



THE SOCIETY  
FOR GERMAN GENEALOGY  
IN EASTERN EUROPE

# The Journal

*"A German Genealogy Group for Poland  
and Volhynia"*

Vol. 24 No. 3 - 2022 September



Wojciech Skowronski Łódź, ulica Piotrkowska 17 Chmura 98 2019  
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A historical postcard of Lodz from 1938

Courtesy of Peter von Pazatka Lipinsky

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# SOCIETY FOR GERMAN GENEALOGY IN EASTERN EUROPE



## SOCIETY INFORMATION

*SGGEE, a society for people of German origin  
interested in the genealogy, culture and history  
of their ancestors who migrated through Poland,  
Volhynia, and surrounding areas*

### SGGEE JOURNAL

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mail to the address shown above, attention  
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Bill Tucholke	2011 - 2012
Rose Ingram	2012 - 2013
Raymond Bloch	2013 - 2014
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Dick Benert	2015 - 2016
Edie Adam	2016 - 2017
David Neumann	2017 - 2018
Edie Adam	2018 - 2019
John Abraham	2019 - 2020
Clarissa Giese	2020 - 2021

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## Editor's Notes

Raymond Bloch, Editor  
[editor-sggee@googlegroups.com](mailto:editor-sggee@googlegroups.com)

This year's SGGEE convention was held from September 23 to September 25 and as last year, was done virtually using Zoom Meetings. This year's convention was entitled, "Crossing Borders" and five different speakers provided informative

presentations. As part of the convention, we had the Annual General Meeting with the selection of Robert Frederking and Joan Boyarzin to the board of directors. The minutes of the AGM can be read starting on Page 9. Following the AGM, the annual reports outlining the status of various efforts that SGGEE had taken over the past year are reviewed. These reports start on page 10. Bill Tucholke, Convention Chair, provides the convention report and it is included on Page 20.

In this month's Journal, we have Part 2 of the life story of Hulda and Huldreich Herbstreit provided by their daughter, Elsa Herbstreit Stadelmayer. Part 2 follows their escape to West Germany and the post-war years. We have Part 1 of an article entitled Heritage written by Ruth Bauer and edited by Jerry Frank. Ms. Bauer writes about the founding of Leonberg in Poland and the history of its formation. The article was submitted many years ago and has now seen the light of day.

With October at hand, here is a recipe for Oktoberfest Red Cabbage. Growing up my Mother would make this as a special treat especially at the holidays. <https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/oktoberfest-red-cabbage/>

### Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons bacon drippings or canola oil
- 1 small head red cabbage (about 1-1/2 pounds), shredded
- 2 medium tart apples, peeled and chopped
- 1 cup water
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/4 cup white vinegar

### Directions

1. In a Dutch oven, heat bacon drippings over medium heat. Add cabbage and apples; cook and stir 2-3 minutes. Stir in water, sugar, salt, pepper and cloves.
2. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, covered, 40-45 minutes or until cabbage is tender, stirring occasionally. Stir in vinegar.



With 2022 closing in on 2023, I would like to remind you that renewals for the 2023 calendar year SGGEE Memberships are near. We look forward to your membership renewal and support of SGGEE. The membership renewal form is on Page 32 or you can renew through the SGGEE website at the following address: [https://www.sggee.org/about\\_us/membership.html](https://www.sggee.org/about_us/membership.html). Please avail yourself to using PayPal to expedite your membership.

We are always looking for additional material for the Journal so any articles or documents that would be suitable for sharing are most welcome. Please submit all correspondence, documents, and files to [editor-sggee@googlegroups.com](mailto:editor-sggee@googlegroups.com).

