

GERMAN-BOHEMIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

P. O. BOX 822 NEW ULM, MN. 56073

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Louie Lindmeyer, Editor

A Letter From Our President

We try to distinguish who we are and where our ancestors came from by using the words German-Bohemian. To us this means our ancestors were Germanic people living in the area of Bohemia.

The word Bohemian seems to be causing some confusion as to what it is we are trying to say. Our English dictionary explains Bohemian in these different ways. "A native or inhabitant of Bohemia." "The West Slavic language of the Czechs, also called Czech." "Of Boehmia, it's people, or their language; Czech."

When some of the people with Czech heritage see our title they apparently latch onto the word Bohemian and interpret it the way the dictionary does. Another thought is that some probably read it as German and Bohemian Heritage Society. I get quite a few letters referring to our Society as a Czech organization. A man visiting New Ulm called just to tell me he was delighted to see that a Czech organization had formed in a town known to be mostly of German heritage. He was wondering where we got our membership from.

I get a scolding when I use the word Bohemian while speaking to our friends in Germany. Most of them, especially those forced to leave our ancestral homeland, do not like to hear this word used when referring to this area. I am aware of this but one slip of the tongue and I am in for a fifteen minute lecture. They refer to this area as the Egerland and feel that anyone not using this word cannot know what took place when they were expelled.

When we selected the title of our organization we did not do so to confuse or upset anyone. Our organization was formed to pay tribute to our forefathers, who immigrated to this country and brought with them a unique culture which we are trying to preserve. When they left their homeland it belonged to a country called Austria and later the Austrian Hungarian Empire. They did not know a country called Czechoslovakia or an area referred to as the Egerland. No matter what title we would have chosen the fact still remains that our ancestors were a Germanic type people that came from an area that, at the time, was called Bohemia.

As our organization is growing we are trying to expand our knowledge. We need to communicate with both the people of Czech heritage and our relatives now living in Germany to help in this expansion. Keeping the lines of communication open can serve to help all of us.

Coming Events

September 12 - Picnic at Herman Heights Park, New Ulm

October 23 - General Meeting

November 13 - Dance at Turner Hall

Annual Picnic Date Set

The GBHS annual picnic is set for September 12 at Herman Heights Park in New Ulm. A social hour will begin at 11:00 a.m. followed by a potluck lunch at 12:30. Following lunch you will be entertained by the German-Bohemian Heritage Singers.

Please bring a dish to pass, eating utensils and lawn chairs. Mark your food dishes and utensils. Coffee will be provided. Beer will be available for sale.

Rhyme And Reason by Kurt Eisen & Paul Kretsch

The following is a study of the German-Bohemian dialect. Although difficult to explain on paper, we will attempt to show it in a way that can be understood.

Our resident scholar Kurt Eisen presented us with a German-Bohemian composition, put to rhyme. It is titled "Dogfood". The first time it appears you will find it written to sound like the dialect. Those of you who understand the dialect should try to figure out what it says. This could prove interesting and could be a lot of fun. The second time it appears it is translated into English, but not in the way you would read it in that language. It will be done word for word so you can see the difference in the structure of the two languages. If you count the words written in English you will find more than in the dialect version. The dialect has words that require two English words to explain. The third and last time it appears it will be translated again. This time structured so it forms sentences used in the English language.

Because this story is composed in rhyme, what is being said along with how it sounds, is what makes it funny for those who understand the language. You lose all that when it is translated and we can't provide the sound. If there is enough interest we can make tapes available to correspond with the German-Bohemian phrases and stories that appear in the newsletter.

HundsFoutta

Zan Mout wiat Künnt a Fremda ein,
U bringt sa Hündl mit.
Er Kröigt sa Böia, trinkt a mal,
U sagt er Häit a Bitt.
"Ma Hündl, schau(n)'st, Fängt scho Flöign
Van Hunga. Sans sua gout,
und richt'ns a Foutta Z'samm.
Dass da Hunga nex tout."
Da Wirt hout mit da Achsl g'schuckt,

"HundsFoutta? Möisst i löig'n!
Is selten ebas übrig blieb'n,
Wal döis alls Stammgäst Kröign!"

Dogfood

To restaurant owner came a stranger in,
and bought his little dog with.
He got his beer, drinks awhile,
and says he has a plea.
"My little dog, look, catching already flies
from hunger! Are you so good,
and prepare him a food together.
That the hunger nothing does."
The owner did with the shoulders shake.
"Dogfood? Must I lie!
Is seldom anything over left,
because that's all reserved guests get."

