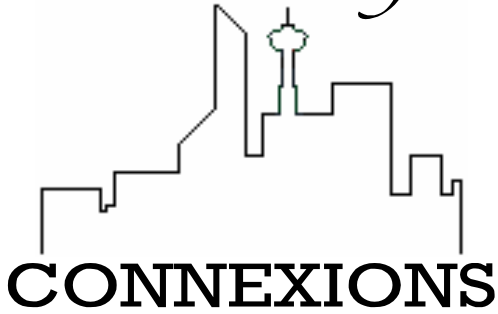


Heritage

American Historical Society of Germans from Russia
Calgary Chapter



*A newsletter for the descendants of
German speaking emigrees from
Eastern Europe, connecting them
with their unique heritage.*

Volume 16, Number 1

Calgary, Alberta, Canada

March 2008

AHSGR Calgary Chapter website : calgarychapterahsgr.ca

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

-- by Bonnie Laing --

The year 2008 seems to be moving along rapidly.

Attendance was very good for our January meeting. The highlight of the day was the Schmeckfest and also the noodle making demonstration by Susan, Kuzina and Anne Stang. Everyone had memories and stories to tell about their mother's method for drying the noodles. My grandmother dried hers on the backs of chairs and I was quite surprised to learn that many cooks dried the noodles on beds on top of clean sheets. My first year as your president ends on February 23rd with the election of new executive. My first term was one with a steep learning curve and if re-elected, I look forward to learning even more about our Heritage. I would like to thank Bev Rayburn for taking over the position of Treasurer and Bill Benner for completing the term of 2nd Vice President during the year.

Thank you to our volunteers who work so diligently on behalf of us all. Our Chapter couldn't survive without your participation and interest. Your efforts make things happen and enjoyable for everyone.

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## GROWING UP IN THE SHADOW OF OUR OLD CALGARY GENERAL HOSPITAL

-- by Bill Benner --

Every community has it's outstanding feature, often a building, a bridge or some such landmark. SOME REALLY "GOOD" -- THEN SOME "NOT SO GOOD". For the communities of Bridgeland and Riverside, our claim to fame must have been the Calgary General Hospital. In reality, we had a lot of stuff to be proud of!

This 5 story structure was built in 1910, employing many of our people living in the area, this was especially fortunate for our girls. Hard work, of course, but a step up. The main entrance to the hospital was situated on the south end of the building facing the Community Association. This created a long walk from the number #9 streetcar from First Avenue and Eighth Street to the south side of the building; this was at least a block in distance.

The structure had many additions, through the years, including a powerhouse and an up to date commercial laundry, A Nurse's Residence on the east end. A 150 foot high smoke stack was added in the 1940's, to facilitate the burning of coal and remained in place, until the destruction of the building. Also, attached to the Power House, on the north side of the building, was a one stall fire station. Time was spent, talking to the firemen and looking at the equipment. As young boys, this really was exciting! This was an open air vehicle and the firefighters were exposed to ALL of the rugged Canadian elements on all their runs.

My early memories of the hospital were of romping on the lawns of the hospital and being chased away by the staff, because we were making too much noise. The building always had an air of mystery. When one went inside it smelled like a hospital. As kids, we said it must be the smell of ether, the stuff that knocked you out really fast! But really, it must have been the smell of some disinfectant. It gave the building a foreboding atmosphere.

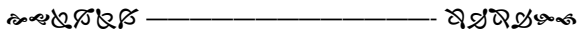
I remember the Nurses in starched uniforms, as they scurried up and down the hallways. They always seemed to be in a hurry, going somewhere! During visiting hours there was a constant arrival and departure of visitors. This was good for us kids, because we sold magazines at the door. Remember the "The Star Weekly" and I believe the



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We publish 4 Newsletters per year. Our rate is \$8.00 for 4 issues per year in Canadian funds. Subscription requests and change of address should be forwarded to Leona Mann at 403-239-9138 or mail to 315 Edgebrook Rise N.W. Calgary AB T3A 5J9

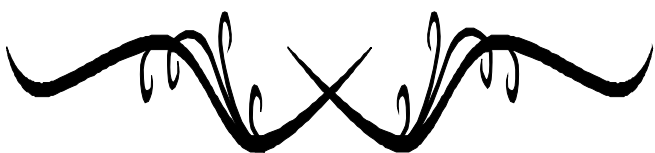
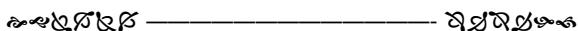


*(Continued from page 1 — Growing Up In The Shadow)*

"The Liberty" was 10 cents -- just a good old dime!

