southern History*, 55 (Aug., 1989), 391-420.

<sup>26</sup> Letters of June 22 and Aug. 22, 1888, Lehmann Collection, CAH.

<sup>27</sup> Tyler, et al. (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas*, VI, 1095; U.S. Congress, *Official Congressional Directory* (Washington: Government Printing Office, [n.d.]), 321-51 and passim. First elected to the 67th Congress, Wurzbach apparently lost his seat for the 71st but successfully contested the election. He was again elected to the 72nd, and died in office Nov. 6, 1931.

<sup>21</sup> Gene B. Preuss, "Within these Walls: The African American School and Community in Lubbock and New Braunfels, Texas," paper presented at the Texas State Historical Association meeting, Austin, Mar. 6-8, 1997, copy in author's possession, 3.

1932, the first time it went Democratic in the twentieth century was for local boy Lyndon Johnson in 1964.<sup>29</sup>

There was nothing primordial about German ethnicity that immunized against slavery. For example, the largest slaveholder and leading secessionist in Kerr County was Dr. Charles Ganahl, born in Georgia, son of an Austrian immigrant and a Charleston belle. Although he had studied medicine in Germany and France, the younger Ganahl identified fully with the planter society from which his mother came and into which he also married.<sup>30</sup> In general, opposition to the peculiar institution derived largely from an egalitarian republicanism of the European enlightenment, an ideology which penetrated more deeply into the immigrant rank and file than most scholars have realized.<sup>31</sup>

Still, one cannot assert that German Texans were unique in their coolness toward the Confederate cause. In practically every county they found at least a few Anglo allies, and their reservations toward slavery and secession were shared by most other Continental Europeans in the state. One sees very similar patterns with Czechs, Poles, Wends, the Alsatians around Castroville, and probably most Scandinavians in Texas: Only a small, atypical, well assimilated elite, often at the fringes of the ethnic community, embraced slavery and unreservedly supported the Confederacy.<sup>32</sup> Farther down on the social scale where most immigrants were concentrated, attitudes ranged from indifference to hostility. Some were able to evade the draft, gain exemption as teamsters, or restrict their service to local militias; others served reluctantly as Confederate troops.<sup>33</sup> Even before the war, Czechs as well as Germans were harassed for their association with

<sup>29</sup> Edgar E. Robinson, *The Presidential Vote, 1896-1932* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1947), 117; Richard M. Scammon (ed.), *Americans at the Polls, 1920-64* (New York: Arno Press, 1976), 437-52.

<sup>30</sup> Bennett, *Kerr County*, 136. Meinrad Pichler, *Auswanderer: Von Vorarlberg in die USA, 1800-1938* (Voralberger Autoren Gesellschaft: Bregenz, 1993), 224-29.

<sup>31</sup> For evidence on a nationwide level see Walter D. Kamphoefner, "'Auch unser Deutschland muss einmal frei werden': The Immigrant Civil War Experience as a Mirror on Political Conditions in Germany," in David Barclay and Elisabeth Glaser-Schmidt (eds.), *Transatlantic Images and Perceptions: Germany and America since 1776* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 87-107.

<sup>32</sup> For an example of the kind of German most likely to "go native" in the antebellum South, see Walter Struve, *Germans and Texans: Commerce, Migration and Culture in the Days of the Lone Star Republic* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996), 76-78, 92-98, and Küffner, "Texas-Germans' Attitudes."

<sup>33</sup> Clinton Machann and James W. Mendl, *Krásná Amerika: A Study of the Texas Czechs, 1851-1939* (Austin: Eakin Press, 1983), 35-38, 216-18. T. Lindsay Baker, *The First Polish Americans: Silesian Settlements in Texas* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1979), 64-77. George R. Nielsen, *In Search of a Home: Nineteenth-Century Wendish Immigration* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1989), 94-96. Lillie Moerbe Caldwell, *Texas Wends: Their First Half Century* (Salado, Texas: Anson Jones Press, 1961), 62-63, 110. The NBZ reported on Aug. 29, 1862, that Medina County elected as its officials by a 4:1 margin people who had been held prisoner for disloyalty; on June 19, 1863, it reported that cavalry surrounded Castroville trying to capture the 160 conscripts in the county. Most were warned and escaped, but of the twenty captured, eighteen deserted and disappeared. Institute of Texas Cultures, *The Norwegian Texans* (San Antonio: University of Texas, 1970), unpaginated sections "1860" and "1865."

"abolitionist" foreign-language newspapers.<sup>34</sup> In Bastrop County, Germans combined with Wends to vote down the ordinance of secession. Not only Germans but also Poles from Victoria and Karnes Counties went over together to the Union cause after being taken prisoner.<sup>35</sup> The First Texas Cavalry, USA, included a scattering of Wends, Poles and Czechs among the hundreds of Germans.<sup>36</sup> In Austin County, Germans and Czechs had constituted the bulk of the deserter lists during the war, and in 1865 joined in a Fourth of July celebration affirming the Union victory.<sup>37</sup> During Reconstruction, Poles in Karnes County were harassed by ex-Confederates just as Germans were elsewhere.<sup>38</sup> But Germans were far and above the largest European immigrant group in Texas, probably outnumbering all others put together. Their high level of literacy and strong concentrations in a number of counties made them much more of a political factor.<sup>39</sup>

So while Terry Jordan has provided a needed corrective to Texas-German ancestor worship, overturning the legend that his forefathers were overwhelmingly unionist and abolitionist, he goes too far in characterizing Texas Germans as "unremarkable" in their race attitudes, and he underestimates the degree to which Germans stood apart from their fellow Texans on the issues of the Civil War.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, by not following the story beyond 1865, Jordan overlooks Texas-German Republicanism during Reconstruction and sometimes persisting down into the twentieth century, which clearly had its roots in the bitter experiences of the Civil War era.

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Apparently the handful of antebellum Danish immigrants were of higher social status and came as isolated individuals, and were thus more integrated into Southern society. John L. Davis, *The Danish Texans* (San Antonio: Institute of Texas Cultures, 1979), 12-14, 21-23, 32, 38-39.

<sup>34</sup> The controversy involving Adolph Douai and the San Antonio *Zeitung* is well known. See Biesele, "German Attitudes," but for a Czech parallel see Machann and Mendl, *Krásná Amerika*, 181, and the agitation carried on by the Bellville *Countryman*, Aug. 4, 1860.

<sup>35</sup> Baker, *First Polish Americans*, 68-73.

<sup>36</sup> Nielsen, *In Search of a Home*, 96; Baker, *First Polish Americans*, 76-77; Machann and Mendl, *Krásná Amerika*, 37.

<sup>37</sup> Deserter list published in Bellville *Countryman*, Dec. 27, 1862. Sean M. Kelley, "The Germans Do Not Propose to Act Like Germans: Racial and Ethnic Identities in the Brazos Valley, 1865-1892," paper presented at Southern Historical Association meeting, Little Rock, Nov., 1996, copy in author's possession.

<sup>38</sup> Baker, *First Polish Americans*, 84-96.

<sup>39</sup> Civil War era censuses have the drawback that they are primarily based on country of birth rather than ethnicity, and tend to overlook groups such as Poles and Czechs. A more accurate reflection of the relative size of ethnic groups (including the second generation) is the 1887 enumeration made along with the agricultural census. Besides 33,807 British and Irish, it shows nearly 130,000 Germans, 100,000 more than all other continental Europeans together. The latter excludes Czechs, who were not consistently enumerated, but five of the top six counties listed in Machann and Mendl, *Krásná Amerika*, 157-61, show nearly 13,000 Czechs and Moravians, and the other seven among the top twelve show about 3,000 of "all other" ethnicity, suggesting that there were fewer than 20,000 statewide (where "all other" came to 38,337). Nearly 300 Wends were enumerated in Fayette County, but none in their main settlement of Lee County, where they probably constitute the majority of the 3,045 "Germans." L. L. Foster, Commissioner. *First Annual Report of the Agricultural Bureau, 1887-88* (Austin, 1889), xlvii and passim.

<sup>40</sup> Jordan, "Germans and Blacks," 96.

# The Lutherans Time (almost) Forgot

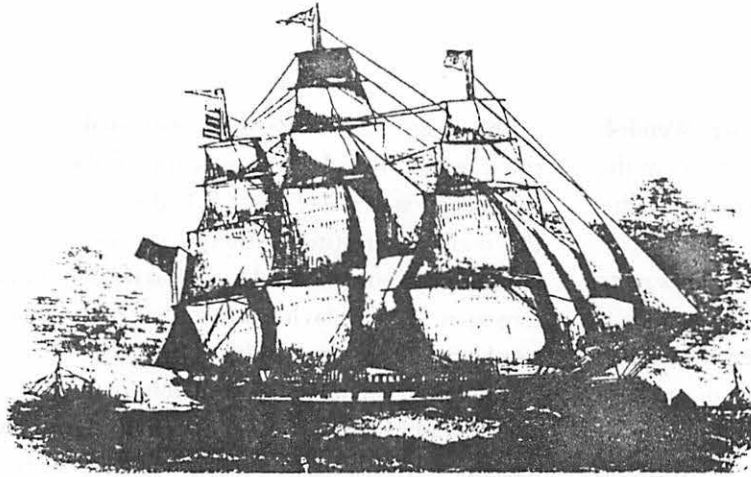
by Mary Agria

**I**t was only two years ago that Dr. David Zersen took to the Internet exploring Lutheran church body Web sites in Europe. Tucked away in an eastern German site, he came across news that a Wendish junior college was being built on the border near the Czech Republic.

St. John's Lutheran Junior College in Hoyerswerda and Concordia University in Austin (CUA) had found each other: They are the only two Lutheran educational institutions in the world that share direct Wendish roots.

*A confirmation certificate signed by church leader Johann Kilian in 1876 shows that the Wendish language and customs carried over into the United States.*





*The Ben Nevis carried some 575  
Wendish pioneers from Germany to  
Texas in the 19th century.*

But who are the Wends? Even many Wends in the U.S. today would find it hard to explain their unique background, says Dr. Gerald Kieschnick, part Wendish himself and president of the Missouri Synod's Texas District. Only an estimated 60,000 Wends (also known as Sorbs) speak the language worldwide. This is why making connections is so important. As a result of that first on-line contact in the fall of 1997, six teachers from *Evangelisches Gymnasium Johanneum* in Hoyerswerda traveled to Austin in the spring of 1998 to celebrate their people's common identity.

## A Saga of Survival

"The Wends never had a defined homeland," President Zersen explains. "They never had a nation. They never had a government, which is one of the reasons why they were persecuted."



"Just as St. Olaf College is Norwegian, so we are Wendish," says Dr. David Zersen, president of Concordia University in Austin, Texas.

Zersen is helping give voice to a Lutheran ethnic group facing the loss of its unique cultural and religious heritage.

For centuries, these Slavs or Slavonic peoples migrated gypsy-like between Poland and Czechoslovakia on the east and various boundaries within Germany on the west. They were given the name "Wends" in early Latin histories (possibly from the Gothic "vinja" meaning "wandering about").

Around the sixth century, a group settled in the Lusatian Mountains and river-laced heaths and meadowlands of Brandenburg and Saxony (south of Berlin and northeast of Dresden). Denied independence by the increasingly dominant Germanic (Frankish) tribes, for the next 1,400 years the Wends resisted ongoing attempts to wipe out their culture.

During the Reformation, most Wends became Protestants. Some speculate that Martin Luther's wife, Katarina von Bora, may have shared this heritage. Her father, Hans, came from Lippendorf (at the time a Wendish town); the name von Bora itself may have Wendish roots.

The Wends had to fight ongoing persecution and prejudice as they practiced their Lutheran faith. Martin Luther himself was once quoted as saying, "The Wends are thieves and a very bad sort of people!" Still, it was Luther's stress on teaching Biblical truths in the mother tongue that in part inspired the Wends to develop their own literary language using the Cyrillic alphabet—a powerful force in retaining their identity.

Under Prussian rule in 1817, the Wends were ordered to combine Lutheran and Reformed traditions and give up their language. They refused, and a new wave of persecution began.

## Life in a New Land

In 1854, mainly to seek religious freedom but also to preserve their language and customs, some 575 Wends boarded the sailing ship *Ben Nevis* to emigrate to the New World, 16 years after the Saxons from Germany had settled



in Missouri with the help of C. F. W. Walther. Wendish leader Johann (Jan) Kilian—a classmate of Walther's at the University of Leipzig—may have been intending to join his friend along the Mississippi.

"Some say that the winds blew them all the way to Galveston," Zersen says with a chuckle. "But the truth is they had contact with an earlier clan of Wends who had settled near Austin." Other Wends took refuge in southern Australia, Nebraska and the Ottawa River Valley in Ontario, Canada. The largest population of Wendish

**"It is one of the really interesting Lutheran stories," Wendish pre-seminary student Paul Goeke says. "But it's about to be forgotten. I'd like to be one of those who helps to keep their memory and contribution alive."**

descendants today outside of Europe is located in Texas.

Both in Texas and Australia the Wend language fell silent. For Texas Wends, the relative size of German populations near their settlement at Serbin contributed to that assimilation. Even the gravestone of pioneer pastor Jan Kilian is carved in German, not Wendish. The last Wendish Lutheran service was held in 1919.

Dr. Gerald Kieschnick, a Lutheran Brotherhood member, says many U.S. Wends might describe their heritage as something like German. "They do not realize they are a Slavic people or that they have a totally different language and culture."

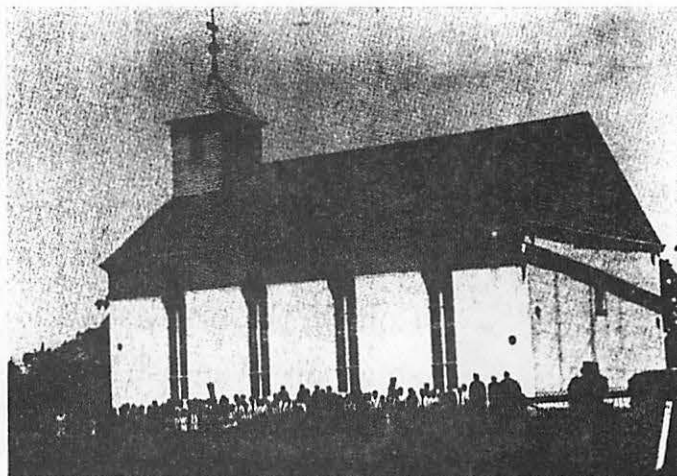
To preserve some of those customs, Concordia University in Austin in recent years founded a Wendish Council, and for three years now, the school has sponsored a traditional "Wedding of the Birds" (*Ptaci Kwas*) festival, complete with ethnic costumes, dances, folk art and traditional foods. The event is part of the Austin Ethnic Fair held in late January. CUA's Old Main building is named Kilian Hall, and the ornate bell the Wends brought with them as well as the model of the *Ben Nevis*, are on display on campus.

Last fall's visit by the *Sorbische Volkstanzgruppe Schmerlitz* was an emotional moment for everyone, especially older Wends in the Austin area. For one of the few times in nearly 50 years, people once again heard Wendish shouted and sung publicly in their community.

The quest to preserve this heritage strikes a chord across the campus. Roughly 10 percent of the student body, faculty and staff today are of Wendish origins. "It is one of the really interesting Lutheran stories," CUA Wendish pre-seminary student Paul Goeke says, "but it's about to be forgotten. Their Slavic catechisms and hymnals are now just historic records. I'd like to be one of those who helps to keep their memory and contribution alive."

Paul's father, David Goeke, lives in San Antonio, and like many people of Wendish origin, he only came to appreciate the rich folklore in adulthood. As he remembers his childhood, one gets a sense of how perilously close these traditions came to extinction in the United States.

"A lot of traditions, like the Easter 'pouring out of the water,' or *Osterwassergiessen*, had died out in my parents' generation. It was really a half dozen older women in the Wendish community who got things started around 25 years ago," David Goeke



As the original church in the New World, St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Serbin, Texas, is an important link among Wends. The current pastor of St. Paul's, the Rev. Michael Buchhorn, is of Wendish background. He preaches to some 450 congregants every Sunday. Although he is part Wendish, Buchhorn says, "Growing up, I didn't recognize some things as Wendish—like those wonderful noodle dishes at my grandmother's house. It is literally like a taste of home coming back here to serve this church."





Georgie Boyce, president of the Texas Wendish Historical Society, says: "I went to a Sorb Festival in Germany in 1994 and am about to go again. My only regret on these trips is not having more time to look up some of the specific places my family probably lived."

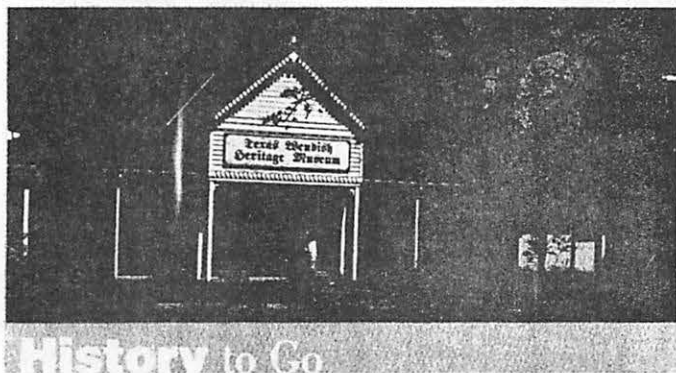
explains. "One of the ways they built more awareness was representing Wendish culture at the annual Folk Life Festival in San Antonio."

Some 35 members of a brass choir from Kilian's original congregation (St. Johannes Lutheran in Klittern, Germany) performed at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Serbin in 1996, where they were hosted by local families. The next year 50 members from St. Paul's formed a bell

choir and went to Klitten. Other visitors in recent months included a group of Australian Wends who came to Serbin to learn more about the Texas immigrants' experience.

President Zersen's on-line contacts have blossomed into a program that this fall will bring some 18 Wendish young people from Germany to study on the campus at CUA. Next year, a famous Wendish organist from Berlin will be coming to give a concert series. Still other educational programs are being developed between CUA and the Domowina, the cultural center of the Wends in Bautzen, Germany.

"We have a lot to learn from the courage and faith of those Lutheran Wendish pioneers," Dr. Kieschnick concludes. "They left their homeland for uncharted territory because their faith and their heritage were so important to them. That's an exciting legacy—risk-taking for one's faith. That is also what the church is all about today!"



Georgie Boyce, president of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society, says this group now maintains the only Wendish museum in the United States. It is located on the grounds of Jan Kilian's original church in the New World, St. Paul's Lutheran in Serbin, Texas, where the Wends first settled. The Heritage complex includes exhibit buildings, an interpretive center, research library and archives. It also hosts an annual Wendish Fest every fourth Sunday in September—now in its 11th year—featuring folk art, folk dancing, music and typical Wendish food. (As a fund-raiser, every year volunteers make and sell more than 4,000 pounds of their famous noodles.)

To learn more about the Wends, read *In Search of a Home: Nineteenth-Century Wendish Immigration* by George Nielsen, published by Texas A & M University. It and other publications, bibliographies and brochures on the Wends are available through the Texas Wendish Heritage Museum, Rte. 2, Box 155, Giddings, TX 78942. Phone: 409-366-2441.

For information via the Internet, go to the Concordia University in Austin Wendish heritage home page: [www.concordia.edu/ethn.htm](http://www.concordia.edu/ethn.htm)



# Erinnerung an den Tag der Confirmation.



ROM 3. 28.  
SO HAUTEN WIR ES NUN, DASS  
DER MENSCH GERECHT WERDE  
OHNE DES GESETZES WERKEN,  
ALLEIN DURCH DEN GLAUBEN.

HESEM 1. 10.  
ICH WILL ABER GEDENKEN  
AN MEINEN BUND, DEN ICH  
MIT DIR GEMACHT HABE,  
ZUR ZEIT DEINER JUGEND.

Das ist Mein Leib.

Das ist Mein Blut.

*Traugott Zoch*  
geborenen 9<sup>ten</sup> Mai 1862 confirmirt  
den 9<sup>ten</sup> April 1876 in der Kirche  
zu St. Paul in Serbin.

## Denkspruch.

**D**ehmet zu Herzen alle Worte, die ich euch heute bezeuge; denn es ist nicht ein vergeblich Wort an euch, sondern es ist euer Leben. 5 Mose 32, 46. 47.

Du heil'ges Licht! edler Hort! laß leuchten uns des Lebens Wort,  
Und lehr' uns Gott recht erkennen,  
Von Herzen Vater Ihn nennen.

O Herr! behüt' vor fremder Lehr', daß wir nicht Meister suchen mehr,  
Denn Jesum Christ im rechten Glauben  
Und Ihn aus ganzer Macht vertrauen.

*2. Cor. 23, 17.*

Serbin, Lee Co. Texas, am 10 April 1876.

Johann Kilian, Pastor.



ROM 4. 3.

JOR. 1. 17.

Lith. u. Verlag v. Leopold Gast, St. Louis.

1628 Second Carondelet Avenue.



# Selbst Willie und Waylon besangen den Ort

Luckenbach und der „Broken Spoke“ in Texas sind magische Punkte für alle, die Countrymusik mögen

„Luckenbach ist kein Ort, Luckenbach ist ein Gefühl“, hat Countrysänger Waylon Jennings gesagt. Na schön – aber wie findet man dieses Gefühl, wenn man es einfach nicht findet? Luckenbach ist wirklich nicht einfach zu finden. Schon eine gute Stunde zieht der Chevy seine Staubfahne durch die Abenddämmerung im Hill Country. Endlos ist das Grasland, Hügel, Busch, Zäune. Die typischen Postkästen, weit hinten die Ranchhauslichter. Schattengleich springen Rehe über den Weg. Wo aber zum Teufel ist dieses „Gefühl“ namens Luckenbach, das kein Ort ist? Ein Ort hat ja auch (normalerweise) Hinweisschilder.

Luckenbach hat keine. Da ist die Farm Road 1376, mußst du erst mal finden. Fünf Meilen ungefähr noch, dann eine sandige Straße und dann – Luckenbach.

Am hölzernen Post-Office, das noch aus dem Jahr 1850 stammt und auch so aussieht, grinst mit amerikanischem Humor ein Schild: „Glückwunsch, daß Ihr uns gefunden habt!“ Das Post-Office ist gleichzeitig Laden, Souvenir-Shop und so etwas wie ein Heimatmuseum. Dahinter der kleine Saloon. Flaschen, Reklamen, Gags, Bilder, Schilder, Souvenirs, Kartengrüße von überall her. Und Namen auf Geschäftskarten, eine ganze Wand voll. Der Bursche hinter der Bartheke heißt Gordon und hat einen ganz deutsch klingenden Nachnamen: Hasdorff. Soviel in diesem Land hier klingt ganz deutsch und darauf sind sie alle ein bißchen stolz, auch Gordon. Er gibt mir sein „gun“, wie er sagt, und das natürlich kein Colt ist, sondern eine „Pistole“ für Heftklammern und ganz schön knallt. Seitdem hängt meine „Visitenkarte“ zwischen den Grüßen von Country Music-Fans aus Tennessee und Kalifornien. Dann erzählt Gordon bei einem Bier von Luckenbach, da eigentlich nur drei Einwohner hat, nein, manchmal auch 25 und manchmal auch ein paar hundert. Die meisten aber eben nur vorübergehend. Wenn hier was los ist sage ich. Hier ist immer was los, sagt Gordon, aber viele kommen eben einfach „mal so“, aus Neugier, aus Interesse oder „just for fun“. Orts- und Hinweisschilder ha-

ben die Souvenirjäger regelmäßig abmontiert. Deshalb machen wir einfach keine mehr dran, grinst der Blonde mit dem weißen Stetson.

Luckenbach ist eine Art Mekka für Leute mit Hippieblut und dem Nerv für handgemachte Country-Music. Hier sind sie tatsächlich alle schon mal gewesen, die mit den klangvollen Namen in der musikalischen Szene. Viele andere wollen sich den „Ort“ eben einfach mal ansehen. Luckenbach entstand 1849 als Frontier Trading Post (Handelsposten) zum Kontakt mit den Comanche-Indianern, avancierte ein Jahr später zum US Post-Office. Das texanische Original „Hondo“

Crouch, Sänger, Humorist und Geschichten-Erzähler, kaufte 1970 den „Ort“, erklärte sich zum Bürgermeister und verkündete unter dem Leitspruch „Everybody is somebody in Luckenbach“ (Jeder ist jemand in Luckenbach) den geplanten Aufschwung der Mini-Ansiedlung. Er engagierte sich mit unglaublichem Einfallsreichtum, stellte Talentwettbewerbe, Western-Parties und Country-Music-Feste auf die Beine. Er ist nun schon über 20 Jahre in der himmlischen Country-Hall of Fame, seine Inspiration aber ist allenthalben gegenwärtig. In der Tanzhalle aus dem Jahr 1880 – wo ständig Veranstaltungen und Familienfeiern stattfinden – nahm der Sänger Jerry Jeff Walker 1973 sein Live-Album „Viva Terlingua“ auf, 1993 ein zweites als direkte

Hommage an das „Gefühl“ im Hill Country: „Viva Luckenbach“. Und dann eben sind sie alle mal gekommen, die Countrygrößen, für eine kleine Session mit Kollegen und Freunden oder nur zum Gucken und Relaxen oder auf einen Umtrunk. Schließlich kreierten Chips Moman und Bobby Emmons speziell für Waylon Jennings ihren Song „Let's go to Luckenbach, Texas...“, in dem von „Willie and Waylon“ die Rede ist und tatsächlich haben ihn Willie Nelson und Waylon Jennings in ihren Repertoires. „...in Luckenbach, Texas, heißt es da, „ain't nobody feelin' no pain...“ – und in dieser idyllischen Landschaft mit ihrer Weltverlorenheit, bei Musik und Drinks kann wirklich keiner das Gefühl von Kummer oder etwas Ähnlichem haben. Und Luckenbach – „people can't believe!“ – hat nicht nur einen eigenen (weiblichen) Sheriff namens Margie Mueller, sondern auch einen großen Mond“ für so eine kleine Stadt: den „Luckenbach Moon“, eine achtseitige, heitere Mini-Zeitung! „Luck“, wie man dort kurz sagt, vermittelt schon sein Gefühl...