Dogfood

A stranger enters a restaurant and he has his dog with him. He gets a
beer, and after a drink he tells the owner that he has a favor to ask.
"Look at my little dog. He is so hungry he is
catching flies. Would you be so good and prepare some food for him so his
hunger no longer hurts."
The owner shrugging his shoulders says, "dogfood? Well I can't say for sure, but
there seldom is any left over because that's all my regular customers get!"

Cookbook News Article Produces Many Comments

by Emmet J. Hoffmann

Following the Jan. 10, 1993 article in the Minneapolis Star Tribune came an outpouring of 350 orders for our cookbook, "Deutsch-Böhmische Küche" but it also produced an unexpected by-product. About half of the mail orders included notes and comments about people's heritage, and bonds which connect them with family traditions and a host of related comments.

In a further testimony of the "power of the press", orders came from California, Connecticut, Washington State, Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, and the Dakotas. However, the majority of orders came from various Minnesota communities. From a cross-section of the comments, one realizes the "pull" and interest that our ancestry exerts on our attitudes and life.

Here is a sampling of the wide-ranging comments that accompanied many of the cookbook orders:

"I have "devoured" the cookbook. I can't wait to try the potato dumplings. My mother

used to make those. I am giving the extra cookbook to my daughter, Joan." Catherine Rains, Minneapolis.

"Since I am both German and Bohemian, this cookbook interests me very much." Mary Mealy, Minneapolis.

"My husband's maternal grandparents immigrated from Moravia and my father from Germany so we have great interest in anything Bohemian or German. I was not aware that there is a German-Bohemian Heritage Society based in New Ulm." Mrs. Keith E. Yarns, Jackson, MN.

"It brought back many memories of my mother's kitchen." William Vezensky, Chicago.

"Please send a cookbook to our friends (name follows). They saw ours and thought it was great." Margaret Bramsen, Minneapolis.

"Please wrap the cookbook carefully. My great -grandparents came from Berlin." Sarah J. Voas, Biloxi, MS.

"I received one cookbook from you and now I need one more for a friend." Steve Vortruba, Blaine, MN.

"The article was a delight. I grew up on German food. My mother left Germany when she was 19. I am always looking for new recipes. As far back as I can remember our traditional Christmas Eve dinner has been pork hocks and sauerkraut - with a lot of good ingredients added to both." Barbara Radel, Minnetonka, MN.

"My children and I are interested in tracing our family genealogy - we are of German heritage. That was a wonderful article." Shirley Knight, Minneapolis.

"My husband and I enjoyed the article. We, too, walked the ground that our forefathers walked in Bohemia on our 1990 trip. We anticipate eating some delicious, hearty foods from the recipes." Donald & Janet Kamis, Brockton, LA.

"My husband's father was a German immigrant, but beyond that we know nothing of his family's history. We look forward to enjoying the cookbook." Dorothy M. Kugler, Ashland, WI.

"I wish my German father-in-law were still alive. He would love many of those dishes."

Mary Niemann, Minneapolis.

"The father of my husband (Fred) came from Lake Starnberg, Bavaria, when he was 19 years old. I'm going to try to keep Fred's heritage alive with the help of your cookbook." Angela Graefenhain, Naperville, IL.

"Please send me three copies of the cookbook. One is for my daughter-in-law and another for my niece who is planning to marry a farmer of Bohemian heritage. My paternal grandmother was born in Niederjohnsdorf. Her mother was a Weber from Michelsdorf and her father was a Pechacek from Dolmi Cermna. All of these villages are north of Lanskrone in eastern Bohemia. They were German -speaking but they also spoke Czech. I was raised on Swedish cooking (and sauerkraut) all the while thinking it was American food. (Yep, my husband is a Norwegian-Swede). Jean H. Anderson, Lauderdale, MN.

I am writing for my dad who is 82. He enjoyed the article and wants the cookbook. His mother came from Moravia. I wrote down many of my grandma Lillian's recipes - dumplings and Kolaches, etc. My dad has a lot of wonderful memories and stories to tell. If you would ever like to get together with him for a visit, let us know." Carol Penonteau, Minneapolis.

"Both of my parents were German and used to make many German dishes. Unfortunately, both have died and left none of the recipes. I hope your cookbook has some of the old favorites." D. A. Weber, Columbia Heights, MN.

"Just a note to thank you for the cookbook. I have many cookbooks but yours will always be special. I'm showing it to my mom who is a great Bohemian cook. I already know she will try the prune gravy as she talks about her mother's but she never had a recipe." Debbie Davis, Monticell, MN.

A final comment came from a Minneapolis caller whose name somehow became separated from notes recorded from the conversation. "I want another copy of the cookbook," he said. "I am Norsk and my wife is Bohemian. One of her first dishes after we were married 30 years ago was prune dumplings. I had never seen anything like that and I refused to eat them. She vowed that she would never fix them again and after 30 years she hasn't. But the cookbook may change that and I am willing to try to add some German dishes to my diet of

lutefisk. I want to keep my marriage going for another 30 years."