Dr. H. G. Mackid was the surgeon that did the first surgery, when the hospital opened and was associated with the hospital for 50 years in various positions. Many artefacts and photos of the "OLD Hospital" can be seen in one of the hallways at the PETER LOUGHEED CENTER.

There is a great deal of emotion attached to this site. Looking back; the new hospital was opened in 1953. Thousands of people passed through the doors. Patients, students of all sorts, Nursing school, X-Ray & Lab Technicians to name just a few. Calgarians have been paying a heavy price in healthcare, following the dramatic destruction of our "General Hospital". When the hospital was demolished, the heart of the our community was also ripped out. Even today, with all the upscale buildings lining the streets, I close my eyes and I get a vision - the ghostly structure of the old building, where people worked, lived and died.



## Die Krim" or "The Crimea"

-- by Herta (nee Braun) Anderson --

This article is based on a presentation, which I had been asked to give at our Harvest Dinner, October 2007. The Crimean Peninsula is an area of Russia that many people are not familiar with and until recently not much has been written about it. For me it has always held special interest.

The Crimea peninsula was home to most of my maternal family. My mother was born and spent her youth in the village of Ogus-Tobe until my parents marriage and subsequently emigrating to Canada.

From my younger years I remember the many stories mother would tell about her life and her family in "Die Krim". It was always referred to as "Die Krim". In fact it was many years later during adulthood that I actually made the connection that "Die Krim" and the "Crimea" were one and the same. During many of these "story-times" mother's face would literally light up. At other times her eyes would become misty. Etched in my mind was an image of a far away place resembling a mystical utopian paradise – a sort of fairy-tale land. People riding on camels through the village streets. Spending a day at the beach and encountering royalty. The people who lived on this peninsula were a mixture of many cultures and traditions – a culture of their own. This was quite evident in some of my mother's traditions and mannerisms. These "Crimean" similarities were also evident in other people who came from this area.

### Location:

Crimea is a peninsula connected to mainland Russia by the 5-7 kilometre wide strip of land at Perekop. It is approximately 26,000 square kilometres in size. The Crimea is just east of Odessa and across the Black Sea from Istanbul, Turkey. The peninsula is in the middle of the Black Sea with the Sea of Azov just northeast. The coastline is broken by several bays and harbours and shielded by mountains. The south coast is often referred to as the "Russian Rivera" because of its beautiful scenery and beaches. Approximately 75% of the remaining land, primarily the northern part of the peninsula, consists of a flat steppe similar to the mainland steppes.

### Climate:

Crimea lies in the same latitude as Venice, Italy. Summer temperatures are similar to the French and Portuguese coasts. The fresh sea breezes from the Black Sea ensure comfortable summer temperatures. Basically there are two seasons – May through October is warm to hot. This is also

the swimming season. November to April is the cooler season with temperatures rarely dropping below freezing except in the mountains where there is usually snow. In March flowers begin appearing.

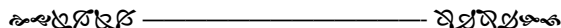
### History of the Crimean Peninsula:

By the 5th century B.C. the Greeks had already established settlements and cities on the Crimean peninsula. Near the present city of Sevastopol one can still find ruins from one of the most important settlements - Khersones. Over the centuries this area came under the rule of many kingdoms, under Rome, under the Byzantine Empire. The Goths, Huns and Mongolians invaded the Crimea during the barbarian invasions. In the mid-fifteenth century it was under Turkish rule. It has been under Russian rule since 1783 during the time of Catherine the Great.

The Crimean War (1853-1856) was fought on this peninsula between Russia and Turkey with their English and French allies. The war ended in 1856 when Tsar Alexander signed the Treaty of Paris.

In 1861 Alexander II bought an estate near Yalta on the south-eastern seacoast and built the famous Lividia Palace. The late Tsar Nikolas and his family spent time here on several occasions.

To be continued in the June 2008 issue of this Newsletter.