Zurück nach Austin, der texanischen Hauptstadt. Auch jetzt, oder besonders jetzt, am späten Abend, zeigt sie ihren Charme. Austin ist keine der rabiaten Großstädte mit ihrer Downtown-Seelenlosigkeit. Austin hat viel Grün, viel Freundlichkeit, ein Capitol, 1882 bis 1888 nachgebaut dem in Washington, D.C., nur etwas größer – in Texas ist sowieso alles etwas größer. Die Stadt hat wie all diese Städte viel kulturelle Interessen und eine

ausgeprägte Musikszene, nicht nur in den Clubs, Lokalen und Theatern in der Sixth Street, wo einst sich die Hipies trafen.

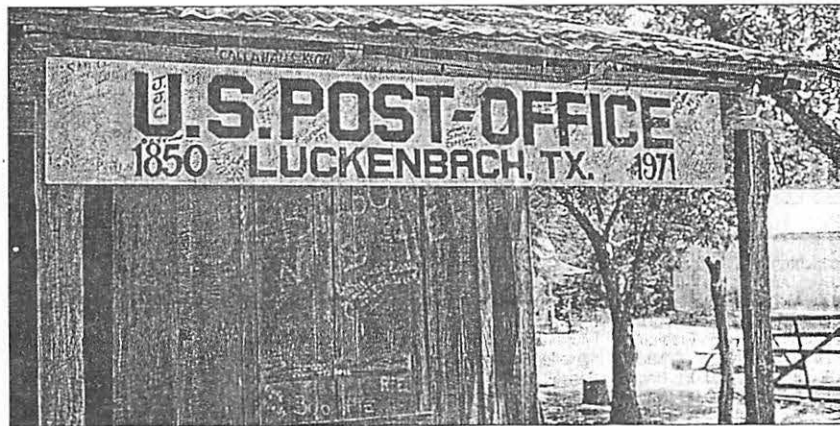
Dann kamen die Countryleute, und die, die kamen, hatten andere Art von Musik drauf wie die der gängigen Industrie mit dem eingängigen Sound. Die Musik von Nelson, Jennings, Walker und den anderen war würzig und herzhafte wie Brisket, mit Texten, die auch junge Leute ansprachen. Und nach Austin kommen auch neue Namen und immer sind sie, das ist sozusagen obligatorisch, im „Broken Spoke“ an der Lamar Street im südlichen Austin ist ein magischer Punkt für alle, die Country Musik mögen: Honky Tonk, Saloon und Country Dance Hall. Links zwischen Saloon und Tanzhalle ist das Museum, das die „owner“ James und Annetta White da im Laufe der Jahre eingerichtet haben. Hier haben sie alle ihre Spuren hinterlassen, die Großen und nicht ganz so Großen der Countryszene, Signierte Hüte und Gitarren und Geigen und Platten und Bilder und... Hier waren sie alle auch auf der Bühne, George Strait und Roger Miller und eben auch Willie Nelson, der gar nicht so weit von hier seine Ranch hat. Hier im „Spoke“ ist er gewiß nicht seine erste, aber sehr wichtige Bühnenschritte gegangen. Andere gehen erste, wieder andere kommen immer wieder und fast jeden Tag gibt es im „Spoke“ richtig schöne Live Music zum Tanz, da sind vor allem die nicht

mehr so ganz Jungen sehr aktiv. Man kommt mit landesüblicher Lässigkeit, das „Outfit“ angehend, ohne ausgestellte Westerntribüne, fröhliche und ganz selbstverständliche Pflege der traditionellen Tänze, Western Swing vor allem.

1964 hat James White den „Spoke“ gegründet und darauf ist er so stolz wie auf sein „best chicken fried steak in Texas“. James White sagt: „Ich glaube wirklich, das hier ist mehr als irgendein Platz, ein Gebäude. Wir hatten 34 Jahre gute Zeiten mit all denen, die zu uns kamen.“ Im November war Geburtstag im „Broken Spoke“: er ist ins nunmehr 35. Jahr seines Bestehens gestartet – keep it Country on the south side of Austin.

Karl Knietzsch

„Luckenbach ist kein Ort, Luckenbach ist ein Gefühl“



Das Post-Office von Luckenbach ist gleichzeitig Laden, Souvenir-Shop und so etwas wie ein Heimatmuseum. Foto: Repro aus Thomas Jeiers Buch „USA. Spurensuche abseits der großen Highways“

Many present-day Germans are as fascinated by everything Texan as were the immigrants generations ago. When writer and journalist Karl Knietzsch of Dresden was a houseguest of GTHS members Hans and Helga von Schweinitz in Austin, he learned about German-Texan history, visited with people and places and published several articles on his experiences here in German papers. He is presently doing research on the painters Lungkwitz and Petri and on Hermann Ehrenberg of 1835/36 fame. The enclosed article was published in the *Dresdner Neue Nachrichten* on May 25, 1999.

Since Karl Knietzsch's first visit to Texas, his friends call him "Tex".



## Gruene Hall for rugged country fun

by Cynthia Young  
LSL Staff

Texas' oldest dance hall is still rocking with popular bands, rugged looks and a comfortable atmosphere. Gruene Hall, located in Gruene just a short 20-minute drive from TLU, has been a Texas favorite for people of all ages and all origins for generations.

The hall was established in 1876 by H. D. Gruene, a local businessman. Gruene, his family and others helped build the town including the hall, a general store and several homes all within a few blocks. Today, Gruene is known for its historical architecture, numerous bed and breakfasts, antique shops and craftsmen who work in their studios.

Gruene Hall is a bar and dance hall open to people of all kinds and all ages. There is no age limit to enter the dance hall, although alcohol is served at the bar. The bar's beverages include beer; wine, wine coolers, soda and bottled water for the customers.

Musicians that have been known to play at

Gruene Hall include Clay Walker, Garth Brooks, Jerry Jeff Walker, Hal Ketchum and Two Tons of Steel. The admission price varies depending on what band is playing and what day of the week it is, but most of the time the price stays in the boundaries of a college student's wallet. Gruene Hall is open seven days a week and their hours are Monday-Wednesday 11 a.m.-10 p.m., Thursday and Friday 11-12 a.m., Saturday 10-1 a.m. and Sunday 10 a.m.-10 p.m.

The hall has been refurbished over the years, but the most recent addition to the hall is the air conditioning

unit. For the first time in 123 years, the hall's owners installed air conditioning to help their customers have a more pleasurable visit on those hot days that Texas knows too well.

To experience a rugged, fun, antique-country styled bar, come to Gruene Hall. You can travel to Gruene Hall by following State Highway 46 west to New Braunfels. After going under IH-35, stay on SH 46 until you get to Common Street, the stop light where Rooty's Bar-B-Q is located. Take a right at Rooty's. At the next stop sign, take a left and you can't miss it!

Editor's Note: Part 1 of Excerpts from German-Texan Master Mason Gustave Birkner's Diaries is in the Summer 1999 Journal. His complete memoir is housed at the Technical Reference Center of the College of Architecture at Texas A&M University. Mr. Birkner's manuscript is now being edited and annotated for general publication in 2000 by Donald Regan Birkner and J. Kay Gayle. The first person "voice" in the story is that of Gus Birkner, himself, who was born to German parents in Gonzales, Texas in 1861. The first half of the diary ends after Birkner describes in gory detail the shooting in Joe Foster's vaudeville house in 1882.

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Between 1882 and 1884 while that notorious feud was raging, I was living with my Uncle John Stoffers in Gonzales learning my craft as a brick and stone mason. Bettie and I had had our first little boy, Freddie, but he died in Gonzales on May 9, 1883 at just two years old. We buried him, and my uncle planted a little hackberry tree at the head of the grave. About thirty years after that I went back there to do some building work, and I was able to locate the grave only by that hackberry tree. It had grown to be twenty-five feet high.

While I had stayed with Uncle John Stoffers, I heard my mother telling a story about Uncle John's son. He had a son by the name of Henry, and Henry had fought Indians. One day as he was being attacked, he had his jack mule trained to lie down. The Indians ran up on him but Henry used the jack as breastworks and fought the Indians off with his rifle. But when the Confederate War broke out, Henry went off to Mexico to keep out of the war. He was at that time married to a doctor's daughter and they had one girl child. For seven years not a word was heard from Henry, and the folks gave him up as dead. His wife married a Mr. Jansen at Moulton. Not long after his wife had remarried, Henry returned to find that his wife belonged to another man. So he went back to Mexico. There my cousin changed his name to Bob Stafford and went by that name until he died. I heard that he died in Dallas years later.

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My wife and I had had our second child then, a girl by the name of Bessie. We moved back to Bear Creek in the fall of 1884. I had a few cows left, and I went into partnership with Mr. Charles Von Rosenberg to run

five thousand acres, nearly all under rock fence. We now had plenty to eat, for I could kill a kid goat or shoat hog whenever I got ready. I raised a good garden and caught all kinds of fish out of Bear Creek. We were living at ease without the need of money.

At first we lived in a tent camp until I could build a house. I cut my logs and trimmed them, hauled them up, and got everything ready to build. I built one room out of logs, sixteen by sixteen feet, and a shed room of lumber, eight by sixteen feet. I built a good rock chimney for four-foot wood. We had plenty of cedar wood there and plenty of rock to build my chimney. In less than two years, we had about three hundred head of hogs and about the same amount of goats. Hogs then were worth about three cents on foot or six cents butchered. A person could buy good bacon at seven or eight cents per pound, and ham for ten cents a pound. Goats could only be given away, as they were worthless except to eat.

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My wife went to stay with my parents for a few months until my second son, August, was born February 27, 1885. So at Christmas 1884, during this time while I was "batching," my wife's uncle came up to spend the holidays with me. Christmas morning we started down to see my parents. My wife's uncle was still feeling good from the night before, so he started running his horse and roping at bushes. His saddle turned with him, he fell off his horse, and his saddle came off. There was a bunch of horses on the road, and his horse started to run with them. I tried to cut the horse off from the bunch and was running my horse fast over the very rocky land. My horse's shoe caught in one of the honeycombed rocks, and he fell with me. I was dragging a forty-foot rope on my saddle. The fall broke the horn of my

got up on the horse or he got up with me still in the saddle. I was unconscious. He carried me about two miles with that rope dragging and his forefoot caught in the bridle reins. He carried me to my father-in-law's house. They took me down to my father's and got a doctor from Manchaca to set my arm. Incidentally, our uncle was found back on the road where I had left him, asleep by his saddle, totally unharmed.

At the time I got that injury, I was working riding pasture to look after about five hundred very wild mules from the King Ranch. As we needed that ten dollars a month that I got for looking after the mules, my wife's uncle had to stay with us to do my work until I got well. One morning while he was cooking breakfast, I got up early to check on my chickens. I knew something had been catching them, and my kid goats, and my pigs. I told our uncle that I had counted the chickens the night before on their roost to see if there were any missing this morning. Sure enough, one of my hens was gone. I called my two good hunting dogs, and off we went.

The dogs got on the trail of whatever was catching the chickens, and they soon caught up with *el tigre* -- a wild jaguar cat. The dogs couldn't do anything with him. He was whipping my dogs for the fun of it. They ran him for about a mile, but every time they caught up with him he whipped them again. I had my left arm in a sling, but I picked up a liveoak club and carried it to the bottom of the tree that the *tigre* cat had gone up. He was getting pretty mad by now, as he had whipped the dogs until he was tired. He now came out on a limb towards me and thought that he would take it out on me. He jumped off the limb right towards me, and as I stepped back to get out of the way I fell backwards. When he hit the ground, the dogs bounded on him and I jumped up right quickly with my club.

club and stunned him. I finished him off. I had a time dragging that heavy cat back to the house with one arm in a sling. I kept yelling for my wife's uncle to come to help, but I couldn't make him hear me. We skinned him, and he was just the fattest thing you ever saw. We got enough grease out of him to grease harness with for a year. I had his hide dressed, as he was the only *tigre* cat caught in that part of the country.

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In 1886 we had a bad drought. The creek stopped running and my hogs began to die when they couldn't find any water. So in the latter part of 1886 I went to Austin to see about getting me a job building on the State Capitol. They were working on it then and, as I had done a great deal of rock work, I thought maybe that I could hold the job. I was always willing to tackle anything which was honest. I walked to Austin in one day, about fifteen miles. I got there that evening and applied for a job. The boss asked me if I was a rock mason, and I said yes. But to myself I said, "Now you're lying. You won't hold that job." I thought maybe I would get about two dollars per day. Anyway, I went up the next morning with my tools and they put me to work backing up behind a granite wall. I worked that day, then the boss came around and told me that my wages would be three dollars a day. "My God," I said to myself, "giving *me* them wages!" I surely was proud, for that was the largest wages I had ever earned. The next afternoon the boss came around and said, "Birkner, your wages will now be three-fifty." You don't know how I felt about his raising me fifty cents. I thought that I was getting rich. The third day I found out my raise came because the contractors were bringing in about fifty rock masons from Chicago -- union masons. They knew they had to raise us Texas masons to the same price. They paid us on the fifteenth of each month. The money was in gold and greenbacks of five, ten,

and twenty dollar denominations. No one-dollar greenbacks had been made at that time, the smallest denomination being five dollars. Any change under five dollars was paid in silver dollars and smaller change.

After I had worked awhile there, I sold out my ranch on Bear Creek and kept what few head of cattle I had, and moved to Austin. I couldn't afford to lose my three-fifty per day job. I worked there on the Capitol during the latter part of 1886, all of 1887, and part of 1888. After moving back to Austin I lost my second little boy, August, on November 5, 1887 and we buried him at Manchaca at the Liveoak Cemetery. Building the Capitol was a dangerous piece of work, for one had to be working under big granite rocks swinging over him all the time. I was fortunate, as I got hurt only once. That was in 1888 just as we were finishing up. There was a man by the name of Slaughter working on the dome about fifty feet above me. He was corking with a coal chisel. It flew out of his hand and hit me on the head. It knocked me cold for awhile, but I got alright. I was the youngest mason on the job, and they often gave me some mighty dangerous jobs because I was good at climbing. I was then about twenty-five years old. There aren't many masons living now who worked on the Capitol.

Let me give you a little history of the Capitol. The building proper covers three acres of land, and has eighteen acres of floor space. The dome is 7 feet taller than the dome of the Capitol of this nation, and the Texas Capitol building is second only to the National Capitol. At the time of construction, it was said to be the seventh largest building in the world. Contracting work was begun on February 1, 1882; the cornerstone was laid on March 2, 1885; and the completed building was dedicated on May 16, 1888. It was built at a cost of 3 million acres of land -- land of the

state taken from the public domain. This land today is worth about \$60 million. The architect of the building was E. E. Myers; the contractor was Abner Taylor; and the subcontractor was Gus Wilke. The Capitol is shaped like a Greek cross, fronting south, with a projecting center and flank, and having a rotunda and dome at the intersection of the main corridors. The east and west wings of the Capitol are three stories high, and the front is four stories high. The dome is 312 feet high from the grade line to the top of the statue on the dome. The grade line is 600 feet above sea level. Dimensions of the building are as follows, including the portico but not the steps: 528 feet in length and 290 feet at the greatest width. The exterior walls were built with more than 15,000 carloads of red granite from the inexhaustible granite quarries of Burnet County, hauled over 75 miles of specially-built narrow gauge railroad. The inside walls were built of limestone rock hauled from Oatmanville (now called Oak Hill) about 12 miles from Austin on the I.&G.N. Railroad wide gauge railroad. There were 26,000 carloads hauled from there. The roof of the Capitol was made of copper roofing. Inside there are 392 rooms, 18 vaults, 924 windows, and 404 doors. The wainscoting is made of oak, pine, cherry, cedar, walnut, ash, and mahogany with an aggregate length of about 7 miles.

They started the building in 1882, blasting out the basement through solid rock and walling it up with limestone rock to the top of the ground. After the walling of the basement, they stopped the work for awhile. They found out they couldn't get the labor in the state of Texas or even in the United States to complete the building in the five years they had to build it. Labor was hard to find for that kind of work, for it was hard and dangerous work.

As I said, the inside walls of the building are of limestone and the outside is of granite from Burnet. There



were two railroads running to the Capitol which brought in the rock -- one narrow gauge railroad from the Burnet Granite Quarry at Burnet, and one wide gauge railroad from Oatmanville which intersected the I.& G.N. Railroad about six miles from the south of Austin. The railroads ran north and south of the building as far as the ell. There were thirteen large derricks to handle the material. These derricks hoisted the rock and iron from the cars. At first they used a whistle to give the signal for hoisting and lowering, until the building was two stories high. Then they used electric buttons. There was one man to each power station in the basement to run the machinery for hoisting and polishing the granite for the columns and the other work. They had improved machinery for that work. They had carriages on each derrick to place the stone in the right place. The granite rock was quarried at Burnet and each block of stone was marked before it left the quarry, because it was cut by a granite stonecutter to fit in one certain place.

The work around the building went on day and night. During the day, the derrick was used to set the granite and the steel beams. At night, the derrick was used to unload the rocks from the cars and distribute them over the building. The contractors had Swede and English sailors to keep the guy wires in place for the derricks. The guy wires ran as far as a mile from the Capitol. The derrick for the dome had to run out a long ways to hold it up.

Some of the granite weighed as much as a ton or even two tons. In 1883, the Legislature had granted five hundred convicts to quarry the rock at Burnet and Oatmanville. They commenced to work again in 1884. There were lots of labor troubles. They couldn't get the granite cutters in the United States to cut the granite, so the subcontractor Mr. Wilke went to Scotland and imported sixty granite cutters from there. Then Mr. Wilke was

indicted for importing stonecutters and was fined sixty thousand dollars, a thousand dollars for each cutter. However, the fine was later remitted when he showed the state that he couldn't get the labor in the United States. The contractors got skilled mechanics from all over the United States, and got steelworkers from England and from Berlin, Germany. There were Swedes, Irishmen, Germans, Italians, Frenchmen, Americans, a few Negroes, and Mexican workers on that job. Carpenters were so scarce that they had to obtain them from all over the United States, as there were not enough in Texas to do the finishing work. Most of the iron and steel came from Hamburg, Germany; most of the cement came from England and Germany. Cement was high -- they used the cement for ballasting the ships coming from the European countries. Some of the cement was furnished by the Alamo Cement Company of San Antonio. The Capitol was built by the Phoenix Syndicate Company of Chicago, who took the contract to build it for three million acres of land. It cost about one and one-half million dollars to build it. Labor was cheap -- common labor was from one dollar and twenty-five cents to one dollar and fifty cents per day. The convict labor cost them fifty cents per day, and the contractor boarded them and furnished the guards.

There were several accidents and deaths while the building was being erected. If an accident happened, it would not get in the papers. If anything happened on one end of the building, we wouldn't hear of it if we were working on the other side. The contractors worked about three or four hundred people on that project from its beginning until it was finished in 1888, and many of the workers were superstitious over the accidents. So the contractors and bosses definitely discouraged any talk about them. There was this one death that I knew of. They had unloaded about twelve cars of rock

on part of the building, and the other derricks couldn't move it away fast enough. The top floor broke through with such a lot of rock on the roof. It went through to the bottom of the basement, crushing a Negro by the name of Tom Gamble. It smashed him all to pieces. It took many men from ten o'clock that night until four o'clock the next morning to get the rock cleared away enough to get the Negro's body out. Then there was a carpenter working on the building whose wife chose that site for his murder. She sent arsenic in his tea and poisoned him one noon. How many more accidents happened, I never knew.

In 1888 they finished the Capitol. When they were just about finished, they began to lay off the rock masons and there were about one hundred of us. That made a lot of unemployed in the city. One could hardly find a job. I looked around to find something to do in my field, but I found nothing. I went to the streetcar company and applied for a job. They put me on, driving a mule car up and down Congress Avenue at twenty-five dollars per month. That wasn't like getting seventy and eighty dollars per month, but I thought a half a loaf was better than nothing.

I hadn't driven very long before my former boss, Mr. Swift, got on my car and handed me a dollar to change for his fare. When I gave him his change, he saw it was me and asked why I wasn't working at the Capitol. I told him that his foreman, Mr. Street, had laid me off. Mr. Swift told me that Street had no right to lay me off, and for me to be back there the next morning to go to work. I told the foreman of the streetcar stable about it, and he advised me to go back and get my job.

The next morning I went to work again on the Capitol. Mr. Swift gave me a piece of work which would take me about six days, but he said if I

didn't make ten days out of it that it would be my own fault. He also said that it would be a tight and dangerous piece of work. Just about the time they were finishing the Capitol, there had come a crack in the dome. This didn't amount to much, but they got uneasy about it and the State Commissioner thought it should be anchored. They sent to New York for an expert architect to get his advice about it. He advised them to drill through the dome on the south side and anchor it with a 6 inch round steel rod. So I had the job to work down in an air shaft, about fifty feet down from the top of the brick dome, cutting in the rock to where they brought the large rod through the wall to anchor the dome.

That first morning, Mr. Swift showed me what to do and gave me two Negro men to help me. A hole had been bored from the southwest of the dome, above the basement, with an auger -- about a 6 inch hole. And it came out at the southeast of the dome. The dome wall is 8 feet thick, of limestone of dimension size -- very large. The walls of the dome are built of limestone rock through the fourth story, and from there to the top of the dome the wall is built of bricks. I and one of my helpers went into the air shaft from the ceiling of the fourth floor, hanging about 40 feet down, with the other helper using a block and tackle to let us up and down. It was a three-cornered air shaft about six feet wide. I worked by lantern light. I had to cut into the dome wall for a channel plate of steel, one inch thick by 24 inches wide, with a hole in the middle for a rod to come through. I had to cut into the dome right smart on one side to get it square. We had a tap, 12 inches square, to fit onto the rod and a wrench made by the blacksmith which weighed about 100 pounds to tighten the rod. It took me and my helper both to lift it up to tighten the bolt or tap. When we finished in the airshaft, I left the 100 pound wrench. I reckon it is still down there yet.

That was a hard job -- the hardest job I ever got into. I had to come up lots of times to get my breath and rest. I had to spend a lot of my time to get fresh air. I finished the dome job in eight days and then worked two more days in the building. Mr. Swift paid me four dollars per day for the work, and that \$40.00 was the last work that I did on the Capitol.

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Work was scarce in 1888. I approached Mayor Joseph Nalle, Austin's mayor from 1888 through 1890, and he gave me some city work to do walling up cisterns. Later he gave me some work repairing the old plastered walls of the Avenue Hotel on Congress. The mayor then asked me how I would like to be an extra policeman. There was going to be an interstate drill at Austin, and there would be a big crowd to handle. I had never been a policeman, but the mayor said that I would be alright. He gave me a note to Captain Luce. I was put on immediately, and worked ten days at the police force. But after only two days I had orders to make no arrests if possible because the city jail was full. So all that I did was wear a badge and a six-shooter and look wise. I thought that was the easiest money I had ever made. Of course, that job played out.

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There was then nothing to do. One of my brothers-in-law lived at Lockhart, and he wrote me to come there to look for work. I talked it over with Bettie and decided to go. When I left Austin this time, I decided to really try making something out of myself. Well, Lockhart was where I started at the foot of the ladder.

I began to get a good deal of jobs building in and around Lockhart. This warranted me starting to handle and sell lime and cement. Soon I began handling brick. Slowly but surely I was

climbing ahead in spite of having practically no education in my youth. I moved my business into town just across the street from Mr. Brown the druggist, and on the Luling Road. At my odd moments I was striving to learn figures and trying to educate myself. I always felt that no man needed to be left behind just because he had no education. I had to learn figures or get out of my business. I learned.

In 1898, Mr. A. L. Brock had me figure how much it would cost to build two buildings out of brick and rock on the northwest corner of the Lockhart square where the Grady Saloon then stood. I gave him an estimate of seven thousand dollars. He said for me to get started right away. The bricks for that building were shipped from Gainsville, Texas. I excavated the basement, and Mr. Brock and I gave the city the fine gravel to pave the square. Common brick cost about ten dollars per thousand, face brick about twelve. A brick mason on that building could make five dollars per day, but he had to be a good brick mason to earn that. I had some good German bricklayers from Austin, but they would have to have their bucket of beer about ten o'clock in the morning and about three o'clock in the afternoon. When they had drunk the beer, they seemed to be revived and did lots of work. Mr. Brock's building was three stories, plus the basement. When I was near finishing the building, Mr. Brock wanted a half moon and seven stars put in the front gable out of white brick. Then he insisted I have my name on the corner in granite. I asked that he put "Birkner Brothers" on the stone, as my brother Otto was just then learning the trade and I thought that would encourage him to stay with it.

Lockhart was building at the turn of the century. The crops were good, and the cotton was coming in from all directions. The gin was busy, everybody seemed happy, and money was in circulation. I built a lot of

buildings, and was running my construction sales business plus a feed store and a woodyard. My wife would take the baby in a baby carriage and come down to the office to take orders for wood and feed and do the selling of the building material. Everybody in the family worked there but father, and he did the running around and kept busy. I had a man by the name of Joe Watt who ran the woodyard for me.

In 1901 there was a terrible accident at my woodyard. My men were cutting wood and splitting it by steam. Joe Watt picked up a stick of wood that was too long by four inches. It struck the balance wheel and the saw burst. It cut Mr. Watt's head right half in two. My man who was running the steam engine was scared so badly that he ran off and left the engine running, and came to get me where I was working on the Shea Building. Mr. Bine Ellison was weighing cotton close by and he ran to stop the engine. I got there then, and it was a sad sight. There lay the body and part of the head. The other part of the head lay about ten feet from the body. I asked someone in the crowd to help me place his head back, but no one would. "Well, gentlemen," I said, "I have to do it." So I picked up the head and placed it back on the body. Mr. Jenkins, our city marshal, then came with a piece of cloth and helped me tie the head on. We moved the body into my office and got Dr. Holt and Mr. Morgan Lane, the undertaker, to help sew the head together. It was a difficult undertaking.