As mentioned previously, the publication of the "German-Bohemian Küche" cookbook has served its multiple purpose of perpetuating some old and tested recipes but perhaps more importantly has reinvigorated a desire to keep alive the experiences and spirit of our ancestors.

Recipes

The following is a sample of some of the recipes you will find in the "Deutsch-Bohmische Küche" cookbook. If you want to tempt your tastebuds further you may order a cookbook from the German-Bohemian Heritage Society, P.O. Box 822, New Ulm, MN, 56073. Please enclose \$9.00 which includes tax and postage.

Vinegar Cabbage (Essig Kraut)

Shred 1/2 medium size head of cabbage. Add: One cup water, salt, pepper and caraway seeds, as many as you like. Add 1/4 cup vinegar and 2 tbsp. sugar. Cook 1 1/2 hours. Then add 1 large grated potato; add to the kraut and stir well. Cook a few minutes stir often. Add more vinegar or sugar if needed.

Angeline Portner
New Ulm, MN.

German Style Green Beans

1 can (303) or 2 cups fresh or frozen green beans.
2 strips bacon 1/2 cup diced onion
1 tbsp. flour 3/4 cup liquid from beans
3 tbsp/ vinegar 1 tsp. salt
2 tbsp. sugar 1/4 tsp. dill weed

Brown two strips of bacon until crisp and remove from pan. Cook onion in bacon fat, stir in the flour, liquid and seasonings. Boil for a few minutes and add beans and crumbled bacon.

Ruth Fischer Doherty
New Prague, MN.

German Style Peas

1 large can or 2 cups fresh or frozen peas. Vinegar to taste,
1/4 to 1/2 cup water, 1/3 cup sugar, 4 slices bacon, diced,
salt and pepper to taste.

Drain peas. Pour peas in saucepan. In skillet brown bacon, drain bacon fat, then add vinegar, sugar and water to bacon. Heat. Now pour over peas and simmer until heated through.

From Beata Eckstein Carey, Rochester, MN., whose grandmother, Christine Eckstein, used this recipe.

If you have some favorite Bohemian or German recipes please send them to us for use in our upcoming second edition of the "Duetsch-Bohmische Küche" cookbook. Send them to GBHS, P.O. Box 822, New Ulm, MN., 56073.

Volunteers Needed

The GBHS has the task this year of decorating the Brown County Museum for Christmas. This will be a fun and joyful experience and it is sure to set the mood for the Holidays. All the decorations will be provided by the museum. All we need is your help to put them up - even if you only have an hour or two to spare. The society also needs volunteers to help with the St. Nicholas Day celebration in December. We will have the enjoyable task of making children happy. The St. Nicholas Day celebration is December 6. If you are able to help with either of these projects please call one of the following people: Paul Kretsch 354-2763, Louie Lindmeyer 354-4831, Angie Portner 359-2121. Thank you.

Memorials In Memory Of . . .

Rudi Kiefner

from Agatha & Marlene Domeier,
Earl & Delores Kruger

Harold Hoffmann

from George & Angie Portner

Harold Kral

from Eleanor Kretsch, Paul &
Janice Kretsch, Gladys Ries,
Orlene Kral, George & Angie
Portner

Alfred Kretsch

from Dave & Patti Dittrich,
Bud & Lillian Stimpert

Jack Aufderheide

from James Aufderheide

Gertrude Schnobrich

from Agatha & Marlene Domeier

Mrs. Robert Berg

from Harold & Adeline
Wiltscheck

Marion Berg

from Eleanor Kretsch

Travel Thoughts - Tour 1993

by Mariann Trembl

Once again we visited our European homeland from June 5 - 19. After traveling with many other tours, I realize that people from all walks of life make each new tour enjoyably different.

We spent considerable time in Furth -im-Wald and Bischofteinitz, taking in the homeland celebration, plus the good food, beer, and *gemutlichkeit* throughout our trip. We traveled to many of our ancestral towns and villages. It was my own observation, that some of the people have left the area since 1986 and 1991. We noticed reconstruction in parts of the area, including the church in Bischofteinitz.

A special Sunday was spent with the Leopold Hafner family in Passau. Imagine a busload of people arriving, and being treated like kings and queens at their monastic home. Later, Leopold gave us a tour of the Cathedral in Passau, along with all of his creations of ornamental art work throughout, including the courtyard. (The church at Bischofteinitz also has beautiful metal art work at the main altar, also by Leopold, which I never realized on our first visit in 1991.) We certainly were overwhelmed by their great hospitality; indescribable unless you've been lucky to be there - great food!