# The Story of Hulda and Huldreich Herbstreit

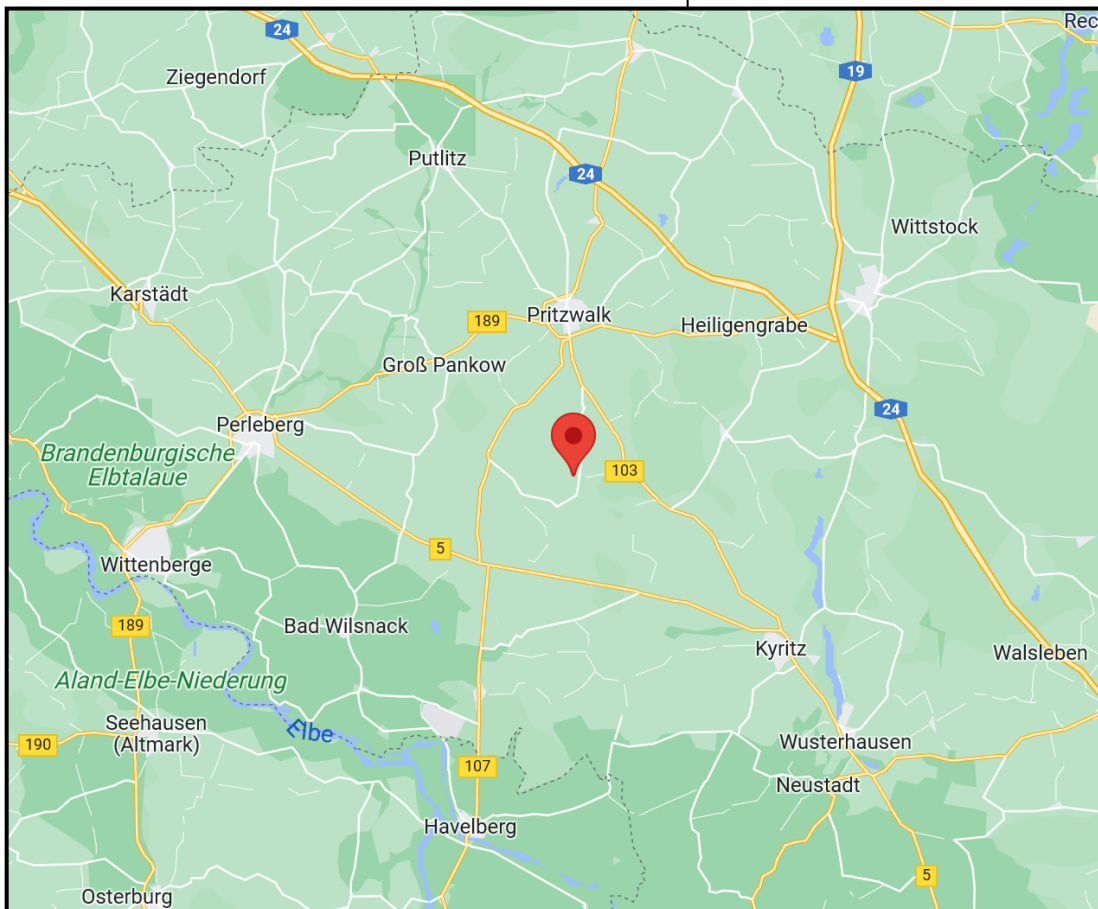
Written by Elsa Herbstreit Stadelmayer

Part 2

Spring was coming and Mom started to work on her goal again, which was to get out of communist territory. Little did Uncle Julius Herbstreit know that when he welcomed Hedwig into his house, that she was only the first of many to look to him for shelter. Hedwig got there in January, 1945. In May, the Russians moved into Kehrberk Pritzwalk. By that time, Uncle Julius had

seven teenage girls in his house, all related in one way or another. He knew it would take a lot of planning to keep the girls safe from rape by the soldiers. He made it, but almost lost his life trying. He and his wife cleaned out the septic tank and hid them in there for a week. Then he made a double floor in the attic, and a double ceiling in the chicken coop big enough to hide all seven. Later

the girls had to go to work on a big farm. Their pay was meat and flour. The soldiers would watch them go into the house, but if they went looking for them, they were not to be found. One day the soldiers took Uncle Julius away. They said he would be shot unless he told them where the girls were. He would rather die than turn them over. Later his wife's sister and family moved in with them.



Location of Kehrberk just south of Pritzwalk

Hedwig got the first sign of life about her family on her birthday in November, 1945. Mom also wrote to Uncle, asking if we could move to him. That was in the spring of 1946. When Hedwig got our address she was no longer to be held down, she was coming to see us. Mom had the same idea. Uncle did not think it was safe for her to travel alone, so he went with her. When they got to the farm, the owner told them we had left the day before. They returned home, but we were not there either. Mom took the train to Pritzwalk. She did not know that Pritzwalk and Kehrberg were not in the same place.

We could not get a train connection. The next morning, we hitch-hiked on a milk wagon to a town with connections to Kehrberg. The house was bulging at the seams, but Mom's plan was to move on, because Kehrberg was still under communist control.