Mr. Watt never knew what killed him, the accident happened so suddenly. The saw threw his brains all over the Mexican who was sitting at the wood splitter. Part of the saw hit the yard of Link Maynard next to the woodyard, just missing by six inches a baby who was playing in the yard.

I bought a cemetery lot next to mine and laid Mr. Watt away nicely. I never turned another wheel in the

woodyard. I sold the plant to Jeff Howard for four hundred fifty dollars and gave the money to Mrs. Watt and her daughter. Mr. Watt, an honest and hard worker, had been working for me for seven years at the time of his death. I lost a mighty good friend, though through no fault of my own. I would sure have prevented the accident if I had been able to.

About three months after the accident, the Lockhart Grocery Company called on me and told me that their roof leaked. I went to examine it. There sticking up through the roof was the part of the hair-covered saw that had killed Mr. Watt. That was what was causing the leak. When the saw burst, it was running with a mighty force to have thrown it that far. We never can tell what will happen in this life.

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That same year I organized a brick company, calling it the Lockhart and Luling Brick Company. The seven stockholders were A. B. Storey, W. S. Vogel, Lish Flowers, Mr. Shinerman, Jim Green Burlison, Hoy Houston, and myself. We bought machinery costing \$15,000, and built the brick plant on Mr. Houston's place outside of Lockhart where the San Antonio and Aransas Pass railroads cross the West Fork. The bricks were stamped on one side with "L & L." We were working about 25 hands at the plant, had a little store there that I furnished out of my store in town, put in a telephone, and had what we called the "L & L Post Office."

I had a very comical German bricklayer named Mike Schwartz working for me then. He had a thick brogue which in itself was funny. He would work until he had made about \$200 and then he always got on a big drunk and blew all of his money on a spree. He would go to Jim Lamb's saloon. He couldn't say "Jim" -- instead he said "Yim." In he would

walk, saying "Yim, give me a drink." Jim would ask him if he had any money. Mike would say, "Yim, you know Goose Birkner? He will pay for it." Jim would give him a drink just to get him to say that. Also, when people saw Mike going down to the depot to come to the brick factory, they would ask him where he was going. He always answered, "Hell and Hell" because he couldn't say "L & L."

But we eventually were losing money on the brick plant because the clay we had would not make a good burn and would not make stable bricks. In 1905 I ended up selling the machinery to the D'Hanis brickworks, where Mr. Charles Wallrath (a German immigrant and brick layer) was making his bricks by hand in wooden molds. I moved to D'Hanis and taught Mr. Carle and Mr. Wallrath how to burn brick. Instead of cash, I took a ten percent interest in the plant and all the bricks I needed for my business.

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In 1919, I was building all over Texas. In September of that year I was working in Sinton when we received warning of a bad storm upcoming. After securing my materials, I told my sons who were working with me in the business that I would go home to San Antonio because their mother would be scared to death. I went home on September 13th, and on the 14th the storm broke loose. It was the 16th before I could get back to Sinton, as every train was jammed with people going down there to see about kinfolk whom they had not heard from. My sons met me at the depot and prepared me for the damage. They said, "You are going to feel pretty bad when you see the damage to your business, but you are going to feel downright lucky when you go to the undertakers and see the dead. None of your men were lost." We went to help at the undertakers. There lay the dead -- about fourteen of them. One of my



sons was making boxes to put them away in. The other son was at White Point helping to pick up the dead. Among the dead at the undertakers was one man named Hal Spicks. He was identified by an initial ring with "H. S." on it, which he had tied to his finger with a string that was then tied around his wrist. Realizing that he was drowning, he had taken a greenback purse from his pocket and tied it around his other wrist, very tight and secure. It contained a \$10,000 life insurance policy. He wanted to be sure that his finders knew who he was. My job was to take whatever I could find that might identify any body and to tack it on the inside of their box. A record of each such thing was written down to be kept for relatives or friends who were attempting to identify the bodies.

When I got through that night with what I had to do, I went back to my hotel. I had left my room previously, not locking it. The hall near my room was full of people lying on the floor. When I entered my room, I saw that not only was my bed full but that the floor was covered with more people. The town was full of folks. One couldn't even get to the depot to buy a ticket. There the floor was covered with Mexicans, because cotton picking season had started at the time the storm came up and there were thousands of Mexicans in the midst of it. It took the railroads about a week to take the Mexican cotton pickers out of Sinton. The cotton fields around there had been as white as snow before the storm, but after it was over the fields were as clean as a swept yard. The smell of dead and decaying human flesh is the most sickening thing that I have ever smelled. I was so sick for three days that I couldn't keep anything on my stomach. Some folks don't know the meaning of hard luck, but those poor people who braved that storm knew.

I had a call to come to Corpus Christi, and I had never seen such a torn-up town. There were about 1,000

people drowned and killed from that storm. The damage was largely from water. It piled houses as high as fifty feet; it rolled them just like balls. Frame buildings broke up like eggshells being crushed in the hand. I went to Rockport also. From the train we could see many chairs, bedsteads, mattresses, and all kinds of furniture hanging on wire fences two miles from the bay. So many cattle, hogs, and horses had been drowned. I hope that we shall never see such storm damage again.

When I got through at Sinton, I told my sons that I would have to give up contracting. The first world war and that storm had finished me. I told them to start contracting themselves, but that I was at my row's end. I contracted no more.

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In November of 1932, when I was about 72 years old, I decided to quit raising hogs. A huge male hog almost got me. He was a terrible fighter. I was in the hog pasture, and he made straight for me. I couldn't get out of his way when he started because I was too far from the fence. I picked up a rock, and when he got close enough I hit him on the forehead and knocked him down. While he was down, I made for the fence and got out of his way. He got up, but I had nearly knocked him out. He had long tusks and would have torn me to pieces if he had ever got hold of me. As I was not so pert as I used to be, I decided then that I was better off trading that hog.

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I noted the following in my diary: "I want to make a complete history of my life, all the way through from month to month and year to year, just as it all happened to me. I should like to let the old and young know what experiences in life I have gone through, and have the world know what I have done to make a living."

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The year that I am writing this is 1940. As the year closes, I thank my God that I am still alive and kicking. I am eighty years old and have been in good health all of my life. My wife and I have been married sixty-one years. I am German and she is Irish. We get along together fine, because the Dutchman is afraid of the Irish anyway! We have had eight children -- three girls and five boys. Five of these are now deceased. We have had our trials and tribulations, but all in all we have had a very good life for which we are grateful.

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*Gus Birkner lived another sixteen years after compiling this memoir. In his nineties he revisited the Capitol, met and was feted by Governor Allan Shivers, appeared in newspaper and magazine articles, and had a resolution in his honor passed by the Texas House of Representatives.*

*In reporting Mr. Birkner's death on June 4, 1956, the Austin newspaper noted "an amazing coincidence." For weeks preceding that date, all exterior lighting on the Capitol had been extinguished for installation of a new floodlight system. On the evening of June 4th, Governor Shivers and Austin Mayor Tom Miller ceremonially flipped the switches and the Capitol was bathed in splendor. Only minutes before, Gus Birkner's death had been reported to his nephew in Austin. Saddened by the news of his passing, the man had walked into his backyard to gaze up at the Capitol building which was his relative's "pride and joy." Just then, the lights came up in unintentional but fitting tribute to Gus Birkner, master mason.*

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## THE HILL COUNTRY GROUP OF G.T.H.S.

## "The Welfare Schoolhouse"

On Tuesday, 15 June 1999, at 4:30 o'clock in the afternoon, schoolmaster Fred Bartel assembled his class of twenty students (all GTHS members and guests) in the old one-room Welfare, Texas, Schoolhouse. The lesson for the day was the history of that building in the rural setting of an old German-Texan community.

Mr. Bartel was a student in this school and received a solid education here. In honor of this class he mowed the schoolyard, raked the sand under the porches, sprayed the wasps nesting under the porch roofs, and raised the U.S. flag on the old flagpole. (I recall that the flag played an important part in the Cherry Springs school I attended. Two boys were assigned weekly to raise the flag every morning and to take it down and neatly fold it at the close of the day. Yes, the pledge of allegiance was regularly recited.) The atmosphere was created to bring back memories for those of us who had attended one-room schools. Once Mr. Bartel's students had settled into the old school desks, he began his presentation.

Originally located on the west side of Joshua Creek, the wooden structure was moved to its present location alongside a major wagon trail near the Welfare General Store. The white paint of the outside is now flaking, and the interior white paint is chipping to reveal a coat of forest green underneath. The Welfare school was a one-room, one-teacher school.

One of the early teachers was F.W. Schweppe, who later became county judge. He had enrolled 14 students in 1897-1898. At that time the school had 8 benches without desks attached. The school term began in November and ended in April. The reason for this was that the children were needed on the farms during the planting and harvesting seasons. Family names of early students enrolled at that time included Hein, Poehnert, Gussler, Ammann, and Stribling.

Mrs. Isa Wray was the teacher in 1901 and was paid a grand salary of \$30 per month. The enrollment had decreased to 11 students, but six new desks had been acquired. Records indicate that the enrollment in 1906 reached a peak of 24, with new names of Weiss, Beseler, Mills, Irvin, Foerster, Franklin, O'Brien, Sultenfuss, Jones, Lampbright, Krause, and Dormiere. That indicates that the German settlement was becoming a mixed culture in this community where cotton was the main economy.

The community enlarged the schoolhouse in 1912 by extending it by approximately eight feet. Parents of students each donated from \$10 to \$15 according to their ability for this addition. Athletic equipment was purchased: a softball and bat, as well as a volleyball and net. Boys also played marbles and girls hopscotch. Unique to this school was that some of the boys played accordion and fiddle during recess and provided music for the other students to dance. How German can one get!

## G.T.H.S. Hill Country Group, "The Welfare Schoolhouse" 2

Behind the teacher's desk hung the blackboard, beside which hangs a selection of pull-down wall maps. A larger blackboard hangs on the side wall of the new addition at the back of the room. The schoolhouse was designed for cross-ventilation with three windows and a door juxtaposed on opposite sides. A large window behind the teacher's desk and a door behind the students' desks allowed additional ventilation. Each long side was protected with a porch. Since school was in session during the cool months, a small wood burning stove stood between the teacher's desk and the students' area. This placement required approximately twenty feet of stovepipe which emitted extra heat into the room. Mr. Bartel recalls that one day, when the fire was roaring, the stovepipe collapsed. A student was dispatched to seek help, and a farmer came with wet burlap sacks to hold the hot pipe and reassemble it.

Storage space was minimal. A very obviously homemade wall closet in the corner by the teacher's desk was for storing books and the few supplies. A smaller closet with shelves at the back door (actually, the front door to the schoolhouse) in the corner was apparently for students to store their lunch cans, coats, etc. The homemade dictionary stand is two-tiered with the flat surfaces made of beaded wood in tongue-in-groove fit. The sides show some effort at converting the plain board edges into a more ornate appearance.

The three doors are all five-panel frame doors. The windows are all prop-up types. Two double windows on each side were added around 1933. The two outhouse on one side of the school ground were typical. The girl's was apparently a two-seater wooden structure with the door facing the building. The boys retreat was sheets of corrugated metal (tin) nailed vertically around a framework, allowing an entrance away from the schoolhouse. (Picture, please, the environmentalist keeling over in a dead faint when they read this!)

The typical curriculum consisted of arithmetic, reading, spelling, writing, and language. Classes were taught at seven different grade-levels. German was the required language at six levels, geography was taught at four levels, history at three, and Texas history at 2 grade-levels. As Mr. Bartel pointed out, if a student didn't get it one year, he didn't fail, because he would be re-exposed to it the following year and could pick it up then.

Students came from as far away as 6 miles to attend the Welfare School. Those who lived within two miles walked to school, and those who lived farther usually rode horses. Students had chores before and after school as part of their family responsibilities. Lunch was usually contained in a metal molasses can with a lid on it. Seven large liveoak trees were spaced around the perimeter of the schoolgrounds. Horses were tied under one against the fence in the corner at the back of the school. The water well was near the entrance of the school. Atop the well sits an old hand-pump. Unique about it is that it does not have a metal handle, but a wooden one. Usually one student pumped and another filled his cup. But, Mr. Bartel pointed out, one could do it alone if one was fast.

## G.T.H.S. Hill Country Group, "The Welfare Schoolhouse"

As in most of the small, rural schools, the Christmas program and the end-of-school program were an integral part in the Welfare School. A wire clothesline was stretched across the room from which homemade curtains hung. During the school term, the curtains were pulled against the wall. For the programs, one student on each side could draw his half to the center to close off an area approximately ten feet deep where the program participants were separated from the audience. Program attendees sat in the students' desks and additional chairs borrowed from whoever could spare one.

At the time the school closed permanently on 25 May 1952, twelve students were in attendance with Erna Dinter as teacher. She was paid \$200 per month. At that time the school had six double desks, but no reference nor resource books. The school was still without electricity, running water and telephone. Records indicate that some of the teachers had entered into their annual reports a need for some of these improvements, but the economy did not allow that expenditure. The school was consolidated with Comfort I.S.D. and most children from the Welfare area then attended school in Comfort.

After Mr. Bartel graciously dismissed his class for the day, the "students" departed for Po Po's Restaurant for dinner and lively conversation. Mr. and Mrs. Bartel remained behind to close the building and take down the flag, like a loving and dutiful teacher. Mr. Bartel is fond of the building and is working to get a historical marker for it and to preserve it for future generations.

After dinner among the walls hung with hundreds of plates at Po Po's, the group motored to Boerne for after-dinner entertainment on The Square of Boerne by the Boerne Village Band. The sounds of German "Blasmusik" were relaxing. None of the group, however, had enough energy to join in the "chicken dance", but quietly watched younger attendees perform this added entertainment. Then came quick "Auf Wiedersehns" as lawn chairs were lugged back to the cars and the drive home ended the pleasant day.

by James E. Feuge  
The Hill Country Group of The German-Texan Heritage Society.



## BIRD ON BEER

# La Grange has old hometown brewery

By **SCOTT BIRDWELL**

A few months ago we discussed the Spoetzl Brewery in Shiner, and how the brewery grew from its modest beginnings to its stature today as one of the largest regional breweries in the country.

Spoetzl was, unfortunately, the exception and not the rule for hometown breweries in Texas. In the late 1800s, there were dozens of small breweries servicing the burgeoning population of Texas.

Immigrants from Europe were accustomed to drinking beer as their daily beverage, and with a large contingent of these immigrants from Germany and Bohemia, the demand was for fresh beer. As a consequence, small hometown breweries sprang up in virtually every settlement in Texas from Bastrop to Port Arthur.

Most of these disappeared, however, as the railroads arrived bringing in cheap, high-quality lager beers from San Antonio, Dallas, Houston, New Orleans, St. Louis, and Milwaukee. The few hometown breweries that were able to stave off the tough competition did not survive Prohibition, which shuttered Texas breweries in 1920. Except for the Spoetzl Brewery, none of these small-town breweries re-opened after the repeal of Prohibition in 1933.

Most of these long forgotten breweries are just dusty footnotes in the annals of local libraries and brewing history books. But in the small town of La Grange, about two hours west of Houston, are the remains of the Kreische Brewery preserved as a State Historic Site.

Heinrich Kreische immigrated to Texas from Germany in 1846 and settled in La Grange in Fayette County. Kreische was a stonemason by trade and built several buildings in town, including the county jail and courthouse. He lived just outside of town on a bluff overlooking the Colorado River. Kreische decided to tap into the pent-up demand for beer and change his occupation to brewing in the 1860s. He was in the enviable position of being able to build his own brewery, which he did around 1870.

The Kreische Brewery was a large one for the period, and by 1878 had grown to be the third largest in the state. Kreische's brewery design was an ingenious one. It was a three-story, traditional gravity-flow design. The bottom two stories were built into the side of a hill and were made of sandstone. The top story was made of wood and was the visible part of the building.

The inventive part of his design was the way the brewery was cooled. Lacking mechanical refrigeration, Kreische built a barrel-arched vault on top of a cold spring and discovered that if he limited his brewing to the 10 coolest months of the year, he could maintain lager brewing temperatures.

In addition, Kreische built a beer garden on his bluff and opened the Union Beer Hall in town to retail his product for 5 cents a glass. Legend has it that when a new batch of brew was ready to be tapped, he would run up a banner on the bluff on which were inscribed the words *Frisch Auf*, or "Freshen Up! Look Alive!" This slogan gave the name traditionally associated with the brewery.

Kreische died in March 1882, probably from an accident he suffered some months earlier when he had been crushed by a wagon loaded with stone. Without Kreische's leadership, the brewery declined rapidly, and by 1884 had ceased production. His beautiful brewery fell into disrepair.

In 1977, the state of Texas bought the property that houses the brewery and now the deterioration has been stabilized. Today the only intact room from the brewery is the large underground vaulted room. There is a state park store and mini-museum in which brewery artifacts are displayed. The site is a beautiful one and even longtime Texas residents may find it hard to believe that they are only 100 miles or so from Houston.

In addition to the brewery, visitors will find the restored Kreische family home and Monument Hill, where the remains of the Texas heroes from the infamous Black Bean Incident are buried.

This is well worth the trip for brewery buffs. The park entrance is about a half-mile west of State Highway 77 on Spur 92. Call 409-968-5678 for details. Ironically, you will have to confine your beer drinking to outside the brewery ruins. This is a state historical site, and alcoholic beverages are not allowed.

Until next time, grab a pint of your favorite brew and *Frisch Auf!*

Bird on Beer appears on the first and third Fridays of each month. Scott Birdwell is a master judge in the Beer Judge Certification Program and proprietor of DeFalco's Homebrew Supplies. Mail should be addressed to Scott Birdwell, c/o Houston Chronicle Dining Guide, P.O. Box 4260, Houston, Texas 77210. Or you can reach him through his Web site at [www.insync.net/~defalco/](http://www.insync.net/~defalco/).

## Hog Killing Time

Hog Killing Time was planned according to the expected weather conditions. The weather had to be cold as there was no refrigeration on the farm. Preparations were started several days before the actual event. The smoke house had to be cleaned out and the counter along one wall had to be scrubbed clean as well as the table that was used to cure the bacon and ham. All the crock jars were scrubbed clean. Every smoke house in our area had these two items as well as two poles suspended from the rafters where the sausages could be hung. The poles were usually old cotton hoe handles, broom handles etc., anything that had no sharp edges. After a butchering day was set, the next trip to town required that a 25 lb sack of salt was bought as well as a set of sausage casings. A "set" was usually the small intestines of one large calf which was more than enough for the sausage for one hog. We usually bought a ball of sausage string also.

We had one iron kettle and when we butchered, we usually borrowed Grammie's kettle, her sausage grinder and sausage stuffer. One other preparation was to sharpen all the butcher knives. They were usually not too sharp because we had used them to cut heigera heads the summer before to feed the laying hens, but that is another story. As part of the preparation we took the wagon, and later years, the tractor and trailer into the pasture and hauled up some wood for the kettle fires.

Hog butchering was a community affair. When we butchered, Grammie and Ray would help and sometimes Robert and Velma Grauke. I got to stay home from school on butchering days. When the Striddes butchered, they usually butchered two hogs and a calf so they had to have a lot of help. They also took the sausage meat to town to have it ground.

When the day finally arrived we got up very early. We set the kettles on bricks, filled them with water and started the fires. After that we ate breakfast and did the normal chores such as feed the chickens, milk the cows and feed whatever else was hungry. When the help arrived and the water was getting hot it was time for the execution. Daddy always used his single shot .22 that he ordered from Sears and Roebucks when he was young. He went to the pen by himself as to not arouse suspicion among the hogs. When he could get a straight shot between the eyes, usually one shot did it. As the hog dropped he would immediately take our long butcher knife and cut the hogs throat. By that time Mamma would be there with a pan with some salt in it and they would catch the blood in the pan. Mom would stir it and take it to the smoke house and put it on a shelf for later use. Depending on which pen the hog was in we would put a rope on him and pull him through a small gate and roll him on to a slide. I haven't seen a slide in many years but everyone used to have one. Ours was made of two mesquite poles about 5 feet long and had 2 x 6 lumber nailed across them. In the front was a chain about 3 ft long with one end attached to each of the mesquite poles. The hog would be rolled onto the slide to be pulled to the smoke house area. The slide was pulled near the kettles. We usually used the car because it was too much trouble to harness a pair of mules. In

later years (after 1945) we used the tractor. It was a Farmall Model B bought new from Marrou Brothers after the war.

It was now time to scrape the hair off the hog. Hot water was poured over the hog slowly to loosen the hair. If the water was not hot enough the hair would not come off and if it was too hot it cooked the outer skin. The temperature of the water was critical. This was a backbreaking job, but it was early and everyone had plenty of energy. When the hog was completely scraped, he was white no matter what color he was before. The outer layer of skin came off with the hair.

He was now ready to be dressed. We had a big mesquite tree that would support the hog. They usually weighed about 400 to 500 lbs. and were usually about a year old when we butchered them. They would have more meat in the bacon and hams if they were older. The slide was pulled under the tree and then the tendons of the back of the back legs were exposed. A single tree's outer hooks were hooked under these tendons and then the "wire stretcher" which was a small 4 pulley block and tackle, was hung in the tree and the free end was hooked in the center hook of the single tree. Two or three of us would pull the hog up to clear the ground. Dad usually gutted the hog. A cut was made down the center of the animal and the body orifices were cut around and tied with string so as not to contaminate the meat. Very carefully the intestines were exposed and two people held a wash tub in position to catch all that came out. The tub was set aside for the time being. Now it was time for the head to be removed. Dad cut all the way around the neck and then started cutting deeper until he reached the spine. He would hold the feet and two of us would start twisting the head until the spine cracked. That freed the head and it was put in a dish pan and taken to a table outside the smoke house where Grammie and Mom would start cleaning it. They removed the eyes, lips and ears and discarded them. The jowls and some of the meat was removed and then the skull was sawed in half. The brains were exposed and put into a bowl to be mixed with scrambled eggs and all fried together for supper.

One of the kettles was cleaned out and water was added and fire was built under it. The skull and all the head meat was cooked along with the liver and kidneys. When this cooled all the meat was removed from the bones and then ground. The meat was usually divided in half and seasoned with salt & pepper. Ground up liver was added to one half to make liver sausage and blood was added to the other half to make blood sausage. It was usually Grammie and my job to clean some of the large intestines in which to stuff the blood sausage. We took a bucket of warm water and a dipper, as well as the tub of intestines and a knife and went into the pasture. Lengths of large intestines were cut and the contents squeezed out and then water was poured into them until they were thoroughly washed. For the liver sausage we used the regular sausage casings.

While this was going on, Dad was finishing his job with the carcass. Remember that I said that the head had been removed. He then took a saw and cut the sternum or breast bone. That freed the two halves in front. He then took an old butcher knife and a hammer and cut the ribs on each side of the backbone using the hammer to drive the knife through the rib bones. A string was tied around the tail before he finished cutting and



some one held the backbone as he finished cutting the ribs. This backbone was then hung in the smoke house. Later the fat and skin was trimmed off and the backbone was cut into small pieces to be boiled or roasted. Mom even canned them sometimes in quart fruit jars with the pressure cooker.

Now we have two halves hanging. Two men would each put his arm around each half and together they would walk forward so as to have the halves start to go over their shoulder. When they got into position, the tendons that the single tree was under, were cut and the half draped to the rear over their shoulder. They would then walk into the smoke house and place them on the counter along the wall.

At this point the ribs were trimmed out. Everyone had two nails sticking out of one wall where a large piece of paper was stuck onto the nails and then the ribs were hung on the nails for later processing. Now the hams were removed and the shoulders were separated. The bacon was cut out of the best part of the piece that was left. The hams were trimmed and the legs taken off. After the bacon and hams were trimmed, the small table that I referred to at the beginning of this writing, was covered with about a half inch of salt and the bacon and hams were placed on this salt. Then they were covered with salt which starts the curing process. Liquid would drip out and run off the table. In a day or two the hams and bacon were removed. The salt was removed and the table was cleaned and a new layer of salt was added. This was done several times depending on their size and weather conditions. When no more liquid was observed, they were washed off with hot water and hung up with the sausage and smoked along with the sausage. This part of the process usually took about a week.

The shoulders were usually cut up for sausage. All the fat was separated from the red meat. The fat was cut into cubes about an inch square and the red meat was cut into pieces small enough to go into the sausage grinder. It was my job to cut up the fat. On a typical day, by the time this was done it was about 4:00 PM. One of the kettles was cleaned out and the fat was put in with about a gallon of water, and then a fire was started. As the fat got hot enough to release some lard, the water evaporated. On a typical day, the lard finished cooking after dark. It was cooked until the cubes were a golden brown. When it was done, the fat was dipped out and strained into a bucket. It was then taken into the smoke house and poured into clean crock containers. These held 5, 10, 15, 25 gallons.

While this was going on, someone was grinding the sausage meat. When it was ground it was placed on a table and leveled. It would be about 3 inches thick. Dad would put a thick layer of salt and pepper on it and then cut out several small samples and mix it in a dish pan. We would place a patty of it in a frying pan and go to the kettle where there were some coals of fire. We would set it down on the coals to cook. When it was cooked everyone was offered a taste to determine if the right amount of seasoning had been added. At this point, since it was not mixed up, some could be removed if necessary (I never saw that happen) or some could be added. When it passed the taste test, small amounts were removed and thoroughly mixed. I failed to mention that sometime during

the morning, the set of sausage casings were unwrapped and soaked in warm water. In the afternoon, they were washed and cut into the proper lengths for the sausage rings. After they were cut one end was tied with string. The first time I saw how the string was cut to the same length, I was impressed. The string was wrapped around a quart fruit jar and then a knife was used to cut through the coil of string on one side. This made the string the proper length to tie the sausage. The sausage stuffer was washed and then nailed down to a table. This was usually done inside the smoke house as it was after dark and cold outside. Dad would always make the sausage and I would turn the stuffer. He would place one of the sausage casings that was tied on one end, over the spout of the stuffer and then I would turn the stuffer until he said to stop and the casing was full. He would hold the sausage while someone tied the free end and then they would tie the two strings together, making a ring. These rings were placed in a wash tub. There was a lot of "hollering" if I didn't stop turning in time or the casing broke.