This is a small world, but each time the highlight is making many more lasting friendships, and keeping our German-Bohemian heritage alive here and abroad.

Already we are thinking about the next tour, perhaps in 1995! Will you join us?

Let's see you all at the picnic on Septmeber 12.

Neighbors

Sellner's Energy Lifts Spirits Of Others

by Robin Webster

(reprinted from the Sleepy Eye Herald-Dispatch)

One daily chore many people dislike, or avoid completely, is making their bed. Freida Sellner has mastered the task, making up more than 60 beds a day.

"I start at 7 a.m." she explained and begins washing and making beds at 8. Freida holds the title of bedmaker at the Sleepy Eye Care Center and she takes the job very seriously. When finished, each bed is complete with hospital corners and are tight enough to bounce a quater on.

"I like my job and as long as I'm healthy and able to do something I think I should," she said. "I like old people... I just love to talk to them."

Freida's never ending energy amazes many, and lifts the spirits of others, when they see her hustling down the hallways.

She believes in taking the time to joke and visit with the residents, and she hopes she brings a little sunshine to their day. "I encourage them to get outside for a while or get involved in the games. I hate to see them in their rooms all the time."

Eighty-one years old herself, Freida relishes talking to her friends at the Care Center

about the good old days. Especially when she gets the opportunity to use her language skills.

Of Bohemian descent, Freida didn't speak English until she started grade school. She still speaks the Bohemian dialect with her children Marion (Bertrand), Marlyn (Sellner) and Carol (Drown) whenever they are home. Later on, she learned German from her mother-in-law, making her tri-lingual.

She has the opportunity to visit with one resident in Bohemian, which is something unique for both of them. "She sees me coming and says 'You're the one,' and we just start talking in Bohemian.

"And then there's Del (Begalka)... he just stops and talks in German whenever we see each other." The two of them carry on as though it's their primary language. It also helps Freida keep other residents on their toes, chatting in German every now and then.

In addition to her work at the Care Center, Freida also volunteers her time. She assists Cindee Schewe with Thursday Mass "and if they have a party or something they ask if I want to help." Freida rarely says no to such requests. "I don't like to intrude, but whenever they ask, I help out. I never say no when they ask and I hope when I need something, others won't say no to me."

Freida has enjoyed working all her life, spending three years at Sioux Valley Hospital making beds, cooking for the Sisters of St. Francis, and later at St. Mary's preschool. She has been at the Sleepy Eye Care Center for 15 years now and plans to stay there as long as she is able.

Even when she is at home, Freida is on the go. "I mow my lawn twice a week, and I have a garden I work in."

Her family is very important to her and she spends a great deal of time visiting three children, 12 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

"I'm not a TV lady and I don't like sitting home unless I'm watching the news or the Twins."

She also joins eight other women on Tuesdays to play sheephead. "Nine of us old farmers get together. We were friends out on the farm and now we've all moved to town and get together every week."

Whether she's at work, visiting with friends and family, or working around the house, Freida is enjoying life and helping others to do the same. Frieda Sellner is a member of the German-Bohemian Heritage Society.

(We would like to thank the Sleepy Eye Herald-Dispatch for allowing us to reprint this article)

Farm Life in Bohemia in 1870 Was Grim

by Emmet J. Hoffmann

Most of the immigrants who came to the Brown County (Minnesota) area from Mies, Bischofteinitz, Staabe and Tuschkau in Bohemia in the period 1860-1890 were farmers. Unfortunately those immigrants left little in writing to tell us what their life was like. Those few letters and reports from that period are indeed precious and every effort should be made to preserve them. They explain a great deal about why they left what was and still is excellent farm land.

One such revealing anecdote exists because of a class assignment given to Sister Catherine Ann Tauer in 1938. She interviewed her grandmother, Eva Mahal Steffl, and wrote a report about her childhood in Gros Malowa, Kreis Mies, Bohemia. Eval Mahal Steffl was a niece of my grandmother, Eva Smasal Remiger who also was born and grew up in Gros Malowa.

A debt of gratitude is due Sister Catherine Ann for writing and preserving for us a wonderful insight on farm life in Kreis Mies in the 1870's. Following is an excerpt from the

report:

"When Eva Mahal (she married Ed Steffl in the U.S.) left Gros Malowa in 1888, the dorf had about 16 farmers and six laborers' families. It was in one of those laborers' houses that Eva was born."

