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SGGEE Newsletter - April 20, 2003

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ZHITOMIR ARCHIVES

The Board of Directors has decided to make a major investment in procuring information from the State Archives in Zhitomir. Readers will recall Don Miller's article in the December, 2002, Journal, describing a project initiated in 1992 by Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchik in which the names of people arrested by the Soviet government will be documented and published. Documents of this sort in the Zhitomir Archives are being investigated by Eugene Romanovich Timirajev, who has already provided Don with information concerning the arrest of his uncle.

Since Mr. Timirajev has been working with some decidedly primitive equipment, the Board has offered the sum of \$1200 US for the purchase of a computer, printer and scanner to facilitate Mr. Timirajev's work. It is hoped that a cooperative working relationship can be worked out that will benefit SGGEE in the form of guaranteed access to this information, either in print form or by electronic transmission. Don Miller has recently returned from the Zhitomir area where he supervised the purchase of the equipment.

We anticipate receiving more details from Don Miller at the Convention.

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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR A JOB WITH A DIFFERENT TWIST

Several years have passed since the Volhynian St Petersburg Lutheran records were indexed and made available to all. Due to the continued efforts of other SGGEE volunteers, the neighboring area of Podolia in Ukraine is nearing the completion of similar indexing.

SGGEE has now found a volunteer to index the Kiev St Petersburg records but this lady does not have the means of obtaining the necessary LDS microfilms and photocopying the applicable pages in order to proceed with the indexing. The completion of indexing for Podolia and Kiev would mean that the St Petersburg Lutheran records for the entire western Ukraine would be done for the years 1833 through 1885, thus covering many of the records of Germans who settled in the neighboring parishes outside of Volhynia.

Volunteers, are needed to do the photocopying of the applicable Kiev pages on each film at their local Family History Center (FHC) and forward them to the person doing the indexing. SGEE will reimburse all microfilm rental, copying and postage costs incurred.

In total there are 1160 pages to photocopy involving 46 microfilms. The number of pages required to be copied on each film range from 1 to a high of 78, the average works out to approximately 25 pages per film.

Please contact John Marsch at [gpvjem@sasktel.net](mailto:gpvjem@sasktel.net) or [databases@sggee.org](mailto:databases@sggee.org) if you can assist in this photocopying project.

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## A CALL FOR STORIES AND PICTURES ABOUT LIFE IN VOLHYNIA

Family stories of life in Volhynia - what was it like for your parents/grandparents/great-grandparents living in Volhynia long ago? It is important to collect as much information as possible because it is fast becoming "lost" to future generations. To some of us this life in the "old country" is unknown because it was never told by our immigrant ancestors.

What kind of home did the Volhynian Germans live in? Thatched roof, tin roof, number of rooms?  
What kind of food did they grow in their gardens, what did they eat?  
Do you have a favorite recipe (German or maybe even Polish or Russian) that was handed down in your family?  
What games did the children play, songs the adults as well as the children sang?  
What particular medicinal practices were used to get well or keep healthy?  
What vocational aptitudes were utilized? (In Volhynia my husband's Less father was a cooper, his grandfather Bergstraesser a shoemaker and his Bergstraesser great-grand father a miller.  
Were some farmers? What crops were grown in the fields?  
What schooling did they have? Did they have German teachers or Russian teachers?  
What about activities in their church or religious group?  
Did anyone in your family serve in the Russian military?  
Did they have to "escape out" during the early 1900's when the borders were closed? Were they caught in the Volhynian Deportation of 1915? Sent to Siberia?  
Did the family experience the famine years in the 1920's in Russia?  
What kind of German did they speak? (Platt Deutsch or High German, or both?)  
What about a family joke, witty saying or a word or two of frustration that was shared (if in German please give the English translation if known!)  
Perhaps there is one story of a special incident in their lives that was told in the family over and over again.  
In recent years have you visited the area your ancestors once lived?  
What was it like? Did you take pictures?

Some of us may have just the basic information of our ancestors that once lived in Volhynia before they came to North America, and there may be only dates and maybe a place (village name) of birth, but so little is known of how they lived. Won't you share with others what you might have heard told in family gatherings by those family members that came over from the "old country"?

Two or three paragraphs would be great. Please send something to me - Virginia Less at - [GVLESS@aol.com](mailto:GVLESS@aol.com) Or, send it by snail mail at this postal address: 503 Ridgewood, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137-5016 Add to your material your permission for SGGEE to use the story and pictures. Please, send only good clear copies of the photos along with a caption and date if known.

Your stories (and pictures taken in Volhynia if you have them) will be added to the collection already received by SGGEE. The stories and pictures may be used in future SGGEE Journals, displayed at future conventions and later published in a special SGGEE booklet.

Send something in now. Help keep the heritage of our forefathers alive.

Virginia Less

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#### PARISH RECORDS INDEX (PRI) - Adopt a Parish

Since January we have had three members offer to extract or copy indexes from microfilmed Church books in Poland. They found themselves researching in records from towns and time periods that are not yet listed on the Job Central Board on the SGGEE website. Once this list of names is complete and posted on the PRI, I am sure it will provide the members with further clues (and microfilm numbers) to further research their particular family name.

If anyone is doing research in microfilmed records of towns not listed on the Job Central Board, and feels this information may also help other SGGEE members, and has time to make a list of the names from the indexes found in the Church Books, please let us know at [databases@sggee.org](mailto:databases@sggee.org)

Rose Ingram  
Research Committee

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#### UPDATE - SGGEE LOGO CONTEST

Several logo entries have been received. Most of them adequately depicted what our Society is all about. However, we would like to have more entries to widen our choice. The committee has decided to extend the contest to July 1st. This will give us adequate review time before the convention August 8-10th in Edmonton.

Some of the most popular logos in the world are compact and certainly remind us of who they are. Some examples are Ford, Coke, McDonald's and Nike. We want our logo to be compact and convey the message of our German Heritage.

If you intend work on a design or revise one you've submitted please indicate your interest by sending an email to [sggee@shaw.ca](mailto:sggee@shaw.ca). Your entry can be sent by email or regular mail sent to SGGEE PO Box 905 Stn "M", Calgary, AB, T2P 2J3, Canada.

Victor Gess  
Publicity Committee

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#### CONVENTION WEBPAGE LINK

The following link will take you to the SGGEE Convention front page.  
<http://members.shaw.ca/sgecvn/>

By clicking "Enter" you will then be able to access the Registration Form, Speakers, Agenda, etc.

If you click "Link to 2003 Convention.PDF" you will find the Official notice of the Annual General Meeting and proxy form, together with the program schedule and a Printable two page Notice.

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Rose Ingram  
Corresponding Secretary