By this time of night, everyone was worn out from a very long and hard day. The "help" usually went home before dark to do their feeding and other things at their farms. Sometimes they would come back after dark if there was a lot of work to do. When all the sausage was stuffed, the rings were hung upside down on the sausage sticks and placed on the poles hanging from the rafters. When everyone was out of the smoke house, a pan or bucket of coals was placed in the smoke house and chips from the wood pile were used to cover the coals to make smoke. The smoke house was closed up for the night. By the next day the casings are dry enough after one more smoking to be turned over and hung by the strings. The blood sausage and liver sausage was not smoked.

That ended a very long day of work. The next morning things would be picked up and cleaned. Sometimes, Mom would make a kettle of soap out of the skin and all the scraps. Occasionally, she would make some mild soap from the fat that came from around the intestines. This was called leaf lard.

After about a month or more the sausage, bacon and ham was packed into crock jars and was covered with liquid lard. Later it was taken out one at a time and eaten. Hopefully this supply of meat would last until the next year when the process was repeated.

This is my recollection of hog killing.

Edgar Gene Neuse  
Born January 3, 1936  
Gonzales, Texas  
Son of Eugene E. Neuse and Elizabeth Marie Buchholtz



# Sister city trip could result in benefits for Tomball students

BY MARK QUICK  
Staff Writer

Returning full of praise for Tomball's sister city of Telgte, Germany, a delegation of 13 civic and community leaders is fired up about the potential for cultural and educational exchanges between the two cities.

The group, which included Tomball City Manager Warren Driver, Tomball ISD Assistant Superintendent Kit Pfeiffer, Tomball College President Diane Troyer and Tomball Area Chamber of Commerce President Bruce Hillegeist, traveled to Telgte from Sept. 9 to 17 as part of an ongoing sister city relationship.

The relationship began two years ago as an effort to foster civic, cultural, educational and business exchanges between Tomball and Telgte under the leadership of local resident and Tomball Rotary Club member Chris Tiews.

While in Germany the Tomball delegation toured schools, colleges, businesses, manufacturing plants and churches; attended city council; met with chamber of commerce leaders; and took in sights and sounds.

Of the recent trip, Troyer told the Tomball City Council, "I have had the most incredible week."

She said the Tomball delegation was treated like "royalty" by their German hosts.

"We gained great insight into their educational, cultural, political, religious and daily lives."

Troyer believes students in Tomball schools and Tomball College will see great benefits from the burgeoning educational partnership between the sister cities.

"Immediately I could see Tomball ISD sixth- and seventh-grade students interacting with students in Telgte via e-mail," she said.

Work is also beginning on faculty exchanges, cultural exchanges and involvement by the Tomball College theater department.

Troyer said the goal is to "connect our college students with their college and senior students."

She said she already knows of two or three German students who want to come to Texas and attend Tomball College.

Their primary motivation is developing greater fluency in English, says Troyer.

She said two of the students are interested in international busi-



**GUESTS.** Tomball sister city delegates pose with their host families during a visit to Telgte, Germany Sept. 9-17



**EDUCATION.** Tomball ISD Assistant Superintendent Kit Pfeiffer, standing, visits with students in Telgte, Germany. Seated at the table are Tomball Councilwoman Diane Holland, far left, and Tomball College President Diane Troyer, second from left.

ness. They need to spend a year or two in the states to strengthen their English skills.

Troyer said the sister city relationship "will help our students understand the whole world in which they will live and work and will expand and broaden their perspective."

Kit Pfeiffer sees great things on the horizon for Tomball kids as well.

She mentioned pen pals, e-mail and common study of "things we celebrate here and they celebrate there (holidays and family traditions for example). There is opportunity for common study from the

little ones on up to high school and beyond."

She said, "The greatest benefit for all of us will come from the ability to see on a first hand basis that you may be five or six thousand miles apart but good people are good people wherever they are."



# Sister City Delegation returns from Telgte with high praise for the German people

Tomball - Tomball's Sister City Delegation returned from Telgte, Germany September 17.

After a busy but enjoyable eight-day visit the delegation had many positive comments about the German people and the proposed sister city arrangement.

"I think we've made forever friends," said Committee member Mary Lou Bogs.

Tomball ISD Assistant Superintendent Kit Pfeiffer said the trip spawned many ideas for projects between the two cities.

"I see it working like a pebble in the water creating the ripples."

Currently 33 projects have sprung out of the relationship between Tomball and Telgte.



Tomball Sister City Delegates pose in front of a German Water Castle during their recent trip to Telgte, Germany.



Telgte's Bergermeister Klaus Beck and Tomball's Mayor Pro Tem Diane Holland.



Some of Tomball's delegation posing in a German garden.

*"It was out of this world, the people were so gracious."*

Committee Member Mary Lou Bogs



Above: Tomball City Councilman Homer Ford gives a thumb up before he soars over Germany.

*"It was really God blessed from the start."*

Sister City Chair Christian Tiews

At right: delegates from Tomball join their German hosts for a tour of Winkhaus Technik, a lock manufacturing plant.



Bruce Hillegeist Photos

### **Soon to be Sister Cities: Tomball, Texas, and Telgte, Germany**

By early 2000, Tomball, Texas, and Telgte, Germany, will be sister cities – bringing the total of German-Texan twin city pairs to well over a dozen. From my point of view, as initiator of the partnership and someone who has lived in both countries, the marriage between these two cities is a natural. Most of the settlers in central Texas in the 1840s were from the area we now know as Germany, and local Tomball names such as Klein, Hillegeist, Bogs, Theiss or Buvinghausen give testimony to this fact (there is even a Telge Road in Tomball -- “Telge” meaning “young oak” in Old German).

On the other hand, Germans have historically been fascinated with America, especially Texas and the “Wild West”, just ask Karl May -- or Buffalo Bill, for that matter, who made sure he toured Germany when he brought his shows to Europe in the 1880’s. Each town (situated 35 miles northwest of Houston, and 15 km east of Münster, respectively) complements and benefits the other. Other similarities are the landscape (but not the weather) and the fact that both towns are in “horse country”.

In the past few years, Tomball’s booming economy has increasingly focused on high-tech (Compaq’s world HQ being right next door), whereas for quaint Telgte, founded in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and straight out of picture book Germany, this partnership could well result in accelerating its push into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Case in point, one of the over 50 citizen-driven projects between the two involves creating a “distance learning intranet”, linking Tomball College and “Treffpunkt Telgte” – so students in Telgte will be able to take online information technology classes with Tomball instructors, and citizens of Tomball will learn German from native speakers in the heart of the Münsterland. What’s more, Telgte provides citizens of German stock living in

the Tomball area who haven't been able to locate their ancestral roots, with a "virtual Heimatstadt" (Speaking of which, you can find Telgte on the web under [www.telgte.de](http://www.telgte.de)).

Establishing a sister city for your town is a two-track process. Citizen – and city government -- support is essential and over time should generate dozens of projects covering as wide a spectrum of the respective society as possible: education, business, churches, sports, etc. One "traditional" way to get started (as was the case here, and also with Houston – Leipzig) is to research whether an international club, preferably located in both cities (such as Rotary or Lions) can arrange high school student exchanges. Involving the Chambers of Commerce, media and other high-profile entities is also a good idea. Ideally, the partnership should touch the hearts, minds and imagination of the citizenry in both towns. Another important aspect (and opposite approach taken by the two cultures) is how to finance such a partnership. In the U.S., private or corporate sponsorship is much more prevalent than in Germany, where activities of this sort are usually funded by the city. Incidentally, Telgte has also created its own steering committee, the "Freundeskreis Tomball", which, as does its Texan counterpart, strives to coordinate the various sister city activities launched by its citizens.

From the initial proposal to the signing of the actual partnership agreement took roughly two years, during which about half a dozen delegations, both large and small, traveled back and forth. In September 1999, 13 delegates from Tomball, including the mayor pro tem, city manager, two council members, the president of Tomball College, assistant superintendent of Tomball Independent School District, senior pastor of Tomball's largest church, president of the sister city advisory committee and others, traveled to Telgte for a one-week visit of their future twin city. Telgte truly rolled out the red carpet and provided an in-depth view of their education system, businesses, government and religious structure, sweetened with a good measure of sightseeing



and local culture. The delegation made front-page news every day. This tour mirrored a similar visit by Telgte's mayor and two other officials to Tomball in February 1999. In both cases, the goal was to provide a representative snapshot of various aspects of life in the future "Partnerstadt".

As chairman of Tomball's Sister City Advisory Committee, I am extremely grateful for the enthusiasm this project has met with on both sides of the Atlantic. I believe we are doing God's work in bringing two cultures together that have so much to offer one another. And at the same time, we're having a lot of fun while we're at it.

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## Delegation embarks for Germany this week

By John Urrey  
Tribune staff

Tomball - Almost two years after talk of a sister city agreement with Germany began, a delegation from the Tomball area is heading for German soil. Fourteen people will travel to Tomball's proposed sister city Telgte, Germany September 9-17. Delegates include Tomball City Manager Warren Driver, Software Specialist and Sister City Promoter

Chris Tiews, Tomball City Council Members Diane Holland and Homer Ford, Tomball Area Chamber of Commerce President Bruce Hill-geist, Tomball College President Diane Troyer, Tomball ISD Assistant Superintendent Kit Pfeiffer, Salem Lutheran Church Senior Pastor Wayne Graumann and Sister City Committee Members Charles and Mary Lou Bogs plus various family members.

Continued - See Trip on Page 13

*"The thing that I think we were all impressed with was the courtesy and the graciousness with which we were received."*

City Manager Warren Driver

*"The people made you feel like they really wanted you there."*

City Councilman Homer Ford

## Trip to Germany

The trip will include numerous visits to points of interest in Telgte, the neighboring town of Muenster and the surrounding area. This is at least the second trip by Tomball area residents to the sister city but the first trip sanctioned by the Tomball City Council. This reciprocal visit comes seven months after representatives of Telgte made an official visit to Tomball last February.

The City of Tomball, however, will not spend any money on the trip. Numerous donations from individuals and at least 12 companies will fund the voyage.

"I'm extremely grateful and humbled that our goal of creating a citizen-driven group has come to pass," said Tiews who first suggested the sister city project in 1997. The idea has enjoyed strong support

on both sides of the Atlantic. There is heavy coverage of the project in German newspapers, even in towns other than Telgte, and local support of the idea has preceded official approval. Although neither city has made the arrangement official, there are already efforts to establish a pen pal program, a distance learning program at Tomball College, teacher and student exchanges, horsemanship instruction, Christian teen camps and more. Tiews is happy that the citizens of both towns have given their stamp of approval to the effort.

"The citizens have voted with their passports and wallets," he said. Tiews added that he and others hope to get local churches involved in an international youth rally in October of 2000. Approximately 50 German youth and hundreds of local youths

**Continued from Page 1**

would be involved in a rally much like the upcoming Tomball Area Day of Prayer. Tiews wants even more aspects of the sister city program to develop.

"In light of globalization, this is the wave of the future," he said. "Borders are falling. The world is one big neighborhood."

Tiews also said support for the program is more than he expected.

"We're very grateful and very fortunate that God pointed us in the right direction," said Tiews.

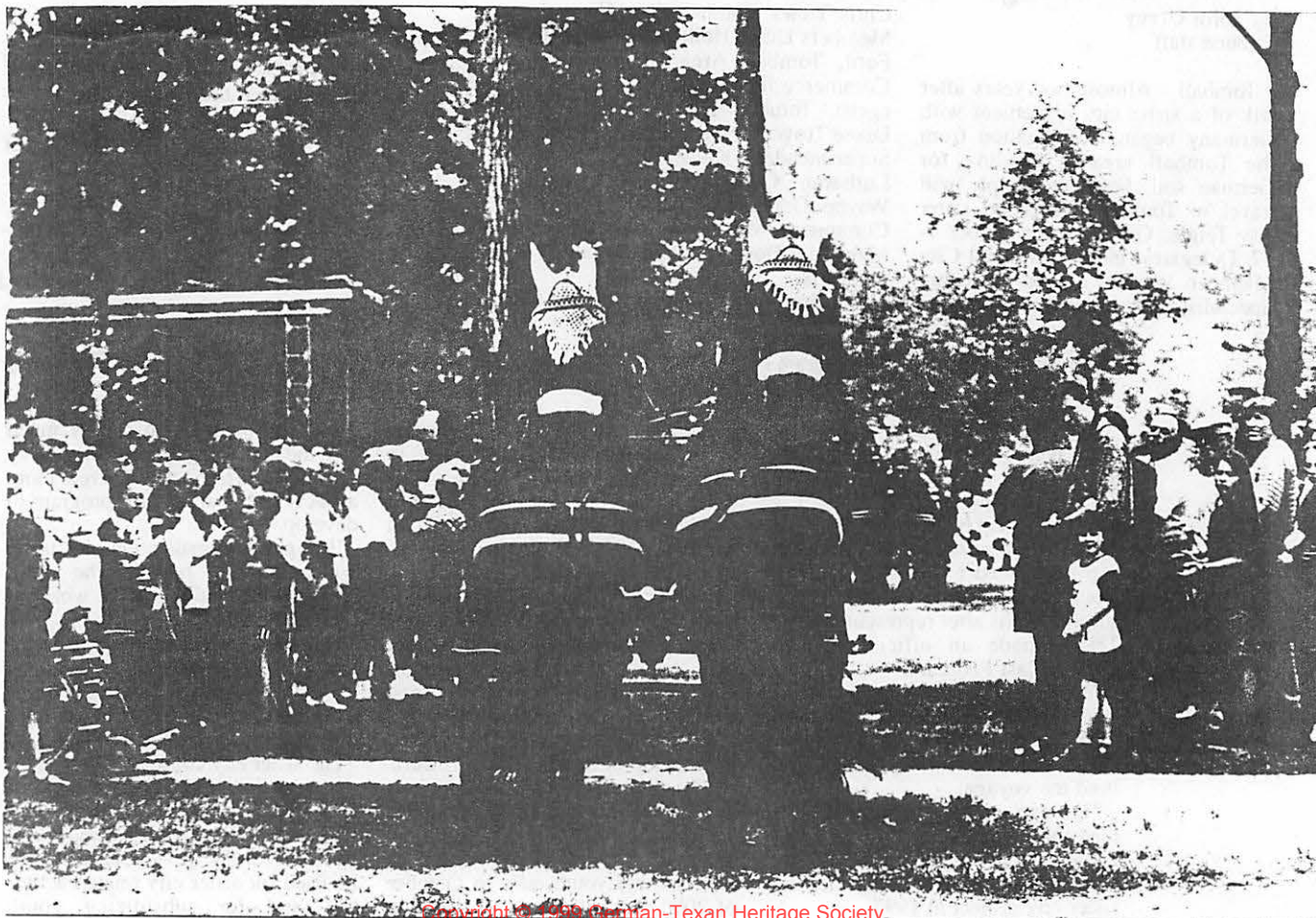
The sister city committee continues to accept donations, payable to Sister City Committee, in care of Tomball City Hall, 401 Market Street. Funds not used for the trip to Germany will be used for sister city related activities and for subsidizing youth exchanges.

## TELGTE DIE SYMPATHISCHE STADT

*Seit Jahrhunderten ist sie Kernpunkt vieler Siegel und Wappen:  
Die „TELGE“ (junge Eiche), die dem Ort, 13 km östlich von  
Münster gelegen, seinen Namen gibt.*

*Wer hat 1238, dem Jahr, in dem Telgte zur „Stadt“ erklärt wurde,  
wohl daran gedacht, daß der Symbolcharakter der Eiche, nämlich  
Kraft, Bodenständigkeit und stetiges Wachstum, so deutlich das Sein  
und Werden der Stadt Telgte bestimmen würde?*

*Schauen wir sie uns einmal an, die sympathische Stadt mit  
Charakter, nicht aus dem Boden gestampft, sondern langsam  
gewachsen und mit viel Tradition.*





# Display showcases German immigrants

By RAY WESTBROOK  
Avalanche-Journal

German immigrants have been driving stakes across the Llano Estacado for 120 years, and now their exploits will be placed on display in the International Cultural Center at Texas Tech.

A national exhibit called "The Contributions of German Immigrants to American Agriculture," will open Thursday at the center, and may be seen at no admission cost from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. each weekday through Oct. 12.

Developed five years ago in the Northeast by Germany's Embassy and the Agricultural Art and Science Foundation, it is on its first visit to Texas. Subsequently, the 55-panel exhibit will travel to three other cities in the state to show how German immigrants influenced agriculture across the United States.

Meredith McClain, Tech professor and director of the Southwest Center for German Studies, obtained a grant from the German government to bring the display here. She is organizing its tour of Texas through her membership in the German-Texas Heritage Society, and is preparing a sign-up sheet at the exhibit where families of German ancestry may express an interest in adding to the exhibit.

Local scholars, assisted by panel development specialists at the Southwest Collection, will add two Llano Estacado panels that feature Crosby County pioneer Hank Smith and Slaton's Catholic legend, Father Joseph Reisdorff.

A third panel also will be constructed locally at the direction of McClain. It will introduce Karl May, a prolific German writer who visited the United States but never physically saw the Staked Plains that he brought to life for Germany through the imagery of language.

"Even though he wasn't ever here, he is the one who planted the Texas seed in the German soul," McClain explained.

According to McClain, Smith dug the first water well on the Llano Estacado by hand. He used it to water a wide variety of grape vines and fruit trees that he was experimenting with.

Smith, a native of Germany, was an entrepreneur and frontiersman who moved to the Crosby County area in 1877. His granddaughter, Georgia Mae Ericson, still lives on some of the ranchland where her grandfather raised cattle.

Ericson said that except for camps, there were no residents between Fort Worth and Lincoln County in New Mexico at the time her grandfather moved to the Llano Estacado.

He died before she was born, but she remembers her grandmother, who had moved to the United States from Scotland.

"She was younger than my grandfather. Hank Smith was born in 1836, and my grandmother was born in 1848. She came to America in 1868, and he came in 1848."

Karl May, Ericson said, wrote about a character such as her grandfather, and called him Old Shatterhand.

"Now the Germans feel that this is where

that he was who Old Shatterhand was."

McClain said Reisdorff came to the Llano Estacado as a colonizer, building Catholic communities across the Staked Plains.

"He started with Nazareth. The second became Umbarger, and the third is Slaton," she explained.

"There is an orderliness and a tenacity" about the German immigrants, McClain said of their nature.

"The overriding characteristic of German farmers is something you can see. It is very evident even down in the hill country where there is such a dense population. People drive down around Fredericksburg and New Braunfels, and they always comment on the tidiness of the fields and the houses that belong to the Germans."

McClain hopes to add as many as nine panels to the display through the input provided by this area's German descendants by the time the display closes.

An exhibits and outreach program at the Southwest Collection has done much of the work in building the local panels. It cooperates with exhibit sponsors through a special library committee.

"Our panels should join, in a few years, other panels made in other parts of Texas so that eventually we have a German-Texan agricultural exhibit," McClain said.

She believes the Texas panels can become a part of the national exhibit also, and will help facilitate getting the German-Texan panels added on to that.

The national exhibit will go to California after its Texas tour, then to the state of Washington. In the year 2002 the entire exhibit is scheduled to go to Germany for the first time.

Ray Westbrook can be contacted at 766-8711 or [rwestbrook@lubbockonline.com](mailto:rwestbrook@lubbockonline.com).



Provided by Crosby County Pioneer Memorial Museum

**The first settlers of Crosby County were known to later residents as Uncle Hank and Aunt Hank Smith. They are shown seated by a wagon. Their granddaughter, Georgia Mae Ericson, still lives on some of the land they settled.**



## SHANTY-CHOR HOUSTON

by Franz Schoennagel

A German shanty choir has existed in Houston, Texas, since 1993. This group may be the first or only serious male choir in the United States that sings sea shanties in High German and Low German (Plattdeutsch). The popularity of shanty singing has been increasing in northern Germany, including the former East German provinces, during the past two decades. With it, there has been a rise in the number of shanty choirs, (written "Shanty-Chor", in the singular, in German). This contagion has spread to Texas, where the "Shanty-Chor Houston" was formed by male singers in the Houston Liederkranz in late 1993.

The rise in popularity of shanty singing may have something to do with a return to its roots. During the 1950's and 1960's sea shanties in Germany were being recorded by semi-professional groups, such as the "Polizei-Chöre" (police choirs) of Hamburg and Kiel. But these recordings were far too grandiose, with special arrangements, orchestral accompaniments, and four-part harmonies sung by large male choirs. By returning to more simple arrangements and fewer instruments, resembling shanty singing done in the nineteenth century, the newer smaller shanty choirs found that the fun of singing shanties could be enjoyed by many more people.

What are sea shanties? In their purest form they are the work songs sung on board the large merchant sailing ships of the past. Work tasks at the sails, pumps, and anchor each had their own special songs. The tasks required a team of men pulling or pushing together, and the rhythm of the music was synchronized with the cadence of the work. In some places, such as the West Indies and southern American ports, shanties were sung by the dockworkers as they loaded and unloaded ships. The heyday of shanty singing coincided with the peak of merchant sailing, that is, from the end of the Napoleonic wars (1815) until the 1880's. However, shanties were being sung as work songs on German merchant sailing ships as late as the 1950's. During the late nineteenth century, electric motors began to replace hand power on the deck. This, and the replacement of sails by coal and steam power, eliminated the need for shanty singing.

Shanty singing was restricted to commercial sailing ships. Such singing was subdued somewhat on passenger ships, so as to preserve the peace and quiet of passengers and to shield them from racy lyrics. Shanty singing was not done in the military navies of the world; it was forbidden on warships.

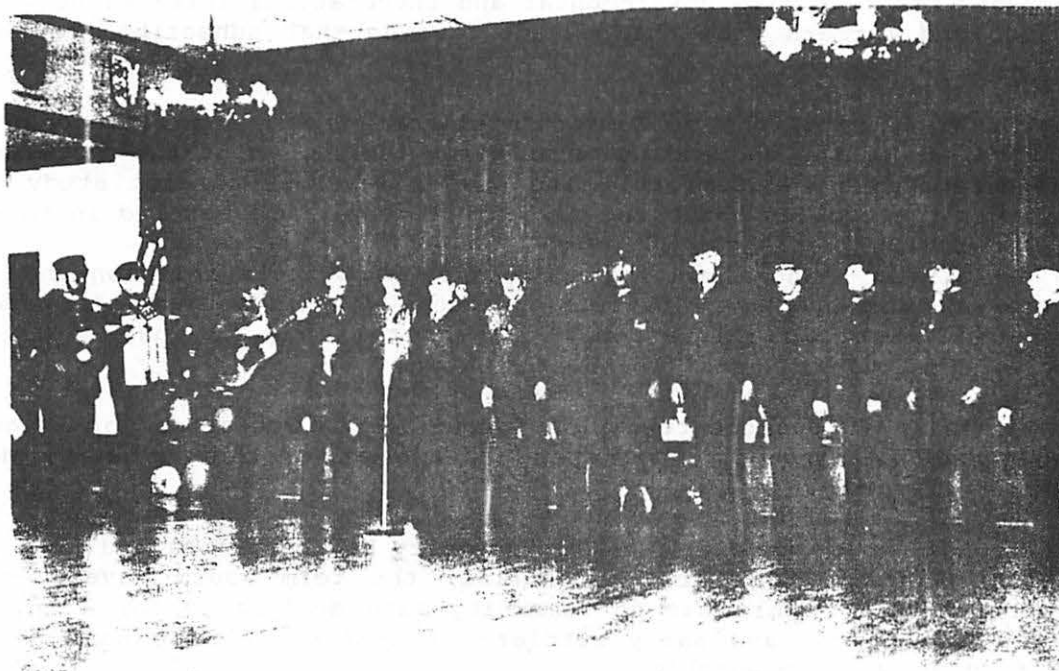
Shanty singing and its accompanying work were led by the shantyman ("Vorsänger" in German). The shantyman sings a solo line or two (e.g. "Ick heff mol en Hamborger Veermaster sehn"), and the crew responds with "to my hoodah..." and, in the chorus, "Blow, boys, blow for Californio...." Note that in this song the Vorsänger sings in Low German (Plattdeutsch) and the crew responds in English, which is the case for a number of German sea shanties.

The repertoires of shanty choirs nowadays include shore songs. Shore songs were sung in the harbor taverns for entertainment and usually did not lend themselves to the work on board. Such songs are not led by a shantyman; both verse and refrain are sung by all. Many are in three-quarter time, and this makes them sound more like sing-a-long songs than work songs. Shore songs were popular with German and Scandinavian sailors, in particular, for entertainment on shore and aboard.

In 1993, members of the Houston Liederkrantz mixed choir were part of the Chorgemeinschaft Texas, which visited Glückstadt and Hamburg in northern Germany. The Chorgemeinschaft Texas, composed of singers from German-Texan clubs in Austin, Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio, was hosted by the Chorgemeinschaft "Lied-Hoch", which was composed of singers from the two German cities as well as a number of smaller towns nearby. The male singers from the choirs of these north German towns had formed a shanty choir as a sidelight to their concert performances and for the enjoyment of the Texans.

It was this German sea-shanty singing that inspired Gary Fritsche and other singers from the Houston Liederkrantz to form a German "Shanty-Chor" when they returned to Houston. Gary's vision involved using the special talents of particular Liederkrantz members that are suited to German shanty singing. As shantymen, two north German immigrants, Frank von Possel and Wolfgang Heuer, were recruited. Both are familiar with Low German; Frank even served in the German merchant marine in the 1950's. Bill Schneider on button accordion and Ed Ranostaj on piano accordion provide melodic accompaniment. Horst Britsche, Wolfgang Heuer, and Frank von Possel play rhythm guitars. About 15 men, directed by Franz Schoennagel, comprise the male chorus. The group calls itself "Shanty-Chor Houston".