"The dorf was a small village with fields extending in strips out from the village. The farmers had narrow strips of land that extended far out from the village. The laborers had little huts in the village but they usually owned no land. Eva's father owned a very small strip of land but there was a large debt on it. "Farmers grew wheat, rye, barley, flax and potatoes. The flax was used for spinning and the barley was usually used for making beer."

"On an average-sized farm there were perhaps about 25 chickens, three geese, two pigs, two oxen, two horses, and 14-15 cows. Farmers made and sold butter made from the cream. They killed one of the pigs for Christmas and the other was left to produce little pigs."

"Grain was pulled up by the roots when it was ready for harvesting. It was dried and the heads were pulled off. A flail was used to pound out the seeds which were then cleaned with a home-made fan. Homes were made of logs but they were plastered inside and they had glass windows."

"Evenings were spent spinning the flax. Young people very seldom had a dance or other entertainment. The family meals were the same practically every day of the year. For breakfast and supper they had potato soup and for dinner they had meat, dumplings made of barley flour, and mushroom, prune or horseradish gravy."

Sister Catherine Ann Tauer, a retired official of the College of St. Catherine, says that her grandmother, Eva Mahal, was 18 years old when she left Gros Molowa, along with a cousin who was 19. They landed at Castle Garden harbor in New York aboard the ship Vero. From there they came by train to New Ulm where an uncle, Joseph Smasal, and an aunt, Eva Smasal Remiger, were living.

Memorable Experiences

European Trip 1993

by Paul Krestch

Our recent tour to Germany, Austria, and the area of Bohemia was a memorable one. We departed June 5th and returned June 19th. Forty-four people took part in this adventure and I am sure everyone would have an interesting story to tell. I am taking this opportunity to tell about some of my experiences.

On June 9th I was in a village called Hor-Sekyrany, which is located in the Czech Republic. At one time this village was called Ober-Serkershan and belonged to the county of Mies in Bohemia. By this time we had visited some historic places and had seen beautiful scenery in Germany but this village got my adrenalin flowing. I had seen a document listing Ober-Serkershan as the birth place of my great grandfather Blasius Haala. This is my mother's grandfather and I am glad she was able to be there to share in the excitement. We saw gravestones with Haala names and, had there been more time, could have visited with a lady whose maiden name was Haala. We were told she lives in a village called Blatnice which was just six kilometers away.

I got excited again the next day when we visited a village called Rybnik. This village used to be called Waier and belonged to the county of Bischofteinitz in Bohemia. This is where the Kretschs' came from. I'm sure my brother Pat agrees that being able to walk on the same ground our ancestors walked on is a feeling that can't be explained. It was our great great grandparents Joseph and Theresa that left this village in 1857 for their long journey to America. I stood in front of the place that used to be their home and wondered if I was seeing anything as they saw it, especially when they were looking at it for the last time.

Another exciting time was when we attended the Bischofteinitzer Heimatkreistreffen. This is a reunion for people that came from the homeland county of Bischofteinitz. Thousands came from all parts of Germany to attend. Furth-im-Wald Germany is used as the home base for the festival. Starting June 6th different events were taking place there and just across the

border in the county of Bischofteinitz. There is a big fest hall in Furth-im-Wald and starting June 10th and lasting until June 13th events scheduled there were the big attractions.

None of us knew what to expect and we all felt terrible when we found out what we missed by not attending the activities the evening of the 10th. Their were tables reserved with a sign that read "USA". We were supposed to be the quests of honor! It also appeared that they were expecting our singing group and were surprised that we didn't come in costume. There were a few other miscues but everything did turn out alright. During the day of the 11th we took part in a celebration at Bischofteinitz. That evening we made it to the fest hall and found tables still reserved for us. Earlier that day, and again in the hall, eight of us belonging to the German-Bohemian Heritage Singers were ushered to microphones. Our performace consisted of songs done in the dialect. The people were amazed that we knew these songs. What amazed them even more was that several of us could speak the dialect. We returned to the fest hall the evening of the 12th and the morning of the 13th. Our morning visit was to attend a Mass with at least five-thousand people present.

All through this reunion contacts were being made and a bond was being formed. Every village in the county of Bischofteinitz was represented and signs carrying their names filled the hall. The people sat at tables by the sign representing the village they came from. If you knew your ancestors' village you simply walked to those tables and the bonding began. Connections were made in other ways as well. I announced over a microphone that my name was Kretsch and my ancestors came from Waier. A gentleman by the name of Eric Fischer heard this. He happens to be the record keeper for the village of Hostau. Later that evening he told my brother, "If your Kretsch ancestors came from Waier I am related to you." I have this mans address and plan on writing him. A lot of people exchanged addresses and I'm sure a good number of letters will be going back and forth across the ocean.