In order to get into West Germany, we needed someone to need us. We found Mom's sisters Hanna and Lydia through the Red Cross. Now it was up to them to get us over the border. Her sister Hanna went to the doctor and got a statement saying that she and her husband were sick and needed help on the farm. With that in hand, Mom went to set things in motion one more time. The office she had to go through was at the railroad station. The train was to leave the next day. They told her, sorry but that train is for people who have family in West Germany and are split up because of the war. Relatives did not count. Little did they know Mom's determination to get out of the East zone. She was not the only one that went there. She had us all packed and there with her including Grandma on the stretcher. We were at the station to stay. There was only one move for us and that was West. We slept at the train station and by morning they decided to grant that crazy woman her wish.

Crossing the border into West Germany was a big accomplishment for Mom. "Thank you God, I

think I have arrived." Another round of filling out papers and answering questions. This seemed to be a safe time to give Hermann his legal age back. We were put up in temporary housing. Hedwig took a train and went to Aunt Hanna to help on the farm. The rest of us started school again. Food was still a luxury. We would go to the woods and look for berries and mushrooms. Mom would air-dry some of the mushrooms to save for the winter. Then a neighbor told us that they went every morning to a dairy. You could get one liter of buttermilk free and he would be glad to take one of us kids along. He would wake us up at 4:00 a.m., we would walk one hour, stand in line for another hour and walk back in time for breakfast in order to go to school. The couple was very nice, they would sit on the ground and let us put our head on their lap to sleep a little while waiting in line.

In the spring, we moved again, this time to Berka, where we would stay. Oh, could we, Mom? We are so tired of moving. This apartment had two bedrooms, and no kitchen. The lady of the house would let Mom use her stove. The village had what they called a poor house. It was for families too big and too poor to pay rent. Mom decided that we qualified. She was right. We gave it a new name, calling it the "Villa Sunshine." It had a kitchen and storage room on the first floor, and two bedrooms upstairs. Grandma slept in the storage room as she still did not walk. The bedrooms were so cold that in the winter you could scrape frost off the walls. Hermann joined Aunt Hanna on her farm. Then the health department told Mom that I had spots on my lungs, and also was undernourished. I would have to go to a home for treatment. (Undernourished, they should see me now.) Three months later I came back fifteen pounds heavier. Then Grandma got sick and was taken to the hospital in the city. Mom told the doctor about her leg. He checked it out and said it had healed perfectly and now was the time to start using it again. Grandma protested. He told her, "Lady, the only way you will get home

again is to start using the leg.” Three weeks later Grandma walked into our house.

Mom decided that it was time to upgrade our education. She found a lawyer that agreed to give us English lessons. She would do his laundry as payment. She also felt it was time to get us into a church. We went to the Lutheran church a few times, but that was not enough. Mom was going to start a Church of God in our house. She contacted the Fritzlar Bible School. They would send a student once a month to hold services from Friday night to Sunday afternoon. Mom would save all week, then cook and bake to feed anyone that came from out of town.