The repertoire of this group consists of shanties and sailors' songs in Low German, High German, and English. Even the English and American songs sung by this group come from German songbooks and are being sung by the shanty choirs of Germany. Preliminary inquiry to singers of the Nordamerikanischer Sängerbund suggests that the six-year old Shanty-Chor Houston may be the only serious German shanty choir in the United States.



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**The Town with no Sunday Houses: - Comfort, Texas  
by Anne Stewart**

Ernst Altgelt, age 22, founded Comfort in 1854. Acting as a land agent for J.C. Vles of New Orleans, who in 1846 had bought from Jose Maria Regalado, "one league and labor of land", and Altgelt purchasing 1000 acres himself, he transported a survey party into the area in early summer.

Altgelt's party included, in addition to himself, Anton Beyer, his wife, Mrs. Beyer who cooked for the men, Fritz Goldbeck, Fr. Brunko, Louis von Breitenbauch and the surveyor, Friedrich Grothaus. Working with an "entire league and a half of land," the work crew completed their task during July and August, with town lots, out lots, streets, blocks and village necessities platted. Comfort's official founding date is September 3, 1854.

Comfort was settled in the heart of the Texas hills. The nearest neighbors were Sisterdale, founded 1849 and Fredericksburg, 1846. A New Braunfels paper, The Neu Braunfelser Zeitung, welcomed the new town in its December 8, 1854 issue. "As a new addition to the German population of West Texas, we extend to Comfort our best wishes for happiness and prosperity."

This "German population" came because of the German Revolution of 1848. They came to Texas seeking a more peaceful existence and found it initially at the confluence of Cypress Creek and the Guadalupe River, in the newest German Texan village, Comfort, Texas. These "intellectuals and freethinkers gravitated toward the area around Comfort," and as a result, a particular environment was established.

Freethinker is an umbrella term that has been used to describe a variety of people who believed in rational thought rather than a supernatural religious being, university radicals who wished to practice a Utopian or communitarian way of life, intellectuals who had no interest in conventional worship and some individuals who sought a way of life free from governmental and theocratical interference. There were also craftsmen and farmers from the peasant classes that subscribed to this way of life.

Mrs. Esther B. Wiedenfeld, one of Comfort's historians, in a milestone interview in the early 1970s, asked the descendant of an early family, about the difference in the towns of Fredericksburg and Comfort. The answer deserves careful study because it gives one of the first clues about the make-up of people who settled in this town.

The person explained: "Those wanting to keep on with their religion and the church went to Fredericksburg and New Braunfels and those who did not want to remain in the church came to Comfort and Sisterdale." While this may not have applied to the entire population, Comfort was a freethinkers town.

When Ernst Altgelt laid out the town plat, property was set aside for a town park, a school house and a friedhof (a cemetery). Here is another clue in deciphering Comfort's early history.

The term, friedhof, means cemetery. If the cemetery had been attached to a church and therefore sacred ground for Christian burial, the term would have been kirchhof (churchyard cemetery). There was no community land designated for a church of any denomination. The founder and early settlers of Comfort felt no need for a formal setting in which they could worship.

Fredericksburg exhibited a marked difference. Founded as a German colony by the Adelsverein, religion was of utmost importance. When the town of Fredericksburg was planned, not only was land set aside and a pastor hired by the Adelsverein, but a structure was provided the townspeople for the express purpose of religious worship. The original building was set in the middle of Main Street. It was also used as a school and a fortress against attack by Comanches.



This octagonal building topped with a small tower and built of stone and timber, the Vereins Kirche (the society's church) as it was christened, was placed in the town's center for convenience and to show the importance of religion in the lives of the Fredericksburg people. Dedicated May 9, 1847, it serves the community still today, though in other capacities, and shows no sign of diminishing in influence and importance in the twenty-first century.

Full of churches almost from its founding, Fredericksburg is home also to the Sonntag haus, the Sunday house. The large town lots laid out in Fredericksburg's original plat made this architectural tidbit possible. Farm families who moved to their holdings in the hills outside of town built small houses on their town lot which they used for accommodations when they came into town for supplies and worship.

In his 1981 book, The German Texans, Glen Lich described these "weekend cottages" as he termed them. These dwellings "consisted of three rooms on the ground floor, a front porch and a wooden outside stairway leading on one side to an attic, where the children slept in a bedroom under the rafters."

More recently in 1995, a description is found in Fredericksburg, Texas: 150 Years of Paintings and Drawings by Jack Maguire, who states that the "Sunday house is a Fredericksburg trademark." He goes on to characterize the structure.

"The usual Sunday house had a small porch, one large room downstairs and a second on the floor above. They were connected by an exterior stairway. A few had an additional room, particularly if the family was large."

While some were frame, others were built of stone. Tight and cozy, the family had a place to stay when they came into town. One member, at least, had to remain at home to perform the homestead chores and care for the livestock. The family could journey into town on Friday night to a place of their own where they could prepare and eat their meals, shop and visit family and friends on Saturday, attend worship services on Sunday morning and return to their rural holdings after the noon meal. Thus, German religious belief and thrift were both satisfied by the arrangement.

Lich and Maguire's descriptions vary but the intent of this small home away from home was the same: to provide the family with a means of taking care of business in town and more importantly, attending church.

No church was built in Comfort until 1892 and it was built because the railroad was coming west from San Antonio and the railway authorities would not build a line through a town with no church. The story goes on that a stalwart Christian braving a local saloon asked for donations from the festive crowd to build a religious structure. The resultant contributions became seed money accorded the architectural necessity of a church building.

As there were no churches in Comfort, funerals were conducted by community intellectuals, who gave the eulogy for the departed and directed the local liedertafel (singing society) in appropriate songs, not found in hymnals. In the late 1980s the Comfort Heritage Foundation Archives received a gift of over 700 eulogies given by one man during his lifetime, not one in a church.

There was no church in town during Comfort's first 38 years. As there were no churches in Comfort, there were no Sunday houses. Small houses were built, but not for the same purpose as those in Fredericksburg.

The Goldbeck brothers lived in a small fachwerk cabin on 7th Street close to their store and the post office they operated. The Ernst Flach family built a one-room fachwerk structure of limestone and local timber near the park. C.W. Boerner and Theodore Bruckisch shared bachelor quarters in a small log house, also on 7th Street.

Today's barbershop on High Street was originally the tiny residence of Julius and Susana Fricke Holekamp. This interesting little place was built of rough limestone with a tinner's roof. There isn't another like it in town.

And the town of Comfort is like no other. As Lich described Germans in his book: "From the beginning they were different, more fun-loving and family centered. .. For the Germans Sunday was a day not only for worship but also for sports, competitions, clubs and gay family outings. Germans even drank and danced on Sunday."

And in Comfort this is all still true. In the 1980s, when Comfort's population hovered around 1000, 129 clubs, associations, unions, alliances, leagues, societies, organizations: fraternal, benevolent and civic existed, over-lapping and side-by-side, mostly amiable, tho' not always. Social life in Comfort now includes church activities and of course, there are always civic meetings, with endless volunteer work to keep the quality of life high and pleasurable.

There is also and more importantly, the opportunity nearly every given week-end, to attend birthday parties, anniversaries (no gifts please, your presence is the most important gift you can bring), dances, barbecues, and family get-togethers and celebrations of all sorts. A momentary lull is observed from July 4 through Labor Day, while the Texas summer heat beats down when people go away on trips and vacations or remain busy, cool and quiet at home.

My Comfort grandmothers were the centers of their respective homes though their personal philosophies were quite different. One grandmother came to Comfort as a Kindergartener employed by the Episcopal Diocese of West Texas. She stayed to marry a freethinker who attended church only for weddings, including his own, christenings and the very occasional funeral. On Sunday mornings he dropped my grandmother and any visiting grandchildren at the front of the church and went to visit one of his sisters, returning in time to gather up the family and go home for Sunday dinner.

My other grandmother did not attend church and was married by a Justice of the Peace. My father quoted her as saying, reluctantly, that it was all right, maybe, if a child read Bible stories, but they were not to be taken seriously and the child should stop reading them around age 11 or 12, as they were only fairy stories.

In Comfort today there are many churches with supportive congregations, but there are no Sunday houses.

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### HEDWIG THUSNELDA KNIKER

Hedwig Thusnelda Kniker was born November 13, 1891 in Gay Hill, Washington County, Texas. She was the third child and third daughter born to Carl and Natalie Meyer Kniker, a pioneer family. She was baptized at 2 a.m. on her 19<sup>th</sup> day when the family believed she was too ill to survive.

At the time of Ms. Kniker's birth, her father was minister of St. Peter's Church. On September 27, 1892, the family moved to Cibolo, where Reverend Kniker became minister at St. Paul's Church.

As evidenced by her diary, Ms. Kniker decided at an early age to attend college. After she graduated as valediction from high school in New Braunfels in 1908, she and her sister Rose obtained teacher certification and began teaching near home. In the summer of 1913, after both had saved enough money for college, they entered The University of Texas at Austin.

Ms. Kniker completed her undergraduate work in three years and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in German, psychology, and geology on April 28, 1916. During her years at the University, she was a member of Phi Beta Kappa and Sigma Xi, an honor society for scientific research. She was active as well in the Germania Club, was vice president of the organization that later became Cap and Gown, was an officer in the Y.W.C.A., and was a student assistant in geology.

After graduation, she began working on a Master of Arts degree, which she received after writing a thesis entitled "Comanchean and Cretaceous Pectinidae of Texas." After receiving the M.A. in June, 1917, she went to Cornell University to do further study in paleontology, and then to the University of Chicago.

From Chicago, she returned to Austin to join Dr. J. A. Udden in research at the Bureau of Economic Geology. During those years, she did extensive work on subsurface stratigraphy in Texas and Louisiana and named many geological formations in those areas.

In 1920, Ms. Kniker joined Texaco in Houston to establish the company's paleontology lab and direct its operations. While there, she received wide recognition for her pioneering work on Gulf Coast micropaleontology.

The west Texas oil boom attracted Ms. Kniker in 1927 and she went to San Angelo to work for Phillips Petroleum and, later, the independent oil firm of Ricker and Dodson. In 1930, she moved to San Antonio and went into business for herself as a consultant in paleontological and stratigraphic services.

She did well in business, but because geology was still considered a man's occupation, she operated by her initials. For many years, the oilmen for whom she did consulting work assumed she was a man. Among her accomplishments during those years was the identification and naming of the McKnight formation, which even today is a common marker for wells drilled in some parts of west Texas.

Following her mother's death in 1941, she went to Chile for nine years to work for the United Geophysical Company and a government agency in geological investigation. Fluent in Spanish, Portuguese and German, she lived in Punta Arenas and was active in exploring the area south of the Strait of Magellan for oil. During that time, she returned to the U. S. several times, primarily to do research in paleontology in Washington, D.C.

In June, 1950, she retired and bought a home in Seguin, Texas. Even after retirement, she remained active as a consultant and as a contributor to professional journals. In 1955, she was honored by the South Texas Geological Society for her contributions to geological progress and for her international recognition in the field of paleontology.



In 1970, Ms. Kniker moved to a San Antonio retirement home. She died October 12, 1985, and was buried at the Guadalupe Memorial Park Cemetery between New Braunfels and Seguin. In her Will, Ms. Kniker created a scholarship trust within the San Antonio Area Foundation to assist outstanding San Antonio area students who will major in Botany, Chemistry, Geology, Physics, Zoology, or other fields of Arts and Science, and among her other bequests, provided funds to purchase the remaining carillon bells for the Main Tower of her beloved alma mater, the University of Texas at Austin.

On November 14, 1987, after the installation of the carillon bells was completed, a special ceremony was held on the terrace in front of the Main Building at The University of Texas to officially name and dedicate The Kniker Carrillon.



On August 8, The Texas Historical Commission is dedicating a marker on my Aunt Hedwig T. Kniker's birthplace in Gay Hill, Texas My grandfather, Carl Kniker, was the second minister of St. Peter's Lutheran Church in that community and Hedwig was born in the original parsonage. The church itself received a marker on it's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1985 and is the original structure.

Both of Hedwig's parents were born in Germany. Her mother, Natalie Meyer was born in Hasel, Baden Germany and her father, Carl, in Holson-Westphalia. Natalie's father was an architect who founded New Baden, Texas. He was with the New York and Texas Land Company. Carl was the minister at New Baden when he married Natalie. They went to Gay Hill December 11, 1885.

JANICE K. LEE  
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HOUSTON, TEXAS 77079

## “Grandmother - Grandfather, what are my family roots ?”

### **This may be a trap you could never recover from**

Beware, there is a small group of people out there with a strange ailment unknown to most of us. We must always be alert for ‘those people’ and their infectious disease. There must not be many of these people but I fear their disease is very contagious - they are called Genealogists. If at some time you try to find information about your ancestors their deadly traps are everywhere. Be alert, you may be trapped, catch the disease and you will never be the same.

***The bait*** I assure you this seems an innocent request from one of your loving grandchildren, but the future road you may travel in your search for an answer to this simple question could change your retirement years forever. This event in our lives had a very easy solution - dig out those old boxes of stuff we kept from our parents and grandparents and the question would be answered. In the boxes were many papers, reports and even a book researched by family members back through the years on several family branches. Some of these had many generations of family names and birth dates, enough to help with a school project. The only problem was the selection of a family line that would be interesting. For us the decision was easy. Our children were born in and had lived most of their lives in Texas. The grandchildren had also grown up in Texas, so the choice of a family branch would be one of my father’s grandparents. This would eliminate my wife’s family who were from the east coast. and my mother’s family who were from Oklahoma and Kansas. All of my father’s side of the family were born in Texas and would be the most interesting for their school project. With all this information in hand, surely we would be off the hook. Well almost but a new road was opened by the curiosity of our daughter Brenda that lived in Pasadena. This information sent her to the Clayton Library in Houston to see if she could find any other items of interest about the older generations of the family. For my wife and I this proved to be the wrong road for her to venture down. She soon found out that my great great grandfather Gabriel Remmler was one of the founders of New Braunfels in 1845. This was my grandmother Edda Perner Fischer’s Grandfather. This would tie all of his descendants to the Republic of Texas. The bait was ready for the trap.

***The Trap*** As an old project engineer that liked to solve problems, but was a very poor history student, I would find these events and information very intriguing. I now had a great great grandfather that had been part of early Texas history. History was now not just about strangers with names that had no meaning, but one of these people could have been our ancestors. Curiosity overwhelmed me. Who was this man? Why did he come to the Republic of Texas in 1845? Who were the people he was with when New Braunfels was founded? How many lived in the Republic of Texas at this time? This would be the starting point of a very long time consuming project. I fear this is when I must have met one of ‘those people’ and found out we needed to visit our library and its local history room. Little did I know this would be walking into the trap. At first I was lucky. We quickly found that the process of genealogical research was adapted to those with great patience, perseverance, persistence, and someone that was a jigsaw puzzle fan. I do not excel in most of these great personal traits, but my wife Rosemary fits the requirements well. After seeing all this information at the library, the books available about genealogy and historical times, we were trapped. I knew our only hope would be Rosemary’s patience during the times when I would probably lose interest if the pieces of the puzzles did not fit. Quickly we found out the next place we should visit was the scene of the “crime”, New Braunfels, the starting point for many of the early German immigrants when they moved to the Republic of Texas or later to the State of Texas.

***Trapped*** The trip to New Braunfels turned out to be the final step in the plan of ‘those people’ to infect poor curious senior citizens. Our visit to the Sophienburg Museum and Archives could surely be classified as entrapment. This building was full of old photographs, newspapers, maps, books, and the research on the people who settled this area beginning in the 1840’s. When I asked about the founders of New Braunfels, we quickly learned that the Sophienburg and the Comal Genealogy Society were helping Mr. Everett Anthony Fey who was writing a new book, “New Braunfels: The First Founders” that was to be published by the end of 1994. They were still trying to find photos of the founders. I remembered we had found an old photo of Gabriel Remmler and his wife Elise in one of the boxes. I was not sure how good the photo was, but told them I would send them a copy. Of the family history books and reports we found, there was one that had information on many of the early families. After searching books over the last six years, this book is still the most incredible 1600 page family history I have found, “The Bremers and Their Kin in Germany and in Texas”. Written by Robert R. Robinson Jr. and published in 1979, I still cannot figure out how Mr. Robinson, a young man, was able to research and write a book of this magnitude about his family. Strangely enough there was a section in the two volume set about Gabriel Remmler. Gabriel and



his wife Elise Seiler were married Oct. 22, 1846 in New Braunfels. She was related to the Bremer family and I had found another family branch that was unknown to me. In one day we had more information about my ancestors than I could absorb. All the propaganda about how hard it was to find out about your ancestors must be overstated. After the first full day of genealogical research, several book purchases and an order for eight sets of the New Braunfels Founders Book, we were experts at family history. The trap had sprung and we were fully infected.

**The Treatment** Never again would we find out so much about any of our ancestors in the next six years of searching as we discovered on that day at the Sophienburg in New Braunfels. We soon learned that to keep from going crazy with all the bits and pieces of puzzles we would collect, we needed to organize all the information we had found in the old boxes and then would be able to coordinate all of the new information into these files. Most of those we talked to that had been struggling with this ailment recommended a computer genealogy program as the treatment that would give us the fastest relief. So with a Family Tree Maker Program installed on our computer we were on our way for a quick cure. Rosemary was drafted as she had all that typing speed and could put this great information into the new computer program. I could help by learning the good old hunt and peck method. This turned out to be a very long project. One day while working the Perner history, she became intrigued to see what we could find out about my great great grandfather Friedrich Perner and his wife Friederike Marquardt Muller. The report we were using to add family members into the file was written by Oscar W. Perner in 1965. Mr. Perner must have visited many of these families as he developed this history and probably knew more members of this family than anyone has since the late 1800's. The history page in his report has become highly suspect. After five years of research we have found very little to support the tale of four brothers leaving Germany in 1854 and coming to America, being attacked and robbed by Indians and becoming separated. The story about one of the brothers that had lived in Ohio says his son Emil Perner visited his cousins in Comfort and Ozona in the late 1920's. This item needs more research. One brother was thought to be a Christian Perner that lived in San Antonio in the 1850's. (probably was a cousin) It stated that Chris Perner came to Texas from Groban. The report also tells of a Mr. Mueller and his wife that also came to Texas about this time, became friends and started a freighting business at Sisterdale, Texas. There is also a short story in the book 'Indian Wars and Pioneers of Texas' about "Friederick Perner of Comfort Texas" We now know there are several errors in this information. A third report written by the Meyers in 1972 indicated that Mr. Mueller had come from Tappenbeck, Hanover and his wife Friedericka Marquardt from Mecklenburg, Prussia. Our goal was a simple one, with so many new places to find family history data, maybe we will find out where Friederick Perner came from and more about his history.

**The Search** With all the tricks we had learned from many books in our growing library, this would be piece of cake. We were now two new experienced genealogists that had a great index of search locations;

**HOME SOURCES** - Search for more old boxes --- **PUBLISHED RECORDS at LIBRARIES**  
**CHURCH RECORDS** --- **CITY-TOWN-COUNTY-STATE RECORDS & FEDERAL CENSUS**  
**NATURALIZATION RECORDS** --- **GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIPS**

Armed with so much knowledge, we would skip most of these long slow methods and direct our attack on two fronts. First we found every Perner in the telephone directories in the United States and wrote each one a letter asking about their Perner history. The second effort was to see if our local Honorary German Consul would try to find Groban and maybe put us in touch with someone there that could find records on this man Friederick Perner born July 19, 1827. The first stage of the search ended with sending almost 150 letters to Perners. Mr. Wendl sent a letter with our search request to Plauen in Saxony that was near a village with the name of Grobau. Rosemary also wrote the Comfort library to see if they had information on my Perner family or if they knew of the family. All was set. We could sit back and wait for all the great history about this man Friederick Perner to flow in. We next learned a new lesson about the disease, genealogy immunity.

**The Immunity** For the next 6 months we waited for all the information to arrive by our dependable postman. But doom would soon set in. Many letters were returned; some found no one; some said they were not interested and a number replied they were not part of our family. Two wrote back that they believed they were related to the Chris Perner of San Antonio that was thought to be one of Friederick's brothers. Was there no one left in our family with the Perner name or was it that most people were not interested in their family history? Our effort to contact someone through the Comfort library ended with a ray of hope. Our letter ended up on the desk of Joyce Behr and she said her great aunt Ida Schilling had married Edward Perner, a son of Friederick Perner. She would send us the information on the Perner and Mueller families in her files. This information was almost the same as the Oscar Perner report, but we did know there was someone living in the area that had history on our family. A trip to the



Comfort library was needed. Having never known anyone where your ancestors had once lived is a big disadvantage. This was about the time Mr. Wendl received a letter from the town of Plauen that they were not able to help since civil records on citizens had not started until the late 1800's. They sent our request to the district church that had served Grobau for hundreds of years and this effort led to a contact with Reverend Schubert of the Ev-Luth. Pfarrant Church in Misslareuth that had served Grobau for over 700 years. He found a Perner Family in the church records that were from the town of Grobau and it looked like the last name had been changed from Bernhardt or Bernert to Perner. He was unable to find a Friedrich Perner, but one of the sons of this family in Grobau was a Christian Gottlieb Paulas Perner with a note in his record stating that he had gone to America in 1849. Rosemary asked Mr. Wendl to send another letter to the Rev. Schubert asking him to look again at the records for the date 7-19-1827, Friedrich's birth date. She also enclosed a photo of Friedrich Perner and his wife Friederike Marquardt's grave stone with their birth and death date inscriptions. It soon became apparent that our great plan had not worked. We had not found a single new fact about my ancestor, Friedrich Perner. Maybe there was something we did not understand about this disease because only a couple of those we had contacted seem to be one of 'those people'. There was something we now had learned, most people must have an immunity for this ailment including those we had contacted. They seem to have no interest whatsoever about their early ancestors beyond their grandmother and grandfather. Another obvious conclusion was the disappearing family name which ends with the daughters and with the boys that do not have children. Maybe somewhere out there one of the girls, with a new surname, has traced the Perner history. After all this work we did make one of the Perners, June Perner Sloan, very happy when we sent copies of the church records from Misslareuth that show where her ancestor Chris Perner was born.

**Find Some Cousins** Our last hope was to find cousins in the Sisterdale-Comfort-Boerne area that had our disease and been stashing away those building blocks needed for a good family history. After several trips to Kendall County we found out about a Schmidt descendent that had helped at the Comfort library and had been working on her family history for many years. She was my cousin from Friederike's first marriage with Mr. Muller. The meeting that followed with Elizabeth 'Betty' Schmidt Johnson was a turning point in all my future Marquardt research. I had finally found one of 'those people' who was fully infected with the family history bug. By the end of 1994, two of great great grandmother Friederike Marquardt descendants who had never met began a project to combine all of their files and start a basic search for new information in all the places that were not available back in 1960's. We would try to create a history of Betty's side of the family, the Mueller family, and my side, the Perner family. As a first step Betty would undertake to try to figure out why there were so many Marquardt and Marquart family names in this very sparsely populated area of Texas, that were not related to our Friederike Marquardt. When one walks through the Sisterdale and Comfort Cemeteries, you are overwhelmed by the number of Marquardt and Marquart graves dating back over 100 years. Rosemary and I had to go back to those basic rules we had passed by and begin searching for the Perner History. I would start combining everything we had, at this point in time, into the computer and print out a couple of working copies as reference books for Betty in Comfort and us in Corpus. We are again on our way to solving the jigsaw puzzle.

**Puzzle Pieces** (The Letter and the Naturalization paper) In July of 1997 Betty called to tell us about a Marquardt reunion that was to take place at Sisterdale in July. Maybe we should try to go and ask about their family history. We found the name of someone that might help us with information about the reunion. I talked to Allen Spenrath and he invited us to attend. During this wonderful Sunday lunch and the meeting after, Betty saw many people she had known through the years. I quickly learned this was like most reunions I had heard of, mostly a social gathering of several generations of the family that have very little interest in talking about old family history. Again no one thought our Marquardt grandmother was related to their family and it was apparent that most of the older family members did not think they were related to the Marquart family that lived in Kendall County. Allen seemed to be the only one interested in old family history. He had been collecting papers about his Spenrath and Marquardt history for years. It looks like we have found another one of 'those people'. In our conversation about our families, he told us about an interesting 1850 **letter** written by a Mr. Muller that his great great grandfather Edmann Gottlieb Marquardt had brought with him when he moved his family to the Sisterdale area of Texas from Rothenacker, Saxony in 1855. Allen did not know who this Mr. Muller was but the **letter** was to relatives in Rothenacker and spoke of his first child being born Sept. 1850 in Fredericksburg Texas. This **letter** was one of items they had used in tracing their family back to Rothenacker. At this time, the **letter** did not seem to relate to our family since we thought our Mr. Muller had come from Tappenbeck, Hannover and our Miss Marquardt had come from Mecklenburg in the far northern part of Prussia. By the end of the reunion we assumed we were not connected

to any of the other Marquardt or Marquart families in Kendall Co. In Sept. 1997, Rosemary and I had our first opportunity to attend a German-Texan Heritage Society Convention that was held in Kerrville. The following Monday we met Betty and Neal Johnson in Fredericksburg for lunch and spent a few hours at the courthouse to do a little searching. We were still hoping to find a marriage record for Friederike and her first husband Christop Muller. We had found them recorded in the 1850 U.S. Census as living in Fredericksburg and we were also sure their first child Ernestine Mueller was born there in 1850. Just before we left for our trip back to Corpus, Rosemary wanted to check the District Clerk's naturalization record book for all of Muller/Muellers in the index. A match for someone with a name like our Mr. Christof Muller/Mueller could not be found. Just before we closed the book, I noticed a note on the page that said Muller or Miller. We turned back to the index and found a Christop Miller listed in 1853 and asked to see his naturalization request. When we reviewed the hand written request you could read the name spelled as Miller or Muller and whoever had made the index years ago thought it was Miller. In this request made May 2, 1853, Mr. Muller stated he was Dehles in the Kingdom of Saxony near Plauen and arrived at Galveston Texas May 21, 1849. With a copy of this interesting paper in hand, we left for Corpus Christi.