It was obvious that Rudi Kiefner's presence was missed. Several memorials were held for him and a lot of people still had a hard time accepting the fact that he is gone. This was the 19th reunion, and in the past, Rudi had played a big part in them. Knowing it was not easy. I give Rudi's widow Rosemarie and their daughters Martina and Karmen alot of credit for stepping in and helping to make this years reunion a success.

After leaving Furth-im-Wald our tour went on to other parts of Germany and Austria. I enjoyed our visits to all these places, especially the one with our good friend Leopold Hafner. He and his family were very gracious. They prepared a lunch for us that was quite a feast and very delicious. The atmosphere they created had us all wanting to stay there.

My wife, her sister, my mother and myself enjoyed a similar experience when we spent a good part of the day with Joseph Ries and his family. We met Joseph at the reunion and he invited us to spend this time with his family. My wife's maiden name is Ries, and this also allowed her and her sister some more time to bond with their relatives.

All of the things I have written about were the most memorable for me, and I would be willing to go over there again if I knew that I would be experiencing something like them once more. I wrote in detail about the Bischofteinitzer Heimatkreistreffen thinking it was important that you were informed as to what took place there. The next reunion will be held in 1995 as they are held every two years. I know our organization could make an even better representation should we decide to go there again.

GBHS Members at Heimatkreistreffen by Emmet Hoffmann

The German-Bohemian Heritage Society's participation in the biennial Bischofteinitzer Heimatkreistreffen June 10-13 was a highlightt of the June 5-19 European tour. A majority of the 44 tour members are also Society members.

The Heimatkreistreffen activities were centered in Furth-im-Wald, Bavaria, and its sister city in the Czech Republic, Bischofteinitz. The Society's singing group performed with the Egerlander Trachtengruppe on June 11 to a large and enthusiastic audience at the Furth-im-Wald plaza. On Sunday, June 13 the entire group was given the place of honor on the Festhalle stage prior to a mass attended by a standing room only crowd of several thousand celebrants. The lone Canadian in the tour group, Doreen Bleich, and the youngest American, 14-year old Peter Anderson, carried the flags of their respective nations in the entry parade. It was fitting testimony for the "togetherness" theme of the celebration.

This was just one of several tour highlights. Visits to the former Bohemian villages on June 9 and 10 brought vivid thoughts of where and how our ancestors lived. It was brought to tour members' attention that Egerland is a more precise name for Kreis Bischofteinitz, Kreis Mies and the surrounding region in the former Czechoslovakia. This region is where many Brown County, Minnesota, families originated.

The trips had many delightful rewards, such as: Veronica Vesser who found the house in which her father was born; the Kretsch's and Haala's who found numerous relatives in the cemetery at Ober-serkershan; Doreen Bleich who found a relative running a gashous in Linz; and Francis and Cecilia Beranek who found former Beranek property in Weshorsch. That is also the village where Emmet Hoffmann's great grandfather was born. And after a long search Bob Paulson finally set foot on land that was once farmed by Helget ancestors, his mother's family.

An event that ordinary tours don't include was the day spent with Leopold Hafner, his lovely family (six children) and his studio where he does his sculpturing and metalcrafting. After lunch at his expansive home - a former monastery - he showed the group some of his fine craftsmanship in the cathedral in Passau.

(Leopold Hafner created the immigrant's statue that now stands in German Park in New Ulm.)

There were several opportunities to become familiar with distant relatives who were most cordial and eager to visit, as Angie and George Portner can attest. They finally found the Portner Schloss (castle).

Other stops and points of interest were Nurnberg, Reit im Winkl, Oberammergau, Ulm, The Wieskirche (church in the meadow), Neuschwanstein castle, Slazburg, Innsbruck, Ulm, the Hummel factory and Munich with its treasury of museums, old churches, modern stores and fabulous food and beer.

Tour members had an enjoyable time, cemented many friendships and despite the usual discomfort of packing, unpacking, etc. called the trip a huge success.

Hilly-Billy Queen Gets Her King!

by Bob Paulson

One of the most memorable experiences of the German-Bohemian Tour this past June was the crowning of Artie Dietz of New Ulm as the "King of the Hilly-Billies". Crowned at a very impressive ceremony held at the Hotel Wittelsback in Oberammergau, Germany, Artie thus joins Angie Portner who was selected as the "Queen of the Hilly-Billies" on the 1991 Heritage Tour. At the coronation ceremonies Artie was invested with an Alpine Hat, a Jesters Scepter and a appropriate ceramic pipe. King Arthur and Queen Angeline were then "toasted" by all their loyal subjects with a very potent Austrian liquor called "Hezengeist" (Witches Brew).