## **CHRISTMAS PROGRAM DECEMBER 2007**

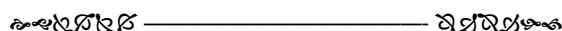
-- by Anne Stang --

This year our program was fairly traditional as planned by Susan Kuzina and Anne Stang, chaired by Bonnie Laing. Members entered the church to the sound of German carols from a CD. There was time for visiting before lunch. Then came the festivities. Herta Anderson accompanied us in the first of several carols, sung in both languages. The Penners read the Nativity story from the gospel of Luke -- Justina in German and Peter in English. Anne read a story about celebrating Christmas on the Volga in the 1920s. It was good to know that a few traditions still continue as was shown by the Peltznickle (aka Lorraine Reppon) and the Kriskindle (aka Leona Mann) who made their appearance immediately after the reading.

Interspersed with those activities were many draws for gift bags and other prizes, thanks in part to the generosity of Sandy and Glen McAlister. Some members also received small boxes made from used greeting cards. Decorations were provided by

Ray Hessler. Irene Hergert looked after the bake and craft table. Dorothy Hunt and Karen Shaw greeted members, ensured that they signed the guest book and sold raffle tickets. Marian Benner, Fran Reiss, Vera Semenuk, Carol Pendergast, Gerrie Schroeder and Lorraine Reppon did the final preparation and cleanup of the delicious sandwiches and great desserts for lunch. Mabel Kiessling and Leona Mann sold books and accepted memberships.

\*\*\*Ein grosses **DANKESCHÖN** to all who took part!



## **OODLES OF NOODLES PROGRAM JANUARY 26, 2008**

-- by Susan Kuzina --

Our January 26th meeting was waiting to be executed in fine form, when a glitch in the works happened. The meeting had to be moved to St. John Lutheran Church on very short notice, due a funeral being scheduled at Mathew Lutheran Church, same day and same time. We want to thank all our members who attended this meeting, we had 54 people turn out to enjoy a good meeting and a wonderful winter's day. It was opportune that we enjoyed Saturday as the weather took a downward trend in a major way on Sunday! The executive and all the volunteers, whether they were phoners, kitchen helpers or Jack and Jill of all trades, deserves a special thank you for their quick response to our change of venue and their drive to "get the message out" to all members and to create a welcoming venue for the meeting. THANK YOU!

The program committee has been talking of having more food demonstrations for some months and they finally decided give it another try. Anne Stang and Adina Bauer making noodles. Anne made a batch of noodles at home the day before and brought the well-rested dough, the necessary ingredients for hands-on making at the meeting and equipment for the demonstration. Adina ably mixed the dough to show members how it should be done, we handed round a patty of previously prepared dough so that members could feel the texture.

While Adina and Susan Kuzina ran the dough through the noodle machine, Anne rolled out one patty with a rolling pin made by her father over 30 years ago. We then took a break for lunch - a Schmeckfest, with several variations for cabbage rolls, "glace", sausages and sauerkraut etc. Of course, the dessert table was well presented as well- pies, cakes and kuchen - WOW!

The second vital part of the demonstration was the informative display of various grains and flours that Susan prepared. She also had pictures of chickens and various bits of interesting lore about making noodles. To finish the "Martha Stewart" show, Anne showed members how to make "lauf noodles" and how to cut by hand. Seven lucky people went home with door prizes or bags of noodles. Anne helped Susan immensely with the placemats, writing a short story in German (about noodles and chicken soup, of course), preparing the German words for the list of noodle appropriate words for the matching game and sending Susan three recipes for three different types of noodles.

We have some wonderful ideas for future meetings and are always open to suggestions. Are there other foods you would like to know more about -- or could demonstrate? We are looking for fall and Christmas programming -- any ideas or suggestions? It is just the beginning of spring and we need time, time and more time to prepare good programs. Contact any of the executive or Susan and Anne in particular to discuss your ideas. We're usually at Library Nights (2nd Monday each month - 4 pm to 9 pm) this is a good time and place to put ideas on the table and brainstorm.

See you next time!