The Pieces Fit After reading this paper several times and with the file of information Rev. Schubert had sent us about Chris Perner and the map showing the towns and villages around Grobau it was an incredible sight. There was Grobau, 3 miles to the northwest was Misslareuth, then 2 miles north was Rothenacker, 5 miles east-southeast of there was Dehles and then 3 miles southwest of Dehles was Grobau. You could not help but think of the Mueller letter Allen had told us about and the possible connection. I called Allen and asked if he could find the letter and read it to me. He had not progressed far reading his translation when I suddenly realized he was reading a letter written in 1850 by my great great grandmother's first husband Christoph Muller and that the in-laws he was referring to were my great great grandmother Marquardt's family and she had come from somewhere close to Dehles where Mr. Muller said he was from. This was also very close to Rothenacker where Allen found that his Marquardt family was from. Our Friederike had not come from Mecklenburg to Texas. I asked Allen about the other family records he received during his search and he said he would send me copies of the records that Rev. Schubert of the Church in Misslareuth had sent him. This was incredible. This was the same man that had been helping us. After we had looked through all of the church records and papers in the old Chris Perner file and started filing them, Rosemary saw one of the church records and asked when did we get this one. She was looking at a record that said Marie Friederike Dorothee, 7th child, 3rd daughter was born Dec. 31, 1826, Baptized Jan. 2, 1827. This listing lined up with entry #60, Marquartin, Rothenacker. Quickly we looked at the records Allen had sent us and it was easy to see that the parents listed for this Friederike Marquartin were the same as the parents in Allen's records. For almost four years we had great great grandmother's birth records filed away in the dead Chris Perner file. This was a strange series of events. A few pieces of puzzle had been fitted together but we had not solved the problem we started with. Our Marquardt-Mueller-Perner family record was very incomplete. We now had Friederike's two brothers and their families to add to the family history. There must be hundreds of cousins from Fredericksburg to Kerrville that do not know they are related.

New Family I sent copies of all the papers which were in German that Allen and I had received from the church and the letters sent to Mr. Wendl from Rev. Schubert to another cousin from my Fischer branch. Nadine Fischer is a true family researcher. She looked over the papers and said she would try translating them. (One must note that these old hand written entrees in German do not copy well and take great patience to translate) Many pieces of the Marquardt family history puzzle would come together from her translations. She would solve the mystery of why we had the copy of the Misslareuth Church record of the birth of our great great grandmother Friederike and did not know it. When Rev. Schubert checked the church records close to the Friedrich Perner birth date, his letter to Mr. Wendl had said he did not find our Mr. Perner. Mr. Wendle informed Rosemary of the result and he mailed us the letter in German and another copy of a page of the church record. We now knew this was a dead end and when we received the information, in German text, we filed it the Chris Perner file and forgot it. If we had been curious as to what was in the letter and had someone translate it, we would have found out that Rev. Schubert could not find anything on Friedrich Perner, as Mr. Wendl told Rosemary. We did not know that he had noticed the information on the photo of the tombstone about Mr. Perner's wife nee Marquardt. He had looked up the birth date of Friederike in the Misslaruth Church records and had found her record and enclosed a copy. I guess Mr. Wendl thought we had this information and were only interested in the Perner history. Most of the early history about the Marquardt -Mueller - Perner family in the last few months of 1997 was changing rapidly. It was now apparent that the project to find Friedrich Perner's history in Saxony had been a failure. With all this new

information about Friederike Marquardt, we had given credence that the note in Oscar Perner's report about her brothers Gottlieb and Christian was partly true. The problem was that Christian was not the second brother, but he was the son of her oldest brother Gottfried. Our new focus now needed to be finding the descendants of a much larger family and starting new sections in our book for her two brothers and their children. Allen Spenrath came to the rescue and starting sending me all the information on his Edmann Gottlieb Marquardt branch and started contacting others for more information.

We still have very little written history about our family's lives, but I will now attempt to assemble the hundreds of pieces of puzzle found and write one of those 'family stories'.

***The 'Family Story'*** " My Marquardt family that came to Texas in 1849 and 1855 were three of the seven children of **Johann Gottfried Marquardt** and his wife **Anna Sophia Muller** that lived in Rothenacker, Kingdom of Saxony. After reading stories about the many citizens of Prussia going to the Republic Texas and now part of the United States of America, six youngsters living in the far west end of Saxony, close to Bavaria, decided to Go To Texas. The villages that they lived in were all within 10 miles of each other. The two single young women were **Marie Friederike Marquardt** age 22 from Rothenacker and **Christine Wilhelmina Zenin** age 22 from Strassberg (probably related to Friederike's sister-in-law Catharine Rosina Zeh Marquardt) The four young single men were **Christoph Friedrich Muller** age 23 from Dehles (probably related to Friederike's mother Marie Sophie Muller Marquardt from Dehles) **Carl Gottlieb Elbel** age 22 from Grobau, **Christoph Gottlieb Paulus Perner** age 20 from Grobau and **Johann Friedrich Perner** age 22 from somewhere in this area. (Friedrich was probably a cousin of Christoph) The first five of the youngsters left Bremen in the spring of 1849 and arrived at Galveston, Texas May 2, 1849 aboard the sailing ship Galliot Flora. I guess Friedrich Perner had missed this first sailing and boarded another vessel a month later. He said he arrived at Galveston June 23, 1849.

***Muller and Marquardt:*** They were married some time between May 1849 in Galveston and the early summer of 1850 in Fredericksburg, Texas. All of the Gillespie County early records that were stored at the Hunter store in 1850 were destroyed by a fire that summer. The 1850 U.S. Census listed them as married and living in Fredericksburg. The first member of the Marquardt family to be born in Texas was **Ernestine Christine Friederika Mueller**, born Sept. 23, 1850 in Fredericksburg. A third **letter** from Mr. Muller to his family and in-laws in Saxony was written Oct. 2, 1850 from Fredericksburg. This **letter** was probably the reason Friederike's brothers moved to Texas in 1855. It is believed the Mueller family moved to Sisterdale shortly after Ernestine's birth, where they went into business with friend Friedrich Perner. The settlement of this area had started with the arrival of Nicolas Zink in 1847 and his building of a cabin where the Sister Creeks join. This was on the wilderness trail between New Braunfels and the settlement of Fredericksburg. By 1850 a number of German immigrants had bought land grants during the days of the Republic of Texas and started a settlement named Sisterdale. This would be where the Muller's second child **Wilhelmina Mueller** was born Dec. 6, 1853 at their cabin "Bell Bee" close to where the Sister Creeks joined. During the spring of 1854, Mr. Mueller passed away. The widow Mueller would marry Friedrich Perner Aug. 6, 1854 in Sisterdale Texas.

***Elbel and Zeh:*** They were married March 31, 1850 at New Braunfels, Texas. The book Blanco County History states **Gottlieb Elbel** appeared for the first time on the Comal Co. tax roll with 175 acres on the Guadalupe River. The 1860 Census lists the Elbel family as; **Gottlieb** age 33, **Christine** age 33, **Mina** age 9, **Auguste** age 7, **Hermann** age 5 **Emma** age 4, **Bertha** age 3 and **Ernst** age 1. There is an Elbel Cemetery listed in the Kendall Co. record book.

***Christoph Perner:*** His travels after leaving Galveston are not known. The first record we have places him at San Antonio April 12, 1851 making his citizenship intention declaration.

***Johann Friedrich Perner:*** He stated that he had arrived at Galveston June 23, 1849. He then traveled to Indianola and purchased an ox-team for the journey to New Braunfels. The first record we have on Mr. Perner is his citizenship intention request made at New Braunfels Nov. 21, 1849. This would mean he probably stayed there several months before he left for Fredericksburg that winter. Some time early in 1850 he met **Christoph Muller** and **Friederike Marquardt** at Fredericksburg. This is probably when Friedrich found out his friends had married. Shortly after his visit he returned south 22 miles to Sisterdale, along the trail to New Braunfels, and settled there sometime in 1850. Mr. Perner can not be found in the any the different county census records for 1850. He must have found the Sisterdale settlement a fine place to start a business and soon asked the Mullers to join him there. For the next few years they ran a freighting and milling business together. Mr. Muller died in the spring of 1854.



His friend Friedrich Perner married Friederike, the widow Muller. In the winter of 1855-56 her brothers, **Christoph Gottfried Marquart** and the **Edmann Gottlieb Marquardt** families arrived at Sisterdale. The Perner's first child **Edward Perner** was born at Sisterdale April, 1856. In Nov. of 1856 the Perner family purchased a 150 acre homestead on the Guadalupe River about 2 miles east of Comfort and probably had moved to their new homestead by the end of 1857. Here their family grew; **Bertha** born April 1858, **Wilhelm** born Oct. of 1860, **Richard** born Oct. 1863 and **Amalie** born Jan. 1866. This would be where the Mueller and Perner children would grow up.

**Christoph Gottfried Marquardt (Marquart);** When Gottfried's family arrived the members were **Gottfried** age 50, 2nd wife **Rosina Zeh** age 42 (his 1st wife's sister), son **Christian** age 22, **Caroline** age 14, **Hermann** age 10, and **Christianna** age 2. They lived in the Sisterdale area until 1863 when they bought land on Block Creek near Comfort. We believe a son **Karl** age 24, died during the trip to Texas. Christian Marquart was the first of the Marquart children to be married in Texas, he married Johanne Henrietta Becker in 1856 at Sisterdale.

**Edmann Gottlieb Marquardt ;** When Gottlieb's family arrived the members were **Gottlieb** age 35, wife **Marie** age 39, **Christina** age 14, **Edward** age 10, **John** age 6, **Sidonie** age 3, and **Charles Karl** age 1. They first lived at the Sisterdale area and then in 1866 bought 160 acres on the Guadalupe River about 3 miles east of Sisterdale. New Texans born to Edmann's family were; **Louis** 1858, **Gustav** June 1861 and **Adolph** Feb. 1864."

**Our Family in the Kingdom of Saxony [Generation No.]**

*( Marquardt - Marquard - Marquart; the many spellings of our family name)*

- [1] **Johann Gottfried Marquardt** married **Anna (Marie) Sophia Muller** lived and died in Saxony
- [2] **Christoph Gottfried Marquart** married(1) **Christiane Zeh** she died in Saxony
- [3] **Johann Gottfried Karl Marquart** died during the trip to Texas
- [3] **Johann Christian Marquart** married **Johanne Henrietta Becker** in Texas
- [3] **Caroline Marquart** married **August Ebers** in Texas
- Christoph Gottfried Marquart** married(2) **Catharine Rosina Zeh** in Saxony
- [3] **Johann Herman Marquart** married **Anna Krohn** in Texas
- [3] **Christianna Marquart** married **Christian Liesmann** in Texas
- [2] **Spenrieb Gottlieb Marquardt** no other information available
- [2] **Johanna Christine Marquardt** no other information available
- [2] **Johann Christian Marquardt** no other information available
- [2] **Johanna Christianna Marquardt** no other information available
- [2] **Edmann Gottlieb Marquardt** married **Marie Helfritsch** in Saxony
- [3] **Christina Caroline Marquardt** married **George Werner** in Texas
- [3] **Edward Marquardt** married **Caroline Ertl**
- [3] **John Marquardt** married **Bertha Perner**
- [3] **Sidonie Marquardt** married **Fritz Grasso**
- [3] **Charles Karl Marquardt**
- [3] **Louis Marquardt** (born in Texas)
- [3] **Gustav Marquardt** (born in Texas) married **Lina Giessler**
- [3] **Adolph Marquardt** (born in Texas) married **Emma Paschel**
- [2] **Friederike Marie Marquardt** married(1) **Christoph Muller** in Texas
- [3] **Ernestine Mueller** (born in Texas) married **Friedrich C. Meyer**
- [3] **Wilhelmina Mueller** (born in Texas) married **Eduard F. Schmidt**
- Friederike Marie Marquardt** married(2) **Friedrich Perner** in Texas
- [3] **Edward Perner** (born in Texas) married **Ida Schilling**
- [3] **Bertha Perner** (born in Texas) married **John Marquardt**
- [3] **Wilhelm Perner** (born in Texas) married **Marie Vollmering**
- [3] **Richard H. Perner** (born in Texas) married **Adeline Remmler**
- [3] **Amalie Clara Perner** (born in Texas) married **Andrew F. Vollmering**

At the time of this report in 1999, I would guess the descendants of this pioneer family of Kendall County can be considered to be one of the largest family groups still living close to where their ancestors settled in the 1850's. There are hundreds of their descendants still living in this area from Fredericksburg to Kerrville and it is truly sad that many still do not know they are related. We now have listed almost 2,500 Marquardt - Marquart - Mueller - Perner descendants in our family history printed in celebration of their 150th anniversary of coming to Texas.

Delray E. Fischer

## Birth, Death, and Resurrection of the German Society Cemetery in Houston

Although there were Germans in Houston (Frost Town) in the 1820's, the first "German" cemetery in Houston appears to be the small one started in 1883 by Trinity Lutheran Church, and located adjacent to the east side of Glenwood Cemetery. Just four years later, the *Deutsche Gesellschaft von Houston* purchased 27 acres adjacent to the west side of Glenwood to serve the larger German-speaking community. References to "German cemetery" between 1887 and 1918 are to this larger cemetery, now called Washington Cemetery. As the members of the original *Deutsche Gesellschaft* died out, operation of the cemetery became consolidated in a single family. The last official caretaker died in 1941 and the charter was allowed to lapse in 1947, but the caretaker's widow and her housekeeper carried on as best they could, with steadily decreasing effectiveness, until their deaths in 1970 and 1977. Burials had dwindled from over a dozen per month to less than a dozen per year. The cemetery was rapidly dying, but the weeds were thriving.

In 1977, relatives of people buried here formed a non-profit group, Concerned Citizens for Washington Cemetery Care, Inc., to restore it. Twenty-two years, nearly a million dollars, and untold thousands of hours of volunteer labor later, Washington Cemetery is once again beautiful. Looking at it today, one cannot imagine the deplorable condition it had reached. In 1997, CCWCC became the first non-profit group in Texas to take advantage of a new state law to be named the court-appointed operator of Washington Cemetery, authorized to "restore, operate, and maintain a historic cemetery," including the sale of unsold plots. Further recognizing that this all-volunteer group could not maintain the cemetery forever, in March 1999, CCWCC Inc. merged with Glenwood Cemetery's operating company. While the two cemeteries continue to retain their separate historical identities, the professional Glenwood staff now have full responsibility for the maintenance and operation of the former German Cemetery, forevermore. Questions relating to burial records, current interments, or lot sales should be directed to Glenwood at (713) 864-7886.

Now that the cemetery grounds are being professionally maintained, the volunteers are hard at work straightening up the records. Several projects are proceeding simultaneously: (1) the discovery and mapping of over 1500 unmarked single-grave spaces, (2) computerization of four (sometimes conflicting) books of burial records, and (3) most ambitiously, compiling a history book containing biographies of as many as possible of the 7000 or so folks buried here, to be published next year. The book is really a major revision of the Washington Cemetery Centennial Book published in 1988, which contained about 850 biographies. We expect the new book to include at least twice that number, plus photos of many of the people buried here and a list of all the known veterans, including their rank and military unit where possible. Two veterans of the Battle of San Jacinto are buried in Washington Cemetery, as well as about 100 veterans of the War Between the States. We hope to complete projects (1) and (2) in time to incorporate the results into this volume also.

Here is an abbreviated example of one of the biographies. Research on this family is continuing, so additions or corrections are welcomed. To submit data on any other family member buried in Washington Cemetery, please contact me for an instruction sheet.

Bernice Mistrot, 12800 Briar Forest Drive #83, Houston, Texas 77077-2206, phone: (281) 531-1956, e-mail: [bmist@juno.com](mailto:bmist@juno.com)

### PLOT B-97 W $\frac{1}{2}$

#### AUGUST von HAXTHAUSEN

Submitted by Jack T. Currie of Houston, TX.; great-grandson of Isabella Haxthausen (1988, updated 1999).

**Isabella Helene Adelina (KNIEP) von HAXTHAUSEN**  
(7 May 1851 – 1 Mar. 1896)

Isabella was born in Taugoggen, near Konigsberg, East Prussia (now Taurage, Lithuania), to Carl August Gottlieb KNIEP and his English-born wife Helen Marie FERRY. Isabella appears to be the youngest of her father's 21 children by several wives, born when he was about 60.

About 1872, in the vicinity of Kassel, Westphalia, she married Marcel Wilhelm, Baron von HAXTHAUSEN (11 May 1838 – 19 March 1885), an adventurous widower with a young son, Hermann. According to letters written by his first wife, Anna WINTERSBACH, who died at the birth of their second child in 1868, he was a lieutenant in the Prussian Army at the time of their marriage in 1865. She also alludes to his earlier service in the American Civil War. After his return to Germany, he rose to Captain in the Prussian Army and won a medal during the Franco-Prussian War.

Marcel and Isabella had at least five children: August (1874-1931, owner of this plot), Kurt (1877-1918), Alhard (1879-?), Marcel (1881-1903), and Irma HASSELL (1883-1943).

Soon after the birth of their last child, Marcel and Isabella immigrated to Texas, where they settled in New Braunfels, and bought the local German language newspaper, *New Braunfelser Post*. In 1884, they moved themselves and the newspaper to Houston, where it became the *Texas Deutsche Zeitung* (Texas German Newspaper). Marcel remained the publisher until his sudden death in 1885. (As the German cemetery did not yet exist, he is buried in a single space in Glenwood.) Isabella continued to publish the newspaper until her death from tetanus eleven years later, and their son August published it thereafter, until it ceased publication due to the First World War.

Journalism seems to run in the HAXTHAUSEN family. Albert HAXTHAUSEN, publisher of the *Seguiner Wächter*, in Seguin, Texas, is believed to be Marcel's youngest brother. Marcel's son Hermann HAXTHAUSEN and a nephew, Ulrich HAXTHAUSEN (see Plot H-52 NW $\frac{1}{4}$ ) both worked for Isabella after Marcel's death. Ulrich's brother-in-law, Amos ROSS (see Plot F-38 SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ), was also a printer.

**Kurt von HAXTHAUSEN (1 Aug. 1895 - 16 Dec. 1898)**

**Infant Son von HAXTHAUSEN (Bur. 12 May 1896, 9 mo)**

**Infant von HAXTHAUSEN (30 Aug. 1897 - 12 Oct. 1897)**

These were children of August and Minna von HAXTHAUSEN (grandchildren of Isabella and Marcel).

## **Achtzigjährig**

**Das achtzigjährige Alter ist ein ehrenwürdiger Halter**

**Woimmer die Füße traben, wo Freude und Kummer gehalten  
Man schaut zurück und fügt sich laben  
An des Lieben Gottes Gaben  
Jene alleine sind solche Sachen  
Welche den Mensch eine Stütze machen**

**Erst muß man sich selbst verstehen  
Dann kommt die Wahl der Ideen die im Leben wehen,  
Gelegenheiten die Welt zu ändern  
Wie ein Leuchtturm in stürmischen Ländern,  
Unreifen helfen die ziellos irren auf hohen Wellen.  
Sich zu finden an eigenen Schaffungsquellen.**

**Mit achtzig Jahren wird gepflegt  
Der grosse grüne Wald den man angelegt  
Mit groben Leuten die Würde lernten  
Denn wir halfen ihnen Stolz zu ernten.  
Mit Flammen wärmen sie nun auch andere heute  
Die überall Zuversicht bringen als Beute.**

**Mit Vertrauen und Ehrlichkeit hat man das Ziel erreicht  
Von Dankbarkeit nie abgeweicht.  
Immer zeige menschliche Gefühle  
Führ' alles hinweg aus ungerüschtem Gewühle.  
Dem jeden kleinen und grossen Verwalter  
Ist achtzigjährig ein freudenreiches Alter.**

**von Edith F. Bondi, PhD.  
3350 Mc Cue Road # 903  
Houston, Texas 77056-7109  
(713) 668-5885**

**Am 26. September 1999  
Tishri 2,5760**



## GERMAN TEXAN'S GENEALOGY SECTION

Compiled by Christa Prewitt, Genealogy Editor, P.O. Box 992, Elgin, TX 78621 – Phone: 512-281-2916 – e-mail: [christaj@swbell.net](mailto:christaj@swbell.net)

### BITS – PIECES – NEWS

Passenger Lists, "GERMANS TO AMERICA" by Glazier and Filby Are now partially available on CD-ROM. Volumes 32-56 (1875-1888) are available for the low price of \$ 59.99. Check with your genealogy supplier that sells Family Tree Maker CDs.

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GERMAN MIGRATION RESOURCE CENTER, a Webpage on the Internet. It lists books, family reunions, German festivals, the Hannover Chronicle, provides a place for German Queries, and many links to other German sites of interest. <http://www.germanmigration.com/>

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#### CONFEDERATE SERVICE RECORDS.

The National Archive has announced to eliminate providing paper copies of Confederate service records. Records will still be available but researchers have to purchase the microfilm on which the desired record resides, at a cost of \$ 34. Per roll.

The SCV (Sons of Confederate Veterans) Executive Council reached an agreement with Broadfoot Publishing of Wilmington NC to provide Confederate records in paper copy form. A portion of the proceeds from the charges for this service will go to National SCV.

Broadfoot Publishing Company, 1907 Buena Vista Circle, Wilmington, NC 28411. Website: <http://broadfoot.wilmington.net> - e-mail: [bropubco@wilmington.net](mailto:bropubco@wilmington.net) (source: Houston Genealogical Society, The Bulletin)

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#### NARA MICROFILMS

The National Archives has posted a database online listing all the microfilmed records they have available. You can search by keyword in titles or by film number or by record group. You can find out at which archive a specific film is available. Instructions for rent or purchase of films is also available.

<http://www.nara.gov/nara/nail.html>

## **Some Guidelines for tracing Family Roots in Rheinland Pfalz (Palatinate)**

**Written 1992 by:**

**Landeshauptarchiv Koblenz**

**Postfach 1340**

**D-56013 Koblenz**

**Phone: 261/9129-0, Fax –112**

**e-mail: [anfrage@landeshauptarchiv-ko.de](mailto:anfrage@landeshauptarchiv-ko.de)**

**Updated 1998 by**

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**Postfach 20 15 51**

**D-56015 Koblenz**

**Phone 261/129-2645, Fax – 2640**

**e-mail: [stadtarchiv.koblenz@rz-online.de](mailto:stadtarchiv.koblenz@rz-online.de)**

**The pursuit of family history demands a step by step approach, beginning with family tradition and papers and passing on to main and then to supplementary records sources. The most successful way to use records is to consult the main source first, work ing backwards in time from the most recent to establish a frame work which can be filled in from supplementary sources.**

**The main sources for this purpose are the parish registers of both churches and later on the civil registers conducted by local authorities. In Rheinland Pfalz these registers are not centralized in one record office, so at first you have to find out, where the registers you need are kept today. That is the reason why it is absolutely necessary to know the name of the place, where your ancestors were born, the marriage took place or where they died. Without this knowledge it is impossible to start tracing ancestors because there is no general index of names neither in our archives nor in the archives of the churches. If you don't know the place it may be helpful to put an advertisement in a genealogical magazine e.g. Familienkundliche Nachrichten, c/o Verlag Degener & Co. , Postfach 1380, D-91413 Neustadt/Aisch.**

**Civil registration of births, marriages and deaths was introduced in the region on the left (western) side of the Rhine in 1798 by the French occupation authorities. The Prussians did not change this law in 1815, due to this civil registers exist for the region left of the Rhine since 1798 and for the region in the right side only since 1876, when the civil registration became obligatory in all countries of the German Empire.**

**These "French" registers are held by the Landeshauptarchiv Koblenz for some communities, but not completely. The regional selection is by accident and usually registers are not available after the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Until 1814, as long as the country on the western side of the Rhine was incorporated into the Napoleonic French Empire, civil registers were written in the French language.**

**There is another type of records containing alphabetic lists of the births, marriages and deaths, one file including 10 years of one registration office(Dezennaltabellen), which are available in a wider range than the registers themselves. These lists can be helpful to find out the exact date, if you have only vague information. But as they only mention the names and dates you cannot realize family connections and to identify a person with an often used surname you have to read the registers themselves. You will find a list of all registers held**

## GENEALOGY SECTION

by the Landeshauptarchiv Koblenz, Teil 2. Zweite ergaenzte Auflage 1982 (Veroeffentlichungen aus rheinland pfaelzischen und saarlandischen Archiven. Kleine Reihe, Heft 5)

Registers which are not available in the Landeshauptarchiv Koblenz can be still in the custody of the local offices of the civil registrar (Standesaemter), which you may contact in that case. The modern civil registers since 1876 are always kept there. Concerning the region on the right side of the Rhine copies of the parish books of the 19<sup>th</sup> century for some communities are deposited in the Landeshauptarchiv, but more usually the register remain with the parishes.