This lovely pair was selected by the Supreme Order of Hilly-Billies to be their king and queen because their families came from the very highest villages of the Bohmerwald. The Dietz family came from the village of Fuchsberg and Angie's family, the Meidls, came from Kaltenbrun.

The royal couple will hold court at the "Royal Throne Room" located on the Portner farm in Sigel on the third Saturday of each month. They will be attended to by their "Privy Council" (the board members of the German-Bohemian Heritage Society) at all Royal functions. Rumor has it that the throne room has recently received a new coat of paint.

Muttersdorf Church Renovation

An Update

by Bob Paulson

As was reported in the March issue of our newsletter, in November the GBHS raised \$500.00 toward the renovation of the church in Muttersdorf, Bohemia, a church that many of our forefathers attended in their homeland.

Much has happened since then. In December I was able to travel to Germany to present our check for the renovation to our beloved friend Rudi Kiefner. As you know, Rudi passed away in early February, but, as I was to learn later, he was able to make arrangements for the renovation of the Muttersdorf church before he died.

Planning for our Heritage Tour of Bohemia and Germany continued throughout the Spring and on June 5th, 44 excited adventurers departed on our Heritage Tour. As part of our tour we visited many of the villages in Bohemia where our families originated. When we arrived in Muttersdorf we were happy to find that a number of the farm homes had been beautifully restored and when we entered the parish church of St. Barthomew discovered that the process of its renovation had begun. The tiles for the new roof were being stored in the vestibule of the church. It was a wonderful feeling to know that we were playing a role in the preservation of a symbol of our German-Bohemian heritage in our homeland. It made all of us very, very proud.

Dance, Dance, Dance

Mark Your Calendars

The GBHS fall dance has been scheduled for **Saturday, November 13, 1993** at Turner Hall in New Ulm. The dance will begin at 8 p.m. Admission is \$5.00 at the door which includes a lunch. Dance music will be provided by the German-Bohemian All Star Band.

Village Spotlight

The Village of Natschetin

Part One

Translated by Catherine Hornick

(Editors note: Because this article is quite lengthy we will split it into two parts. Part two will appear in the next issue of our newsletter.)

In the southern part of Pfarrgemeinde Berg (name suggests that the land belonged to the Catholic Church) lies Dorf Natschetin located on a knoll in an area having little water (there were no brooks or streams). Since 1185 this area was referred to as Natschetin. In 1512 Dr. Ernst Richter established and laid out the plan for the village. Before this, it belonged to the bishop's domain along with Döfern Berg, Hostau, and Trohatin. The overseer lived in Castle Hirschstein.

In 1587 the village land register, Teinitzer area had 16 houses. Since those days until 1946 the name Schwab was on the register. The people from Natschetin and from Trohatin had to help the city of Teinitz mow and harvest the hay from the field. This field was in close proximity of Teinitz. The houses were on a knoll and the meadow lay below. The people were

duty bound to harvest the ripe grain from three fields near Teinitzer Hof where they had to cut it, bind it, and thrash it.

In 1789 Natschetin had 20 houses. In 1838 it had 22 houses with 218 Germans and that was after the Germans invaded. In 1913 there were 30 houses including 5 houses in very poor condition and a population of 118.

In Natschetin there was one tavern, one blacksmith shop, one general store, one tobacco shop, and in the following years they fired bricks at the brickyard, and registered two directors of music (compares to our dance bands).

The district covered 263.47 hectare (a hectare equals 2.47 acres). From this 154.66 hectare was arable land, 49.90 hectare was meadow, 14.54 hectare was scrub willows, and 30.99 hectare was forest. Der Hektarhebesatz was 850.

Just as in many other places in the bishop's district, farming was the chief work. In 1870 there were two music bands. One was directed by Rothmeier (Bina) and one was by Rothmeyer (Blasch). They were both sought after to play at festivities. In 1945 both bands were still going strong. The band under the direction of leader Josef Rothmeier (Wirt) even broadcasted over the radio.

In World War I there were 17 soldiers from Natschetin and one casualty. In World War II there were 28 soldiers from Natschetin and 9 casualties.

Until the turn of the century (1899-1900) Natschetin and Trohatin were a political district. Michel Rothmaier of house no. 4 (Blasch) was the overseer. As the population grew they changed the office from village to district. Josef Sandhöfner of house no. 1 (Hensa) took over in 1900 - the first one for the district. After World War I Josef Rothmeier of house no. 2 (Schwab). After that Josef Rothmeier of house no. 17, the son of old Rothmeier also of house no. 17, was the overseer. The last mayor of Natschetin during both World Wars was Josef Sandhöfner of house no. 1, a son of old Sandhöfner (Hensa) and held the office until the dispersion (forced eviction from the area) of the village. Because he was the mayor Josef Sandhöfner of house no. 1 and other men were arrested and put in a prison camp in Taus after World War II.