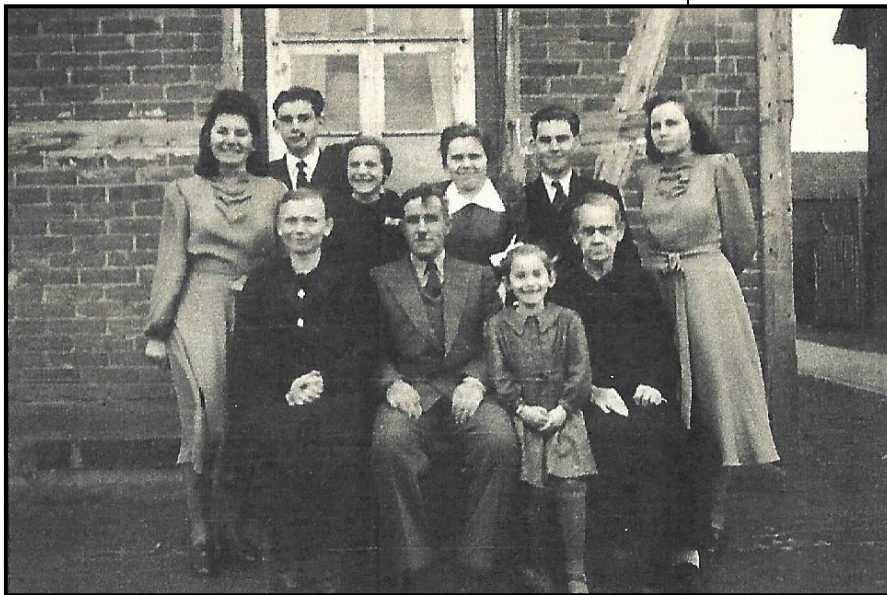
We soon outgrew our apartment. It was time to rent a one room schoolhouse. The cost was about 25% of all our income, if you can put a price tag on Christianity. Herta started a Sunday School each Sunday for children ages 4-14. Her only curriculum was a Bible, some song books and a book of poems. How do you teach one class, four to fourteen and keep them coming back? I don't know, unless you love the Lord, do a lot of praying and preparing, and leave the rest to the Holy Spirit. But her class grew to almost 100 children. She had one student that was not allowed inside the room, so she opened the window and he listened from the outside. Mom had fulfilled her promise to Dad to get us into church. One of the Bible students, Robert expanded his interest to more than just preaching, for he married Hedwig in June, 1948. She joined the Bible School as a cook. Tillie moved to the city to do housework. Hermann went into training as a carpenter. Later he went to Fritzlar to help build a new school. Herta and I worked in a men's clothing factory. We took the train to and from work and lived at home. Dad was still in the coalmines, but we did have contact. While we still were at Uncle Julius' in Kerberg, another prisoner came back who was a friend of Dad's. While in prison he worked for a Russian family in the eve-

nings. When he knew that he was on the list to go home, he asked them if he could have us send his mail to their address. The mail sent to prison did not go through. Dad gave them Uncle Julius' address, taking a chance that we would be in contact with him. This was our second sign of life from Dad. Mom never gave up hope of seeing Dad again. One time she got hold of an army blanket and decided to sew a pair of pants for Dad so he would have something new when he got home.

One day Mom heard about Church World Service and that they were taking applications from families to go to America. Because Dad was still in Russia, communism was still and always will be a bitter taste in our mouth. Mom put in her application. But who would want to be responsible for a family of eight for one year? “O ye of little faith.” They found a family. A family named “St. Joseph Church of God.” Lord, do they know what they are asking for? There were forms and questions to no end. She went on faith and included Dad as one of the family to go to America. Dad told us later that the prisoners were given food according to how much coal they produced. The more you worked, the more food you got. Now and then a group would be sent home. It was always the ones that got sick and could no longer work.

In later years some would get released in order to fill a quota. One of those transports was being filled in 1949. Dad would have been one of them going home, but he would not deny Christ. One of Dad's favorite Bible verses is Psalm 42: 1-2 (“As the deer thirsts for streams of water, so my soul thirsts for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God? NIV). Maybe this was the time when it got special?

Another family moved into the Villa Sunshine. It was a two apartment house. There were four girls, one boy, and the mother and father. They



**Herbstreit Family in Berka, West Germany 1951**

loved the Lord. Sometimes we would have evening worship together, led by the father. God was good to us.

Then one day in the fall of 1950, we got an official letter saying that Dad had been released from Russia and should be home in about a week. His body had begun to feel the strain of prison life and started to fill up with fluid. He no longer could work and was sent home as a disabled prisoner of war. Send him home, send him home and we will take him in any way, shape or form. Romans 8:28 now had a new meaning, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him" •

The news spread like wildfire. Everyone in town talked about it. There were three trains coming a day. Mom would meet the noon train, and we all would meet the 6:00 and 9:00 o'clock trains. All the workers at the station came out to watch. Margie would run ahead and say "I will be the first one to give him a kiss." We would laugh at her and remind her that she did not know what Dad looked like and that she would probably kiss a stranger. Herta said she would not walk up to him at all and

wait to see if Dad would recognize her. The first and second day passed, the last train left and the attendant would lock the door, and still no Dad. Slowly, we would return home. Maybe the next day, maybe the next train.

It was the third day, the last train. We would get there early to make sure not to miss the train. As kids, we would play a game, pulling the petal off a flower and say, "he loves me, he loves me not." Now we would play the same game with the second hand on the clock above the ticket window.