SPECIAL NOTE: I would like to thank Dorothy - Secretary at St. John for her help in coming to my rescue. Thank you Dorothy! Lorraine Reppon

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ST. PATRICK'S DAY

-- by Lorraine Reppon --

Last year, our Chapter meeting was held very close to St. Patrick's Day. We decided to have a few people outside the German's from Russia "turf" identify themselves. Some of our members have one parent or one grandparent who is GR, along with another nationality, for instance - Polish - Croatian - Scottish - Swedish and so on. Most certainly, our children are a mixture! Last year a number of people did come forward, giving a little of their history and a number of the Irish were with us! A dear friend Ray Pendergast! Ray is married to my cousin Carol Kaiser (a GR) Marian Benner (some Irish background) is married to our own Bill Benner. Interestingly enough, Marian and cousin Ray, along with others, took on the cooking for all of our German from Russia Suppers, Dinners, Volga Boatman Lunches or whatever was needed.

These events are and have been "Chapter Fund Raisers".

Along with the Fund Raising, we have tried to focus on the cultural aspect of our people. So it is then, that our kids and grand kids are exposed to all kinds of nationalities and cultures. The food changes over the last 20 years has been unbelievable. Our Chapter has worked at trying to preserve these things, through our newsletter, library, Chapter meetings, the personal contact at the meetings is very important. We do stir up a lot of memories! SO.....whether we have some Germans from Russia blood, a lot or a little, please come out and support us. The preservation of our history and culture is up to us. We are the last of a generation who actually were there!

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## EASTER RECOLLECTIONS

-- by Lydia Kuzina --

My father, David Gross, came to Canada, as a 16 year old, in 1911 with his Mother, Anna and younger Sister, Agnes. At Easter he would tell us the story of the "egg rolling" contests they had in the village of Kraft when he was growing up. Eggs were scarce but at Easter each child would receive one or two boiled, colored eggs from their parents and these were their gifts for the Easter season. Some children kept and ate their eggs, but others would engage in "egg rolling". It was a game similar to rolling marbles, but using eggs instead. One child would put his egg in the middle, the others would roll their egg from a circle around the inner egg and the object was to try and hit the inner egg. If the egg was hit, then the roller would win that egg as well. My father told us that some children were very proficient at rolling their eggs and could collect quite a number. It took skill to roll an egg as it is not round like a marble and it would wobble as it approached the inner egg. On the other hand, the brave child who exposed his egg in the middle of the circle could collect a number of eggs if the rollers were not proficient enough to hit his egg.

At our home by Balzac my Mother, Elizabeth Gross (nee Hettinger), raised chickens for both food and eggs. She sold the eggs we did not need but at Easter, it was a superstition that no eggs were allowed off the farm on Thursday (day prior to Good Friday) and on Good Friday. Therefore there were more eggs available to be used in the household and we had many good foods from these eggs.

Thursday's eggs were used for the special food prepared for Good Friday, which was a "meatless" day. We had boiled eggs (colored, of course), schnitzsuppe (dried fruit soup), rivvel kuchen with caramel rivvel, pefferness brot (pepper spice bread)

made with molasses and doves made from a sweet dough. My mother was seven when she left her home village of Diettle and came to Laurel, Montana. She remembered that in the village the eggs for Good Friday were colored with onionskins and beets; however, by the time she had settled here with my father tablets of color were available and we used these to color our eggs. My daughter, son and daughter-in-law still want colored eggs – either on Good Friday or Easter Sunday and we still do a small number even now with the tablets. My mother made wonderful pefferness brot (pepper spice bread) sweetened with molasses and this was a special treat at Easter. In Russia and the United States this bread was often made with watermelon syrup rather than molasses; however, in Canada watermelon syrup was not readily available and molasses was substituted. The sweet dough buns were formed into doves – a piece of dough was rolled into a sausage shape, knotted and one end flattened to look like the tail and the other end shaped to look like a head with a beak and a dark spice or something used for the eyes.

The eggs from Good Friday and those gathered on Saturday were used to prepare the Easter Sunday food on Saturday. This was a busy day of preparation and baking. A chicken was butchered and boiled for the base of the chicken soup. Egg noodles were prepared, dried, rolled and cut and set aside for cooking on Sunday. My Mother prepared wonderful sponge cakes and I remember that the base for each cake was eight eggs, 1 cup of sugar, 1 cup of flour and some cream of tarter for additional leavening. Also, a special treat for our chicken soup was the preparation of a dumpling called butterglace. This dumpling was made with dry breadcrumbs, eggs, flour and butter. They were poached and then put in the soup along with the noodles. They very much resembled the matzo balls made by the Jewish community that they put in their chicken soup, except that their dumplings are made with matzo flour or meal.