Before 1798 you have to use parish register in any case which mostly have been deposited in the religious archives. Applications should be addressed to Bistumsarchiv Trier (catholic), or to Archivstelle Boppard des Archivs der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland (protestant). However, most of the registers of parishes on the right side of the Rhine are still retained by th parish offices (Pfarrraemter). You find a list in: A. Krudewig: Neues Verzeichnis der Kirchenbuecher der ehemaligen Rheinprovinz (aus Veroeffentlichungen der westdeutschen Gesellschaft fuer Familienkunde. Koeln, Neue Folge 11), 1977

If your anvestors came from the Palatinate (Pfalz) you may contact the Landesarchiv Speyer, the Archiv des Bistum Speyer, and the Protestantische Landeskirchenarchiv der Pfalz. Applications concerning emigration from Palatinate may be addressed to the Institute fuer pfaelzische Geschichte und Volkskunde. The archives for Rheinhessen are Bistumsarchiv Mainz (catholic), and the Zentralarchiv der Evangelischen Kirche in Hessen Nassau (protestant). Guides to the Protestant parish registers of the Palatinate, to the registers of the Archivstelle Boppard and of the diocese Mainz are published as: Veroeffentlichungen des Landesarchivverwaltung Rheinland Pfalz, Band. 26, 28, 30; W. Eger: Verzeichnis der protestantischen Kirchenbuecher der Pfalz. Verbesserte Neuauflage der Ausgabe 1960, 1975 (Band 26); Barbara Guenther : Verzeichnis der katholischen Kirchenbuecher und Elenchen der Dioezese Mainz sowie der Elenchen des ehemaligen Erzbistums Mainz. 1977 (Band 28); Heinz Schueler: Verzeichnis der Kirchenbuecher der Archivstelle Koblenz des Archivs der Evangelischen Kirche in Rheinland. 2. Verbesserte und erweiterte Auflage 1977 (Band 30)

If your ancestors did not migrate from a place in Rheinland Pfalz we recommend to write to the main governmental archives of the federal states (see list of addresses below) or to a regional or local genealogy association. Addresses of these associations can be obtained by the: Deutsche Zentralstelle fuer Genealogie. (German Central Office for Genealogy)

Emigrants arriving at U.S. ports are registered in the following publication: Germans to America. Lists of passengers arriving at U.S. ports 1850-1891, by Iria A. Glazier and P. William Filby. Vol. 1 (January 1850 – May 1851) – vol. 60 (Dec. 1890 – May 1891). Wilmington, Del. 1988-1998. The complete lists from 1820 up to 1897 are kept in the National Archives and Records Administration, National Archives Bldg., 8<sup>th</sup> and Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington , DC 20408, Phone 202/501-5400, Fax 202/501-5759, web side, <http://www.nara.gov/genealogy/immigration/immigrat.html>

For addresses of the Main State Archives of the German Federal States. Addresses of Genealogical Offices and Associations as well as Church Archives write to you Genealogy Editor. Christa Prewitt, P.O. Box 992, Elgin TX 78621, or e-mail : [christaj@swbell.net](mailto:christaj@swbell.net)



## FROM OUR MEMBERS

**Our Genealogy Editor, from the information received by our members compiled the following section. If you have an interest in any of the families mentioned, write directly to the member. To have your story or query appear in the next issue, write to your Genealogy Editor, Christa Prewitt, P.O. Box 992, Elgin, TX 78621. Items are published free of charge for members.**

**If you wish to submit a longer article for publication, please be sure it is camera ready. The manuscript specification are: materials must be typed, single-spaced, on 8.5" by 11" white paper.**

**Although every effort is made to publish reliable material and historical resource material, the GTHS Genealogy Editor does not accept responsibility for errors in fact or judgement in the materials submitted by members for publication. This includes spelling of names of persons and or places; the spelling is used as submitted by the member.**

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## QUERIES

Searching for information on AUGUST C. SCHULZE who came from Elle, Hanover Germany to Cat Springs, Texas in 1854. He was a Farmer. He had 1 daughter--Emilie Schulze--who married Henry Amthor and they lived around Cat Springs and Bellville, Texas. He also had 1 son named Adolph Schulze. Adolph Schulze was born February 18, 1829. He married Marie Krebs on December 22, 1859 in Bellville, Texas. Adolph and Marie (Krebs) Schulze are my Great Grandparents, after their marriage they lived in the Shelby area. Information on August C. Schulze came from a book "The Cat Springs Story" If anyone has any information on this family, please contact: Loretta (Hartfield) Leonhardt Rt 1, Box 62 Red Rock, Texas 78662-9762 .

Marie Charlotte nee Finke, wife of Gerhard Heinrich Wilhelm Losche, left Wehdem, Westfalen, on 21 Aug 1858 along with her children Wilhelmine Henriette, Heinrich Christoph, Charlotte Henriette, Johann Heinrich Wilhelm, Johann Friedrich Wilhelm, Carl Friedrich Wilhelm, Johann Christoph Wilhelm, and Hermann Heinrich. Her husband Gerhard Heinrich Wilhelm Losche is not listed as emigrating from Wehdem, but he apparently did emigrate at the same time. They came directly to the Brenham, TX area. I have fairly extensive information on their ancestries in Germany, but the only information I have on them in Texas is on the family of [my grandfather] Otto Loesch, son of Johann Friedrich. I would like to hear from other branches of this family and will gladly exchange information. My email address is mloesch@bellsouth.net. Mabel Loesch, 2140 E. Scott St., Pensacola, FL 32503-4957.

GENEALOGY SECTION

I am looking for information about the following families who emigrated from Roetgen-bei-Aachen to Texas in the 1800s: Johann Wilhelm FÖRSTER, wife Regina Zimmerman, and children Eduard Albrecht, Bertha, Ida Elisa, and Thekla (1845); Ludgerus GILLESSEN (1845); Albert KOCH, wife Eva Franziska Lennartz, and children Maria Sophia, Eduard Joseph, Anna Rosa, Johann Albert, Anna Thekla, and Johann Georg (1845); Carl Theodor KREITZ, wife Eleonore Foerster, and children Gustav, Rosalia, and Friedrich August (1860); Ernst KREITZ, wife Elisabeth Welter, and children Amalie, Peter August, Gustav Heinrich, and Gustav Adolph (1891); Johann Peter KREITZ, wife Wilhelmina Lütgen, and daughter Susanna (1846); Wilhelm Johann MATHEE, wife Margaretha Anna Fischer, and children Friedrich Leopold and Bertha Regina (1846); Julius August OFFERMANN and wife Margarethe Lips (1892); Ernst SCHNITZLER, wife Luise Foerster, and son Johann (1855); Anton Albert SCHREIBER, wife Carolina Finke, and sons Anton Albert and Johann (1879); Jacob Wilhelm SCHROEDER, wife Anna Zimmermann, and children Eleonore, Peter Paul, and Ida (1845); Eduard Friedrich ZIMMERMANN (1870-80); and Catharina Agnes May, the widow of Johann Anton ZIMMERMANN, and children Eduard, Ida and Eleonore (1845). If you have any information about these families or their descendants, please contact M. Donsbach, 2875 S.W. Raleighview Dr., Portland, Oregon, 97225.

AS TAKEN FROM THE GERMAN EVENING POST & SUNDAY POST  
TO FIND THE DAY OF THE WEEK YOU WERE BORN FROM 1789 TO 1980

A. DATE OF YEAR								B. MONTH												C. WEEKDAY						
								JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER							
1789	1801	1829	1857	1885		1925	1953	4	0	0	3	5	1	3	6	2	4	0	2	1	8	15	22	29	36	SUNDAY
1790	1802	1830	1858	1886		1926	1954	5	1	1	4	6	2	4	0	3	5	1	3	2	9	16	23	30	37	MONDAY
1791	1803	1831	1859	1887		1927	1955	6	2	2	5	0	3	5	1	4	6	2	4	3	10	17	24	31		TUESDAY
1792	1804	1832	1860	1888		1928	1956	0	3	4	0	2	5	0	3	6	1	4	6	4	11	18	25	32		WEDNESDAY
1793	1805	1833	1861	1889	1901	1929	1957	2	5	5	1	3	6	1	4	0	2	5	0	5	12	19	26	33		THURSDAY
1794	1806	1834	1862	1890	1902	1930	1958	3	6	6	2	4	0	2	5	1	3	6	1	6	13	20	27	34		FRIDAY
1795	1807	1835	1863	1891	1903	1931	1959	4	0	0	3	5	1	3	6	2	4	0	2	7	14	21	28	35		SATURDAY
1796	1808	1836	1864	1892	1904	1932	1960	5	1	2	5	0	3	5	1	4	6	2	4	EXPLANATION						
1797	1809	1837	1865	1893	1905	1933	1961	0	3	3	6	1	4	6	2	5	0	3	5	Q. On which week day did May 1, 1898 fall?						
1798	1810	1838	1866	1894	1906	1934	1962	1	4	4	0	2	5	0	3	6	1	4	6	A. On Sunday						
1799	1811	1839	1867	1895	1907	1935	1963	2	5	5	1	3	6	1	4	0	2	5	0	Solution: Look under Col. A (Year) then look to the right under Col. B. (Month - May) to find the number.						
	1812	1840	1868	1896	1908	1936	1964	3	6	0	3	5	1	3	6	2	4	0	2	The number under May is 0. Then go to Col. C (Weekday) and add 0 to 1, which is 1. 1 under Col. C shows the day to be Sunday.						
	1813	1841	1869	1897	1909	1937	1965	5	1	1	4	6	2	4	0	3	5	1	3	Further explanation:						
	1814	1842	1870	1898	1910	1938	1966	6	2	2	5	0	3	5	1	4	6	2	4	October 18, 1813						
	1815	1843	1871	1899	1911	1939	1967	0	3	3	6	1	4	6	2	5	0	3	5	5 + 18 = 23 23 indicates Monday						
	1816	1844	1872		1912	1940	1968	1	4	5	1	3	6	1	4	0	2	5	0	July 31, 1920						
1800	1817	1845	1873		1913	1941	1969	3	6	6	2	4	0	2	5	1	3	6	1	4 + 31 = 35 35 indicates Saturday						
	1818	1846	1874		1914	1942	1970	4	0	0	3	5	1	3	6	2	4	0	2							
	1819	1847	1875		1915	1943	1971	5	1	1	4	6	2	4	0	3	5	1	3							
	1820	1848	1876		1916	1944	1972	6	2	3	6	1	4	6	2	5	0	3	5							
	1821	1849	1877	1900	1917	1945	1973	1	4	4	0	2	5	0	3	6	1	4	6							
	1822	1850	1878		1918	1946	1974	2	5	5	1	3	6	1	4	0	2	5	0							
	1823	1851	1879		1919	1947	1975	3	6	6	2	4	0	2	5	1	3	6	1							
	1824	1852	1880		1920	1948	1976	4	0	1	4	6	2	4	0	3	5	1	3							
	1825	1853	1881		1921	1949	1977	6	2	2	5	0	3	5	1	4	6	2	4							
	1826	1854	1882		1922	1950	1978	0	3	3	6	1	4	6	2	5	0	3	5							
	1827	1855	1883		1923	1951	1979	1	4	4	0	2	5	0	3	6	1	4	6							
	1828	1856	1884		1924	1952	1980	2	5	6	2	4	0	2	5	1	3	6	1							

## FAMILY REUNIONS

### HEINRICH AND DOROTHEA (KEIDEL) KREBS REUNION HELD AT SHELBY, TEXAS

Descendants of Heinrich and Dorothea (Keidel) Krebs met for their 42nd reunion on September 19, 1999 at the American Legion Hall in Shelby, Texas. For the past 42 years family members gathered at this same hall for their reunions. This location is only a short distance from where the Krebs family purchased 1290 acres of land in January, 1848. Several descendants still own and live on parts of this same track of land.

Special recognition was given to 25 family members attending who are the seventh and eighth generation descendants of Krebs. In a few years, they will be in charge of the Krebs family reunion.

A catered meal of chicken fried steak and all the trimmings plus home made desserts was enjoyed by 125 family members attending.

Oldest person attending was Adolph Schmidt age 87 from Seguin, Texas. Longest married was Edgar and Ida (Krause) Schmidt--married 58 years on June 1, 1999--from Burton, Texas. Most recent married was Steve and Cindy (Sauer) Chovanec--married 1 year on September 26, 1999--from Houston, Texas. Babies under 1 year of age were Sydney Krebs 6 month old from Fayetteville, Texas and Cody Vacha 9 month old from Bellville, Texas

Also recognized were family members attending this reunion who now live outside the state of Texas. They are--Carl and Sandra (Tucker) Deffner from Oldsmar, Florida, Cathy (Camerer) Kunkel from Blue Springs, Missouri, Darrell and Charlene (Blanken) Camerer from Tulsa, Oklahoma, Uncle Ed Krebs and Fred and Waunita (Wolff) Carnes from Edmond, Oklahoma, and Alberteen (Wolff) Flint from Cushing, Oklahoma. Family members traveling the longest distance in the state of Texas were Floyd and Gennie (Sims) Bartram, John Bartram, Cliff and Brenda (Bartram) Pate and Barbara (Bartram) West from Corpus Christi, Texas.

The highlight of this years reunion was "An Eight Generation Journey." The first Krebs Family Book to be printed. Judy (Krebs) Chovanec and Loretta (Hartfield) Leonhardt have given many hours working with available family data and contacting many additional family members with whom there had been little communication in the past. A few old pictures are in the book. Over 1400 names of family members were gathered and printed in family groups.. All descendants can find their family lines. Additions and corrections were made to the preview books available at the reunion. Orders were taken for books to be delivered in 6 to 8 weeks.

The group agreed to have another Krebs family reunion on the third Sunday in September 2000. News letters will again be mailed to all family members on the mailing list in about 6 month.

Submitted by:  
Loretta (Hartfield) Leonhardt  
Rt. 1 Box 62  
Red Rock, Texas 78662-9762



# Heinsohn family meets for 45th time

LA GRANGE — The 45th reunion of the descendants of Diedrich and Maria Rodenfels Heinsohn was held at the VFW Hall in La Grange on July 18.

A silent auction, which was held before the business meeting, included a framed picture of the ship Anton Heinsohn was on when immigrating from Germany, afghan, several nice books and other items that were all donated by reunion participants.

The Wilhelm Heinsohn family boasted the most members in attendance with 50 followed by 14 descendants of Anton Heinsohn. The Gerhard Heinsohn family was represented by five people and three descendants represented John Heinsohn. There was no one present from the Friedrich Heinsohn family.

Rox Ann Johnson reported a number of family members were lost during 1998. They included Mary Ima Doyle on Nov. 19; Raymond M. Dvorak, July 31; Carl James Heinsohn, Aug. 11; Carol Y. Heinsohn, April 17; Natalie Heinsohn, May 20; and Marie Pflughaupt, Aug. 22. Harold Herbert Schultz, who died June 18, has been the only member that passed away this year.

Prizes were awarded to Lydia Friedrick, 91, as the oldest lady; Mike Heinsohn, 90, oldest gentleman; George and Hedwig Telschick, married the longest at 63 years; Timo Heinsohn of Germany, traveled the farthest; Jonah Heinsohn, 4 months, youngest boy; and Delta Haevischer, 8, youngest girl.

New officers elected for the next reunion include Joyce Heinsohn as president; Kathy Hord, vice president; Dawn Heinsohn, secretary/treasurer; Mary Frances Heinsohn, chaplain; and Janice Cloteaux and Johnson, historians.

The next reunion was set for July 16, 2000.

The second Heinsohn Heritage Tour, held in conjunction with the 45th Heinsohn Family Reunion, began at the Fayetteville square on July 17 with 54 relatives participating.

Dawn Heinsohn, reunion secretary, greeted and registered the participants at the gazebo. Johnson, one of the reunion's historians, told how six Heinsohn brothers had immigrated to Texas from the area around Varel in Oldenburg between 1845 and 1850.

After listening to a brief history of Heinrich Diedrich Heinsohn's life in Germany, the group rode in caravan to the home of Bernice Heinsohn between Willow Springs and Frelsburg. The oldest brother, Wilhelm Heinsohn, founded this farm in 1867.

Heinsohn described how she came to the farm as the young bride of Wilhelm's grandson in 1935 and how she managed to keep farming even after being widowed with five young children. She talked about the early buildings on the farm and how her father-in-law had run a broom factory from that spot.

Johnson gave a brief history of Wilhelm and Meta Heinsohn's children, displaying their photographs and telling where they lived.

The group went out to the barn to look at old, numbered, notched timbers, which are thought to be from an early Heinsohn cabin, and then enjoyed lemonade and cookies made by Heinsohn and her family.

Johnson also gave a short history of the Friedrich, Heinrich, Gerhard and John Heinsohn families.

Friedrich Heinsohn immigrated to Galveston in 1845 and never left the area. Heinrich immigrated with his wife Catherine and a small child, but the couple died in Austin County just a few years later.

Gerhard Heinsohn married Sophie Fehrenkamp and raised a large family just inside the Fayette County border. John Heinsohn also immigrated in 1845 while Texas was still a republic and settled in the area around Post Oak Point in Austin County.

See REUNION, Page 9

## Reunion

Continued from Page 8

At the Anton Heinsohn Family Cemetery, where the youngest of the Heinsohn brothers and about six of his descendants are buried on his old farm, a short history of Anton and Nancy Stoeltje Heinsohn's family was given. Relatives viewed photos of his children and information on how the children had spread out in clusters from Colorado to Lavaca County, and Bartlett.

The next stop was the Anton Heinsohn homesite on the Pflughaupt's property. Ray Heinsohn, reunion president, described how a fire had changed the roofline of the old home. The house as it stands today was compared to a photograph from the time when Anton Heinsohn lived there. Shirley Pflughaupt Evans briefly told about growing up in that house.

Mildred and Teddy Schultz greeted the group at the Trinity Lutheran Church in Frelsburg and gave a history of the church. Five of the Heinsohn immigrant ancestors are buried in the church cemetery and countless Heinsohn baptisms, weddings, and funerals have been performed through this church since the 1850s.

The tour concluded with family members visiting the cemetery where 47 graves of Heinsohn descendants were marked for the occasion with identical small bouquets.

## 52nd Annual Gloyna Family Reunion

The 52nd Annual Gloyna Family Reunion was held Sunday, June 6, 1999, at the Lincoln Community Center, Lincoln, Texas, with 132 family members present. Billy and Patsy Zwernemann of Spring, Texas, were in charge of arrangements. Reunion committee members Chris and Diana Kimmey and David and Shelley Kasper were responsible for table set-up and barbecue. They were assisted in food preparation by Johnny Kasper and Michael Evans, barbecue; LaVerne Zwernemann and Lois Kasper, noodles; Cora and Danny Beckett, seasoned potatoes; LaVerne and Odell Dancak, cucumber salad; Minnie Michalk, dill gherkins; Patti Zwernemann, tea and coffee. Family members provided desserts. Norman Davis and Patti Zwernemann served as cashiers.

Billy Zwernemann called the group together at 12:30 p.m. and led them in a table prayer.

Following the meal a brief business meeting was held. Billy thanked the reunion committee and the folks helping in the preparation of food. He welcomed back the family of the late Alfred Gloyna; Mark and Cathy Gloyna, Susan and Allen Schatz, Joey Gloyna and their mother Mildred R. Gloyna all of Houston.

A moment of silence was observed in memory of those who departed this life since the last reunion; Louise Zwernemann, September 13, 1998; Alfred Gloyna, February 19, 1999; Ella Gloyna, June 5, 1999.

Billy called on Weldon Markert to come forward and give directions to the special event of the day, the dedication of the Gloyna School historical marker. Weldon invited everyone to attend the 3 p. m. Gloyna School dedication site located 3 miles east of Lincoln on State Highway 21, then 0.2 miles east on Lee County Road 440. Weldon and Della Markert did all the research and paper work necessary to obtain the marker, a project they called a labor of love.

Amelia Hannes Schroeder, age 88, of Brenham, was the oldest descendant present. Georgia Kate Curiaz, age 4 months, daughter of Shari and Steven Curiaz, of Austin, was the youngest descendant present. Emily Clay and children Catherine and Will and Steven Rundell all of Houston were welcome first-timers.

Odell and LaVerne Dancak will serve as chairmen of the 53rd Gloyna reunion June 4, 2000, at the Lincoln Community Center in Lincoln, Texas. Billy and Patsy Zwernemann were thanked for serving as chairmen for the past three years.

After a full day of fellowship, tracing the family history with an ancestral chart, family pictures, maps, wedding and baptismal certificates, the dedication of the Gloyna School historical marker, the day ended with enthusiasm to continue learning more about our ancestors.

For additional information about the Gloyna reunion contact LaVerne Dancak e-mail [lalavender@aol.com](mailto:lalavender@aol.com) or 512-836-3115 or Billy Zwernemann 281-367-5272.

Submitted by Joyce Schroeder Nelson, 1419 Ridgehaven Drive, Austin, Texas, 78723,  
512-453-8196





**UNVEILS MARKER --** Shown are mother and daughter teams that unveiled the Gloyna School Marker. Pictured from left is Tillie (Seelke) Herzog and her daughter Allene (Herzog) Reuther. On the right is Ella (Reuther) Knippa and her daughter Caroline (Knippa) Malinak.

## Gloyna School historical marker dedication held June 6

The dedication of the Gloyna School Historical Marker was held Sunday, June 6, near the site of the old Gloyna School building on County Road 440, just off State Hwy. 21.

The ceremony began with welcoming the approximately 150 people in attendance, followed by the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Eighteen former students were present, along with their relatives and friends. Many of those attending were descendants of Christian Gloyna, in whose honor the school was named.

Grandson of Christian Gloyna and Master of Ceremonies, Weldon Markert, introduced Carolyn Marble, Chairman of the Lee County Historical Commission. Carolyn represented the Commission and in her message encouraged the retaining and preserving of our heritage through historical markers.

The featured speaker was Farrel Zwerneman, who holds a Doctorate in Civil Engineering and is a great grandson of Christian Gloyna. Dr. Zwerneman stressed the importance of education and praised our forefathers who, even in their struggle to make a living, provided education for their children.

The unveiling of the marker was done by two mother and daughter teams who all were former students of Gloyna

School. They were Tillie (Seelke) Herzog and her daughter Allene (Herzog) Reuther and Ella (Reuther) Knippa and her daughter Caroline (Knippa) Malinak. The inscription of the marker was read by Laverne Danak, also a descendant of Christian Gloyna.

Tillie (Seelke) Herzog, 92, was the oldest former student present with Amanda (Kasper) Beisert, also 92, coming in a close second. Bernice (Reuther) Beisert, 56, was the youngest former student present. Bernice was in the first grade when Gloyna School closed its doors.

Gloyna School was established as Hannes School No. 43 in 1893 when F. Soder deeded two acres to school trustees. In 1900, Christian Gloyna bought the surrounding land and the school became known as Gloyna School. The facility became Gloyna Common School District No. 17 in 1909 and encompassed almost 10,000 acres. The one-room school also was used for Lutheran church services conducted by Rev. William Mueller. A larger building replaced the original structure in 1923. Enrollment dropped in the late 1940s and Gloyna School was annexed by the Dime Box School District in 1950. The 50 years of service provided to this German community by Gloyna School is a reminder of the vital role of rural education in Texas' past.



GLOYNA SCHOOL

ESTABLISHED AS HANNES SCHOOL NO. 43 IN 1893 WHEN F. SODER DEEDED TWO ACRES TO SCHOOL TRUSTEES, THE GLOYNA SCHOOL WAS RENAMED IN 1900 WHEN CHRISTIAN GLOYNA BOUGHT THE SURROUNDING LAND. THE FACILITY BECAME GLOYNA COMMON SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17 IN 1909, AND ENCOMPASSED ALMOST 10,000 ACRES WITHIN ITS BOUNDARIES. THE ONE-ROOM WAS ALSO USED FOR COMMUNITY RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES. TWENTY-FOUR STUDENTS ATTENDED CLASS REGULARLY BY 1911. A LARGER BUILDING REPLACED THE ORIGINAL STRUCTURE IN 1923. ENROLLMENT DROPPED IN THE LATE 1940s. GLOYNA SCHOOL WAS ANNEXED BY THE DIME BOX SCHOOL DISTRICT IN 1950. THE 50 YEARS OF SERVICE PROVIDED TO THIS GERMAN COMMUNITY BY GLOYNA SCHOOL IS A REMINDER OF THE VITAL ROLE OF RURAL EDUCATION IN TEXAS' PAST. (1999)

Location: 3 mi. E of Lincoln on SH 21, then 0.2 mi. E on CR 440



## Reunions

### Hertel family has get-together

The descendants of Carl and Juliana Pietsch Hertel held their annual reunion on Oct. 10 at the American Legion Home in Schulerburg.

The meeting was called to order by president Jeanette Hertel Gouldsberry, who was assisted by Florence Hertel Farek, secretary-treasurer.

Officers elected for the year 2000 were Leonard Schulze, president; Gouldsberry, secretary; and Farek, treasurer.

Gouldsberry requested information from each family to supplement the family book printed in 1974. She also had a display of old family photos that was enjoyed by everyone.

Charles Hertel from McLean, Va. spoke regarding his search for the family scroll. This scroll had been handed down to the oldest son of each generation to record the history of that generation. It showed the "De Heartelle Clan" migrated to Holland right after the French Revolution. Being a higher-educated group, their convictions differed greatly with the victorious French. They changed their name to Hertel.

After several generations of intermarriage with the Dutch, a segment of the family migrated to the Saxon Germany territory. The first part of the scroll was written in French, the next part in Dutch and the last part in German. After Carl Hertel died, the scroll could not be found.

Charles' daughter, Jennifer Hertel, who lives in Germany, spoke of her great-great-grandfather. She told of the many wars going on in Germany in the 1800s and how Carl wanted no part of that. He left for America two weeks before his 18th birthday.

The information they shared gave everyone an incentive to do more research into their family history.

Mr. and Mrs. Elton Schulze were honored for being the longest married couple at the reunion. They celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary earlier this year. Elton is the grandson of Carl and Juliana Hertel.

Jennifer Hertel of Germany was honored for having traveled the longest distance. She is the great-great-granddaughter of Carl and Juliana Hertel.

## Koenig Reunion Held At K Bar K Ranch

The family members who are descendants of John August Koenig and Mary Klaevemann Koenig met for a reunion near O'Quinn at the K Bar K Ranch Sept. 25.

Four of the five living sons and daughters and 45 other descendants gathered at the home of Rear Admiral J. Weldon Koenig and his wife, Nancy.