"He is coming...he is not coming." The tension was almost more than we could take. There would be a dead silence in the whole place, as if everyone was afraid to move. The only sound would be the minute hand on the big station clock as it counted out the minutes with a big bang. God, this is too much to take. Our nerves will break with suspense.

Again the train is pulling into the station and soon out again. The people are coming in. They move to the back and wait. Something is different. The man collecting tickets looks our way. There he is! One of the last men through the door. Dear God, what have they done to him? His face is so pale. His cheeks that once had dimples have deep lines in them. His black bushy eyebrows are all white, over them is a big Russian winter hat. The coat looks about three sizes too big. He looks so tired. Herta is the first one to move. Dad's face lights up. The crowd gives out a shout. They don't know Dad, but they feel the joy with us and help us celebrate. At last our prayers are answered. Psalm 37:4 ("Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart." NIV)

We would spend many happy evenings together



with the family across the hall. We would pass the time by knitting and embroidering. The men would read to us out of the Bible. Some would find a corner to play a game. The older girls would play their guitars.

Dad heard about Mom's plan to move farther away from Communism. We were asked to come for a physical. They told us I still had spots on the lung, so we would have to wait six months, then a year. Finally, they gave us the green light. This time the departure would be harder. We would have to leave friends and the church behind.

We boarded the ship Blechford to go to the New World. Some days, the water would be stormy, and other days you could see the sun's reflection and the fish jumping and playing. God was good to us, we were going to the land of milk and honey. The gallant lady, with her torch in hand held high, greeted us on May 23, 1952. "Give us your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free," that's us. We were yearning to be free, mostly from communism, but more than that, free to worship God. Freedom has to be earned and oppression has to be experienced in order to understand the meaning of it.

In 1957, we went before the judge to get our American citizenship. We answered some questions and had to read from the newspaper. They gave Dad the Bible to read. That was the only thing he had read in English. The judge asked "Are you willing to defend this country"? Yes! "Why did you come to this country and why do you want to be a citizen?" "Because I want my children to grow up as responsible citizens in a free country." The judge smiled. That's good enough for me. He gave us our citizenship papers.

Christmas, 1974 was their Golden Wedding Anniversary. This looked like a good time to try and have a reunion of Mom's brothers and sisters.

All but one came with their spouses. The last time they were all together was in 1921. The celebration lasted for eight days. Hedwig set up her big dining room table and served most of the meals. A lot of sharing and talking was going on around the table. They had eight days to catch up on 53 years gone by.

Mom and Dad were looking forward to the time they would be with Jesus. They wanted to become citizens of one more place, Canaan. But until God called them, they were spending their time working for the Lord. They believed that is one job from which you never retire.

Mom and Dad, you are two beautiful people.

You have fought the good fight  
You have kept the faith  
You have shown us how to live  
And the crown awaiting you will be most beautiful.  
We love you very, very much.

Your children,

Hedwig	Hedwig Halzon
Hermann	Hermann Herbstreit
Herta	Herta Miller
Ottillie	Ottillie Budar
Margie	Margie
Elsa	Elsa Stadelmayer

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This document was created by Elsa Herbstreit Stadelmayer for her family, as a chronicle of the lives of her parents, Hulda Pohl Herbstreit [1904-1991], and Huldreich Herbstreit [1899-1994].

This chronicle was written in 1975, after the Golden Wedding Anniversary celebration for Hulda and Huldreich Herbstreit, as a way to record the stories that were being told around that big dining room table.



# 2021 SGGEE Annual General Meeting

**Society for German Genealogy in Eastern Europe (SGGEE)**

Annual General Meeting

September 16, 2021

Held on Zoom as a Virtual AGM with  
no actual count taken of members in attendance; visually a quorum attended

## **Agenda**

SGGEE President Clarissa Giese called the virtual meeting to order at 10:20 AM.

1. Approval of minutes of 2020 Annual General Meeting

Copies were emailed to all members as well as printed in the June 2021 SGGEE Journal.

Motion to accept the 2020 Annual General Meeting minutes was made by Ray Bloch, seconded by Amanda Kühn Kienlen. There was unanimous approval.

2. Business arising from the 2020 minutes—  
There was none brought forward nor were there questions to the floor.

3. Committee reports

All reports are printed in the June 2021 SGGEE Journal.

Motion to accept the 2021 Committee reports was made by Rose Ingram with second by

David Neumann. There was unanimous approval.

4. New business

There was no new business presented.