My parents went to church for services on Easter Sunday and when they returned we had our special lunch of chicken soup, noodles, butterglace and, to finish, sponge cake.

When we prepared for bed on Saturday night my father would tell us that he was going to catch the Easter Rabbit and shake him up a bit so we would have Easter treats on Sunday. Apparently he always caught him and let him go to come again next year because there was always a treat for me, my sister Florence and my brothers, Harry, David and Raymond. Either a beautifully decorated egg or a molded chocolate rabbit were the usual “gifts” left

by the Easter Rabbit. The beautifully decorated hollow chocolate eggs were my favorite Easter treat, but they are very difficult to find now as the treats have evolved and the flowers, leaves and doves in royal icing that were hand done are no longer used to decorate chocolate eggs. Although it was hard to save money for special treats, both my parents held Easter as a special time and whether it was special food items, special church services or the “treats” my father got in his tussle with the Easter Rabbit, we always celebrated these special days as a family occasion and within our Lutheran faith.

Food and special occasions have always played an important part of my life, whether as a child or with my own family. Traditions are based in our homes around food, not extravagant, but simple, homemade fare that brings us together year by year to celebrate the occasion and to spend quiet, quality time together. I hope you enjoy some of my recollections of Easter traditions and that you have wonderful memories of yours.

This article is based on Lydia’s memories of her childhood on a farm in the Balzac area and were told to her daughter Susan, who assisted her in preparing this article for AHSGR’s Calgary Chapter Newsletter.

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WASS KOCHT? (WHAT'S COOKING)? RECIPES

-- courtesy of Anne Stang --

NOODLES (Note: there are many variations)
1 ¼ cups whole eggs 3 cups flour

VARIATIONS: 1 large egg per ¾ cup of flour
Use some egg yolks instead of
whole eggs
Add *small* amounts of oil or water
to get the right consistency

Knead dough into a stiff but smooth dough. Shape into patties about the size of a hamburger patty. Let it “rest” for several hours or overnight. It can also be frozen. Thaw if necessary.

BY HAND: Roll out the dough in thin sheets using a little flour if necessary to keep the dough from sticking to the rolling pin. Dry slightly. Loosely roll up the sheet and flatten it to cut with a sharp thin knife.

BY MACHINE: pass the dough through the smooth rollers as often as necessary to get the desired

CALGARY CHAPTER

MEETING DATES

Saturday, Mar 29 Schmeckfest
Friday, Apr 18 CDC Meeting
Saturday, Apr 26 Volga Boatman Lunch
Saturday, June 7 Finger Food Pot-luck

LIBRARY HOURS

4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Members may use the library free,
but non-members will be charged \$2.00.

THE MONDAY NIGHT LIBRARY WILL BE HELD
IN THE CHURCH OFFICE BUILDING NEXT TO THE CHURCH
"NOT" IN THE CHURCH BASEMENT

Monday,	April	14
Monday,	May	12
Monday,	June	9
Monday,	July	14
Monday,	August	11

ALBERTA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY MEETING

Red Deer & District Branch

Date: Wednesday, May 28, 2008

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Red Deer Museum and Archives

Guest Speaker

Diane Lewis of Lousana, Alberta

Topic: Her tour to the historic Gluckstal Colony area of the Ukraine, ancestral villages of Neudorf & Freudental; Kassel, Bessarabia & Liebental Districts and the Bundestreffen in Stuttgart, Germany.

CANADIAN DISTRICT COUNCIL MEETING

Friday, April 18, 2008

Place: St. Matthew Lutheran Church
66 - 7th Street N.E.

Time: 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Come to part or to all of this event

We will discuss issues common to
the Canadian Chapters,
as well as the Convention in 2009

Cost for lunch and snacks \$10

Following the meeting
a No-host dinner will be enjoyed at
the Heidelberg Haus
2620 - 23 Street N.E.

RSVP to Anne at 246-6969

You are invited to the

GRHS / AHSGR Joint International Convention

Parkway Plaza Hotel
Casper, Wyoming
July 28-August 3, 2008

**CELEBRATING
OUR COMMON HERITAGE**

SGGEE Conference

(Society for German Genealogy in Eastern Europe)

Aug. 15, 16, & 17, 2008

Coast Capri Hotel, Kelowna, BC
visit www.sggee.org