Assisting hosts were Jennifer Koenig Hill and her husband Will Hill, Andrew Koenig and his wife Dawn Oldham Koenig.

The oldest son, Charles C. Koenig celebrated his 96th birthday during the reunion. He told the family that he was doing well and that his "navigators" (knees and legs) were restricting his movements somewhat or he would be in perfect shape.

His oldest son, Wilburn Koenig, opened the noon meal with a prayer and started the event. Everyone enjoyed the bountiful array of foods that brought back memories of the family gatherings and satisfied everyone's taste.

The oldest daughter, Helen Koenig Niemeyer, was unable to attend, but her three sons, Herbert, Melvin and John C. Niemeyer were present and brought greetings from Helen.

Hattie Koenig Krischke of Schulerburg along with her two sons, Wayne and Ronnie Krischke, as well as Paul Koenig of Hallettsville and his son Robert Koenig and daughter Karen Koenig Day were also present.

The youngest living son, Walter Koenig of El Campo arrived without his wife, Lorene, who was recovering from surgery.

The youngest attendee was Austin Abbott, son of Derek and Susan Abbott, the grandson of Barbara Koenig Abbot and great-grandson of



CHARLES KOENIG

the late Bill Koenig.

Those traveling the farthest were Melvin Niemeyer from Colorado, John C. Niemeyer from Oklahoma, Ronnie Krischke from Louisiana and Robert Koenig from Eagle Pass.

Others attending were Mary Louise Koenig Holdren and her husband Rick. Mary Louise is the daughter of Hermann F. (Sam) Koenig who died earlier this year.

Newlyweds since the last reunion unable to attend were Gregory Wessels and his wife, Amanda; Andrew Koenig and his wife Dawn; and Kara Koenig Boyle and her husband Michael. Greg is the son of James and Diane Wessels and the grandson of the late Myrtle Koenig Wessels and Milton Wessels. Andrew is the son of Weldon Koenig and his wife Nancy and the grandson of Elva Oeding Koenig and the late John H. Koenig. Kara is the daughter of Robert (Bobby) Koenig and the granddaughter of Paul and Alene Koenig.

The visiting and storytelling carried on into the evening and everyone is looking forward to the next reunion in September of 2000.

## ESCHBERGER REUNION

The 44th annual reunion of the Gottlieb and Louise Eschberger family was held Sunday September 26, 1999 at VFW Hall in Elgin with about 175 people attending. Gottlieb and Louise had 7 children, 1 dying young. Each year descendants of one of the remaining six host the reunion. This year the Herman and Auguste Mittag Eschberger branch hosted. A delicious BBQ brisquet dinner was served. The business meeting was called to order by Roy Schindler. Mikki Meyer reported she is updating the Eschberger History Book and please send all corrections and additions to her. The Eschberger Cemetery, where Gottlieb and Louise are buried was visited and reported to be in order. Mikki Meyer and Rosie Schulz have updated the family group charts and they look very nice. Rosie read a history of the Herman-Auguste family and also stories of childhood memories.

Louise Eschberger, daughter of Godfrey and Elizabeth Eschberger, came to the USA on the ship "Neptune" with her mother and 5 siblings December 29, 1852. Her father had arrived on the "Magnet" February 1, 1852. Gottlieb, a cousin, arrived June 25, 1854 on the "Galliott Concordia". He and Louise married August 23, 1855. Gottlieb enlisted in the Confederacy and served until the end of the war. In 1871, the family (they now had 3 children) homesteaded 160 acres north of Paige, in the Paint Creek Community. Most of these original acres are now owned by their great-grandchildren and are registered in the "Family Land Heritage Program" as being in the same family for 100 years or more. Gottlieb died October 29, 1889 and Louise died September 15, 1910. They are buried in "Eschberger Cemetery", so called because mostly Eschberger's and their kin, plus some neighbors are buried there. The reunion provides funds for the upkeep of the cemetery.

The next reunion will be September 24, 2000 at the VFW in Elgin with Sam Eschberger descendants in charge.

Submitted by:

Mikki Eschberger Meyer  
 1596 Stockade Ranch Road  
 Paige Texas 78659

## *Munke-Laux family gathers at Ammannsville*

The 1999 reunion of the Christian Munke/Margaretha Laux Munke family was held at the KJT Hall in Ammannsville on Sunday, June 6, with 39 descendants and friends present. Members of the Fietsam family of the John Munke branch hosted.

Thanks before a delicious covered dish noon meal were offered by Bessie Bean. Following the meal, Annie Fietsam, wife of descendant John Fietsam, welcomed all in attendance and the business meeting was held. Imogene Williams read the minutes of the 1998 meeting as recorded by Barbara Wick; they were approved.

There was one addition to the family - Tamara Fietsam, bride of Brad Fietsam. No loss of family members was reported.

Suggestions for increasing interest in and attendance were discussed. Michael Wied proposed possibly combining with the reunion of another family group. In addition, ways of making the reunion more interesting and more of an outing for the younger members was suggested. More options will be discussed at the 2000 reunion.

A sincere invitation is extended to everyone related to the Munke/Laux families and friends to mark their calendars now and be in touch with family members making them aware of the date.

Awards were given to the couple married the longest, John and Annie Fietsam of Schulenburg, 43 years; most recently married, Brad and Tamara Fietsam, 6 months; oldest

man, Roy Williams of San Antonio, 75; oldest woman, Elva Koenig of La Grange, 86; those traveling the farthest, Nancy and Alegra Abbey of San Francisco; youngest boy, Christopher Garcia of San Antonio, 2 years, 11 months; and youngest girl, Annie Wick, 2 years, 3 months.

Attendance door prizes were donated by John and Annie Fietsam, Bessie Bean, Lillian Stuesser, and Roy and Imogene Williams.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Henry Bean, son of Bessie Bean, took up a free-will offering to provide working capital for next year's reunion, which will again be held at the Ammannsville KJT Hall on the first Sunday in June. Hosts will be the Fietsam descendants of the John Munke branch of the family.



## FAMILY REUNIONS

# Forty-one Descendants Attend Pagel Reunion

Forth-one descendants and five friends of the Gottfried and Friedrike Pagel family met July 11 at the Shelby American Legion Hall for their annual reunion.

Descendants of the Friedrich Wilhelm Pagel, Charles Pagel, August Pagel, Fredericka Ladewig, Ernest Pagel and Julius Pagel attended the reunion.

The families of Wilhelmine Fischer, Emilie Appelt and Fritz Pagel were not represented.

Maynette Heinsohn of Willow Springs registered the guests, many of whom attended for the first time.

Clyde Pagel of San Antonio, vice-president, said the blessing before the noon covered dish luncheon. Henry Pagel of San Antonio, reunion president, conducted the meeting.

Rox Ann Johnson of Austin read the minutes and Victor Roeber of Hallettsville was not present to give the treasurer's report.

Mrs. Johnson, who is also the reunion historian, remembered the following family members who had passed away since last year's reunion. They included Carl Defibaugh, Lillye Harvey Jakubek, Natalie Heinsohn, Harry Horn Jr., Gladys Kaiser and Velma Pagel.

The Wilhelmine Fischer family will be profiled in the next year's reunion newsletter.

PC Mike Heinsohn of Houston was recognized as the oldest person present. Ty Pagel of Groesbeck was youngest; Victoria Orsak of

Hallettsville, longest married person, 64 years, (her husband was unable to attend); and Henriette and Ed Haynes of Hallettsville, longest married couple, 58 years.

The president, vice-president and secretary were re-elected for the next year. Bob Zumwalt was elected as treasurer. Betty Pagel of Gonzales volunteered to bring the paper goods for the next year's noon meal and the group voted to hold the next reunion July 9 at the Shelby American Legion hall. A silent auction was held for the first time and added \$71 to this year's receipts.

Wall charts detailing the relationships of the Pagel cousins and numerous notebooks filled with photos and news clippings were on hand for viewing.

Frank Pagel of Tivoli brought in original documents which belonged to Gottfried Pagel, including immigration and naturalization papers and his will.

At mid-afternoon, most of the attendees formed a caravan to visit the Pagel Cemetery at Willow Springs. This was the site where Gottfried Pagel first settled his family in Texas. The oldest known grave is that of his oldest son, Friedrich Wilhelm Pagel, who died in 1873. Numerous other family members are also buried there. Ted Heinsohn of Houston and his brother, Mike, were recognized for their work in maintaining the cemetery.



## NAUMANN REUNION

The Texas heat did not deter approximately one hundred descendants of Carl Heinrich and Eva Fredericka Naumann from attending the fifth annual Naumann Reunion on August 7, 1999, at the Community Center in Spicewood, Texas.

The Naumanns left their home in Saxony, Germany, with their five small children, Emilie, Morris, Anna, August, and Harman ranging from ages 2 to 9. They arrived in New York on May 31, 1870, on the "Silesia," and went immediately by train to Illinois where they were listed on the 1870 census. Three more children--Henry, Willie, and Max--were born in Illinois before the family moved to the Central Texas area.

Dr. Mervin Lawrence Naumann, grandson of Willie, conducted a memorial service for Lena Skutca, oldest daughter of Max Naumann, and Gayle Naumann, grandson of August Naumann. Mervin also "teased" us by showing a "mystery" photograph to see if anyone could identify the two little boys, who proved to be his father and uncle, Hartman and Malcolm Naumann.

Doris Phillips, granddaughter of August, recognized the oldest Naumanns present (sisters-in-law Alma and Pauline) youngest (Heather, five weeks old daughter of the Bobby Naumanns) coming the farthest (Lonnie and Beverly Reed of Lubbock) and married longest (Adolph and Charlene Naumann, 56 years).

From having contacted representatives of the children of Carl Heinrich and Fredericka, Doris was able to report that the couple has had about 515 descendants, most of whom live or lived in Texas. Only the oldest child, Emilie, and her husband, John Troutwine, left Texas to settle in the Portland, Oregon, area.

Family photos and albums were on display and pictures were taken and exchanged before and after a bountiful lunch. More visiting, reminiscing, golf, and swimming at nearby Krause Springs were enjoyed after lunch. A "left-overs" meal finished the day for those who could stay for it.

The sixth annual Naumann Reunion will be held on the first Saturday in August 2000 at the Spicewood Community Center. If you are a Naumann descendant, come, bring pictures, and exchange stories.

Submitted by: Doris W. Phillips  
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Marble Falls, TX 78654  
(830/693-2685)

By Bert Crowesen

## INTRODUCTION

I'll be the first to admit that you **DO NOT HAVE TO HAVE A COMPUTER** in order to do genealogy. There are people who have been doing genealogy research for many years who find that it is just too stressful to learn how to use a computer. They seem as happy and satisfied without computers as the people are who use them.

Even if you have a computer, you will still have to do your research. However, the use of a computer can be extremely helpful in managing the vast amount of information that continues to build up over a period of time and in producing a variety of reports and charts. What used to take hours or days now can be accomplished in a matter of seconds or minutes.

1. You will be able to better organize and manage your information. As you research further back, the number of people in your collection will grow enormously. Someone has estimated that at four generations, you may have as many as 2,000 second cousins and at five generations you could have up to 40,000 third cousins. With that many names, you may have a tendency to forget a name, or forget what line goes with what name.
2. You can design your own custom reports just the way you need them. If the report is not exactly what you want, you can print the report to a disk file and make all sorts of modifications with your favorite word processor.
3. This includes adding special fonts, graphics, scanned photos or maps, or attaching a lengthy document to a particular individual's record.
4. I especially like the box charts that several of the programs produce. Some programs print a calendar that will include all the birthdays and anniversaries of any line you choose.
5. Some programs will add the needed words to transform your data into book form, paragraphs and all.
6. You can actually use your computer to help do some research. A friend of mine said he found a missing individual by letting the computer program do a search of the source notes he had entered. And the internet has opened up many areas that help your research.
7. Some programs to help you enter and keep track of your citations and source. There are programs to help record data from Census Records, or Cemetery information.
8. To mention just a few

As with learning to drive an automobile or operating a VCR, it does require a learning process. Anyone can learn to use a computer if they want to. They may need some assistance from someone who knows, but anyone can learn.

1. Buy from a reputable dealer, not one selling computers as a sideline.
2. Can the unit be upgraded or repaired with standard name brand merchandise?
3. Buy the latest technology if it is within your budget.

## **GENEALOGICAL SOFTWARE PROGRAMS**

What's the BEST software for genealogy? Better is a matter of opinion. It's like asking which car is the best. Some people like Trucks and some like Sedans. The answer a person may give concerning the best genealogical computer program may be interesting, but not necessarily of value to your needs. Even the most popular genealogical software package on the market may not be the best choice for YOUR purposes. No point in buying a Sherman Tank when all you need is a bicycle.

The real question is "WHAT DO YOU WISH TO ACCOMPLISH WITH THE SOFTWARE?"

As with learning to drive an automobile or operating a VCR, it does require a learning process. Anyone can learn to use a computer if they want to. They may need some assistance from someone who knows, but anyone can learn.

### **CRITERIA FOR CHOOSING GENEALOGICAL SOFTWARE**

1. Ease of learning
2. Ease of navigating the program
3. Ease of data entry
4. Ease of data retrieval
5. User friendly interface
6. Will give you the charts and reports you desire
7. Provides for adequate notes
8. Provides for adequate source documentation
9. Support is good
10. Updated periodically
11. Provides ditto keys to reduce repeated typing
12. Has GEDCOM capability
13. Ability to export reports to a word processor
14. Cost

The limitations of a DOS based program is the inability to create the quality reports and charts that you can through the Windows environment.

By the way, there are several programs for the Mac Computer, including a PAF and Reunion, just to name two.

There are many capable programs that can meet your needs they're all good programs. Which is the BEST depends on your individual preference and how you plan to use the program. And they are always changing and improving. A program that does everything today will probably be out-done tomorrow.

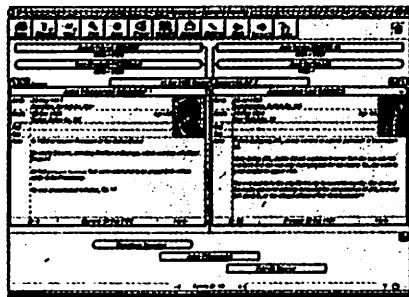


## Reunion 6

**R**eunion has long been rated the best genealogy product available for the Mac. Its

slick interface and ease of use make it perfect for family-tree newbies and serious genealogists alike. And Reunion 6 is a compelling upgrade, making it the perfect way to research your roots.

Building a family history in Reunion is elementary. Upon creating a new database, you're asked whether you want to add a new person or import an existing data file. (These steps can be skipped if you just want to play around at first.) Once you've added your first record, you're well on your way. The program provides several means — all of which are incredibly intuitive — of adding parents,



siblings, children, new or multiple spouses, and virtually any other possible family variant. Within a matter of moments, and even with a very limited amount of information, you can create a clearly defined lineage. Reunion also includes excellent help and tutorial files. If any feature isn't immediately obvious, you'll be able to figure it out in a snap.

Reunion 6 adds a bevy of new features, as well as updating or enhancing many standard ones. You can now add pictures to the Main Family Card View, allowing you to look at old Aunt Jane while you're entering detailed information about her. There is now a Match-and-Merge feature that will search your database for duplicate records and allow you to delete or correct them. The program also provides Privacy Filtering, so you can omit specific personal information that may not be suitable for public consumption.

What makes Reunion a complete standout are its reporting tools. Not only can you easily print out a standard genealogy chart, but your complete database can be ported to HTML so that you can pop it onto the Web for others to see. You can also print out blank Person or Family pages that can be used for collecting information about your family.

**The Final Decision** Reunion is the best genealogy software on the market for a good reason. Ease of use, intuitive interface, and excellent reporting tools make Reunion the only program you'll need to trace your family history.

— Jeff Battersby

**rating**

\$100, Leister Productions  
717-697-1378  
www.leisterpro.com

Intuitive interface, excellent help and tutorial, perfectly suited for beginners and professionals

None

June 1999 MacHome 35

## Native American Groups to Participate in Karl May Festival

The biggest powwow in Europe will be taking place near the Saxon city of Radebeul this weekend. Members of at least ten different Native American tribes will be performing traditional music, dance, and spiritual ceremonies at this year's Karl May Festival, the annual celebration of Germany's best-known author of Western fiction. Artists include the Red Hawk Singers, a U.S. music group, as well as representatives of Mexico's Totonaken tribe, who promise to demonstrate the spectacular "sun tree ritual," in which participants plunge from the top of a 90-foot pole. And Radebeul's North and Central American guests won't be the only "Indians" at the three-day tribute to the Old West. Members of two local Karl May fan clubs, The Buffalos and Old Manitou 1956, will also be on hand to help instruct festival visitors in Native American lore.

Although American Indian culture will be the highlight of the festival, Radebeul is offering plenty of other ac-

tivities guaranteed to please Western enthusiasts, including horseback riding, a trip by steam-powered locomotive, and a "rancher's competition," where contestants can test their skill in such disciplines as beer-mug sliding, lassoing, and horseshoes. Bluegrass bands from the United States as well as Bulgaria, Germany and Austria will be performing in the make-believe Western town of Little Tombstone, named after a spot in Arizona.

A native of the Erzgebirge region in Saxony, Karl May (1842-1912) remains to this day one of the most widely read authors in Germany. His Western adventures, featuring the heroes Old Shatterhand and Winnetou, were immensely influential in shaping German notions of the American West and Native American life. For all their abundance of detail and local color, his Western stories - like his works set in other exotic locales - were written long before May ventured beyond his Saxon homeland. ■

**Letter to the genealogy editor.**

Marianne Elizabeth Hall-Little  
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 3 Sept 1999

Dear Christa,

I wanted to share a genealogy item with you. Proves never to give up searching as we find answers in the "strangest" of places.

I received all the old photo albums and such that my mother's mother, Muriel Morrison Byram Hartmann, still had at the time of her death in June, 1994. Many of her photographs, albums and such I got long before she even got sick as I was the only one interested and so forth.

One entire album had photos taken late 1860s to turn of the century and were almost all taken in O'Quinn, TX. Only my grandmother had no idea who in the family had lived there. We knew that none of her family had lived there, that she remembered or we could find. I finally found the town of O'Quinn in Fayette County and really that SHOULD have sent off bells in my head but it didn't. I knew that my part of the family had left Fayette Co, by 1855. So, time rumbled on and I didn't try to figure out why I had these photographs.

I am a charter member of the German-Texan Heritage Society and in the most recent quarterly on page 113, there was a small mention of O'Quinn, TX! The article mentioned the Norman Woods family and Leander Cottle. I am a descendant of Norman's brother, Montraville Woods and Leander Cottle was a cousin.

My grandfather, August Blanton Hartmann, was the youngest child of William and Emma Ardelia Woods Hartmann. Emma was the youngest child of the Montraville and Isabella Gonzales, Hidalgo Woods. Obviously Emma inherited her parents photograph albums and we had known for quite some time that my grandfather had gotten the albums from his mother. We THOUGHT that there was

only one album but obviously, there were two!! Odd that I would find my clue in the German-Texan Quarterly as it was Emma Woods Hartmann's husband, William, who was the German Texan!!

Please pass along my thanks to Evangeline Loessin Whorton for her fine article on Black Jack Springs Cemetery and tell her that she solved a 25 years old mystery for me!!

Sincerely,

Marianne

I really must close and continue on with getting my house cleaned!! Hope all is well with you and yours. Keep us in your prayers.

Love you,

Found in Attic by Conrad Henkel, San Antonio, TX



Zum frommen Andenken  
an  
Hochw. Wilhelm A. Fuhrwerk  
Rektor der St. Josephs-Kirche  
zu  
San Antonio, Texas.  
Geboren zu München-Gladbach, Rhein-  
Preußen, den 30. Juli, 1858.  
Zum Priester geweiht vom Hochw'sten  
Herrn Bischof J. E. Keras zu San  
Antonio, Texas, den 13. August, 1887.  
Gestorben zu San Antonio, Texas, am  
3. April, 1916.  
**R. I. P.**  
Es geistliche, werde gelobt und ewig gerech-  
ten der gerechteste, höchste und lebenswür-  
digste Wille Gottes in Allem. (100 Tage Ablass.)  
O Herr, gib ihm die ewige Ruhe und das  
ewige Licht leuchte ihm: laß ihn ruhen im  
Frieden. Amen. Vater unser. Begrüßet seist.

**Jesus! Maria! Josef!**  
„Die Krone der Greise ist viel Erfahrung und  
ihr Ruhm ist die Furcht Gottes.“ Eccli. 25, 8.  
„Wohlan! Du bist treu gewesen,  
Geh' ein in die Freude deines Herrn.“  
**Zum frommen Andenken**  
an den nun in Gott ruhenden  
**Herrn Michael Bemex**  
geb. zu Weissenheim am 16. Nov. 1830  
gestorben daselbst am 18. Januar 1911  
nach kurzer schwerer Krankheit, wohl-  
vorbereitet durch den Empfang der hl.  
Sacramente.  
**Er ruhe in Frieden!**  
Gebet. O Gott der Barmherzigkeit  
und allen Trostes, wir empfehlen Dir die  
Seele Deines treuen Dieners Michael, damit  
er, der Welt abgestorben, bei Dir ewig  
leben möge und was er aus menschlicher  
Schwachheit gefehlt, das wollest Du ihm  
durch Deine barmherzige Güte gnädigst  
verzeihen, durch Jesum Christum unsern  
Herrn. Amen.  
Vater unser. Ave Maria.  
O Herr gib ihm die ewige Ruhe!  
Süßes Herz Jesu, sei meine Liebe!  
Süßes Herz Maria, sei meine Rettung!

Louis Jülicher, Weissenheim a. Rh.



**GERMAN-TEXAN HERITAGE SOCIETY  
STATE CONVENTION**

## LEAVE YOUR GERMAN MARK

(Estate Planning by Rodney C. Koenig)  
(713) 651-5333

October 8-9, 1999  
Fredericksburg, Texas

We are fortunate to have the many positive aspects of our Texas German heritage. We can leave our mark on our community if we choose to do so. A number of creative ways exist for all of us to support German-Texan causes. The items below are designed to be a checklist for ways in which German-Texans can help in leaving their German mark.

1. So what if the kids don't want the stuff? Preserve old family books and letters. Collect and record old letters and stories of your family. Make tape recordings of your mother, father, grandparents, Oma, Opa, Tanta, Onkel and others.
2. Search out old diaries and account books. Have them rebound to keep or to be placed in local museums.
3. Prepare and record your family history, both in words and in pictures.
4. Help organize and publicize the German aspects of your family reunion. Be certain that someone publicizes this in all of the local newspapers. Identify the towns in Germany from whence your ancestors came.
5. Refurbish the gravemarker of an ancestor. Help clean an old German cemetery. Establish a chapel at your ancestor's old German cemetery, such as the Black Jack Springs Cemetery Chapel built in 1999.
6. Join and be active in German-Texan singing groups. Organize a German singing group in your locality. Attend the annual State Saengerfest.
7. Submit articles on German-Texans, including your ancestors, to the GTHS Journal, which is published three times a year. Help underwrite the Journal, as Germania Insurance does.
8. Create a scholarship fund to support your favorite university which has a German department.
9. Create a German-Texan Heritage Society professorship at your favorite school in honor of your parents, grandparents or other ancestor.
10. Create a lectureship to encourage significant writing and an annual lecture on German-Texan heritage.
11. Underwrite publishing the history of various local German-Texan organizations throughout the state, such as the brief history of the Houston Saengerbund underwritten by Asta Grona and authored by Professor Ted Gish.
12. Underwrite the maintenance of the German-Texan Heritage Society Headquarters in Austin. Remember Dr. Kelly H. Stevens who so generously gave us the German Free School at 507 East 10th Street in Austin. Help us pay for the purchase of the vacant lot next to our state headquarters. Donate to the garden fund for plants for the German Free School.
13. Search out and find other important German-Texan buildings and work toward their preservation.
14. Provide funds to assist in German genealogical research.

15. Provide funds to microfilm old German-Texan newspapers as Miriam York and Charles Trenckmann did.
16. Provide funds to assist in the support of exchange students to and from Germany as Mary El-Beheri, Ted Gish and others do.
17. Add your favorite German-Texan charity, university, local museum or similar organization as a beneficiary under your Will, as Eugenia Miller did with her Luck and Loessin Collection Trust.
18. Add your favorite German charity as a beneficiary on a life insurance policy or IRA.
19. Create a German skat club, a German quilting club, or a German cooking club.
20. Create a cash award to the top German language student and German teacher in your local high school. Attend awards day. Provide scholarships to local students who will major or minor in German at a local university.

The above list is not meant to be all inclusive. Your own ingenuity can think of other ways in which you could creatively help leave your German mark. If you are interested in any of these matters, please contact Rodney C. Koenig, any of the state officers or any board member for more information. In particular, you should consider amending your Will or changing your life insurance beneficiary designation or IRA to provide for funds for one or more of the above purposes. A format (which should be reviewed by your own lawyer) which could be used for an amendment (Codicil) to your Will, which should be completely in your handwriting and witnessed by two disinterested persons, could be done as follows:

Version 1

This is a codicil to my Will. In addition to other gifts, I give an amount equal to ten (10%) of my gross estate to the German-Texan Heritage Society in memory of Oma Mueller and Opa Ehler. This gift is to be used to preserve German heritage as determined by the Board of GTHS. My grandmother and my grandfather's names shall be associated with this gift. Signed on this 7<sup>th</sup> day of October, 1999.

Witnesses: Margaret Oeding Marie Brock Joseph Mueller

Version 2

This is a codicil to my will. I give \$25,000 and my farm at Lone Star creek to the German Department of my alma mater, Texas Lutheran University, to fund an annual scholarship for a deserving student of German from the state of Texas. I ask that this gift be in honor of my dear German wife, Meta Joost Klaevemann and my daughter, Mary Klaevemann Koenig.

Witnesses: Thomas Oeding  
Bertha Dinklage

Signed on this 9<sup>th</sup> Day of October 1999  
Herman Christoph Klaevemann

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