Business in Natschetin

In Natschetin was one tavern, one general store, one tobacconist shop, one blacksmith shop, one shoemaker, one linen weaver, and two musical bands. Besides that Natscheitin had a mason, a carpenter, a cabinet maker, a wagon maker, a painter, and an egg and butter handler. In Natscheitin there was a beekeeper who seemingly had a good crop every year.

Hunting in Natschetin

The hunting was always restricted in Natschetin. The first man in charge in 1900 was Michel Rothmaier of house number 4 (Blasch). After him was Josef Rothmaier of house no. 12 (Schmied). The last game keeper was Schoolmaster Karl Wurzberger from Schüttwa until the end of World War II. Other hunters were : Josef Snadhöfner of house no. 10 (Zeisnharl), after him his grandson Franz Sandhöfner. Further down the line was Josef Sandhöfner of house no. 1 (Hensa) followed by his son Josef. Still further along was Josef Rothmeier of house no. 17 (Binna) and also Josef Rothmaier of house no. 12 (Schmeid). Also Schoolmaster Karl Wurzberger was an established hunter in Natschetin.

Meadow Names from Natschetin

Louschka, Peint, Trift, and Ankawa bordered the Trohatin meadow; then the Mühläcker, Hasläcker, Vogelherd bordered Hostau, Birken (Wiesen and Äcker), Wanzenhügel, Grund, Kleinangerl, Häich, and Hofäcker.

Until the turn of the century (1900) sheep raising was important in Natschetin. The shepherd was Andreas Tauer of house no. 22 (Häiter). His hut from where he watched the pasture was situated on poor land near the village commons in the direction of Latschen where later the brickyards stood (Stierwiese). In 1903 and 1904 this meadow was planted with spruce

and fir which did very well because of the years of shepherding (sheep manure was a rich fertilizer).

Latschen was a component village of Natschetin situated 300 meters (about 1/5 of a mile) from the village. It had six houses, one farm, two small farms, and three little buildings. In 1905 the community built a brickyard and by 1911-1912 they were producing from 23-24,000 bricks. Today (around 1945) the coal is brought in by railroad.

Henceforth there were many new buildings in Natschetin. Every year they built new buildings, some were 20-30 meters (about 100 feet) long. Also the neighboring villages began building because of the convenience of the brickyard nearby. Transport wagons stood in line from 3 a.m. waiting for the brickworks to open for business.

In 1911 many of the new buildings were fitted with lightning rods because lightning strikes came often. On the 24th of June, 1936 a lightning strike burned the barn of Josef Sandhöfner house no. 1 (Hensa) to the ground.

(to be continued with our next issue)

Volunteers Thanked

by Adeline Wilfahrt

I would like to thank all the volunteers who helped work the gates at Heritagefest 1993. You all did a terrific job and it is very much appreciated. The State Street gate is the busiest gate at the grounds and it is a compliment to us to be picked for that gate. So again I say Danke Schön und Auf Wiedersehen!

The following is a list of names (members and non-members) who generously gave of their time: **Henry Altmann, Dan Beranek, Arthur Dietz, Donald Domeier, Kurt Eisen, Jo Elijah, Bill Embacher, Charles Griebel, Melvin Guggisberg, Rex Hendley, Gilbert Hoffmann, Harry Hofmeister, Kenneth Holm, Dorthy Holm, Richard Holm, RichardKohn, Janice Kretsch, Paul Kretsch, Louie Lindmeyer, Angie Portner, George Portner, Phyllis Postel, Esther Radke, Donald Rewitzer, Vern Rubey, Francis Schneider, Harlan Schulz, Benny Seifert, Tammy Steffel, Dianne Tipton, Charles Waibel, Ted Waibel, Willard Waibel, Lois Warta, Mary Ann Wesselmann, Norbert Woratschka, Sylvester Zwach.**

Danke Schön

Sometimes we are so busy with the world around us we forget to thank those who truly deserve thanks. In general I am talking about all the people who work behind the scenes of our organization. People who don't look for recognition but work day -in and day-out for our society. To them we say **danke schön!**

To be more specific we would like to thank the people and business who donated items for the March 1993 dance fundraiser. We would also like to thank the bandmembers of the German-Bohemian All Star Band for the enjoyable music they provide for our dances. Bandmembers are: Benny Seifert, Frank Lindmeyer, Leroy Flor, Stan Carda, Adeline Wiltscheck, Dr. Hilary Mohr, Mike Grausam, Doug Current, and Leonard Sellner. To them we also say **danke schön!**

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