5. Appointment of auditor

Larry Schultz agreed prior to the meeting to audit the financial reports of the SGGEE treasurer Arnold Badke.

6. Election of Directors

Two persons are needed to each serve three year terms. Membership was provided with names and brief biographical information and given opportunity to vote by proxy. The nominees were:

Robert (Bob) Frederking—Canada  
Bernhard D. Guenther—USA  
Joan Boyarzin—Canada\

Elected to the Board to each serve terms of three years were Robert Frederking and Joan Boyarzin.

7. A “thank you letter” was read from Dr. Mykhailo Kostiuk for publication by SGGEE of his book The German Colonies in Volhynia: the Nineteenth to the Early Twentieth Century.

Verbal thanks was given to Richard Benert for his work with Dr. Kostiuk during translation and leading to publication. Thanks also to John Abraham for working with a publisher to get this out to members and for purchase by non-members.

It was announced that Dr. Kostiuk with Alex Brzhezyskyi is working on selecting and

placing memorial plaques in places significant German heritage in Ukraine. Further information will be published in the March 2022 SGGEE Journal.

8. Announcement of 2023 Convention Location

If not restricted by COVID, a physical gathering will likely take place in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada with dates to be announced.

9. Adjournment took place at 10:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted by  
Ruth A. Boettcher  
SGGEE Board Secretary

# The Society for German Genealogy in Eastern Europe

## *Annual Reports 2021 - 2022*

- Convention (Bill Tucholke)
- Research (Rose Ingram)
- Publicity (Helen Gillespie)
- Databases (Gary Warner)
- Membership (Renate Dilk)
- DNA Report (Earl Schultz)
- Journal (Ray Bloch)

### **2022 SGGEE Convention Report**

After successfully holding our first virtual SGGEE Convention and Annual General meeting

in September of 2021 (that was attended by approximately 20% of our members), the plan for this year is to once again hold a virtual convention and AGM on September 23, 24 and 25, 2022. The theme of this convention is “*BORDER CROSSINGS*”. To get the latest information, presentation topics, and schedule updates, go to the convention blog: <https://sggee2021convention.blogspot.com/>

Planning for 2022 began immediately after the convention concluded with a review of a post convention survey that was completed by 137 attending members. The results of this survey are as fol-

lows: 90% of those who attended lived in North America; 80% were comfortable using the webinar tools; most respondents were supportive of live presentations with a video recording option that can be viewed at a later date; and most were interested in a question and answer session with the presenting speaker.

The four most requested topics from this survey were:

- \*Finding on-line records in Polish
- \*Use of the SGGEE website to find records
- \*Finding a parish/village on maps
- \*SGGEE databases

### **2022 Pre-Convention Plan**

The committee has held virtual monthly planning meetings since 2022. Our initial plan was to schedule 3 free webinar presentations with a video recording viewing option for our members.

\

- \*If It's 1773, It must be Russia: (A virtual presentation on changing borders) by Edie Adam
- \*Family Tree DNA and DNA Projects: by Earl Schultz
- \*Researching Polish Records: by Sigrid Pohl-Perry

### **2022 "CROSSING BORDERS"**

Convention Schedule (as of 2 June 2022)

[Friday] September 23 @ 12:00 PM EST:  
Breakout Room: Q & A discussion group-- 3 choices are available to discuss the presentations provided during 2022 by Edie Adam, Earl Schultz and Sigrid Pohl-Perry

{Saturday} September 24 @ 12:00 PM EST:  
Presentation (1); Annual General Meeting; Presentation (2); Presentation (3)

{Sunday} September 24 @ 12:00 PM EST:

Presentation (4); Presentation (5); Breakout room discussion (1); Breakout room discussion (2) Topic choices for both breakout room Q & A discussions are: Legacy/SGGEE Data Entry; SGGEE Research; SGGEE Journal: and "A Tour of the SGGEE Databases"

Submitted by: Bill Tucholke. Convention Chair

### **Research Report - 2022.**

### **Rozyszcze Indexing Project**

Progress Report 2021-22

The AGAD archive in Warsaw holds original register books of the Lutheran parishes Rozyszcze, Wladimir-Wolynsk, and Lutzk in western (Polish) Volhynia, and also some kantorate books for as far east as Tutschin. Digital scans of most of the records are available online. The aim of this project is to index these records for the Volhynia-Kiev-Podolia (VKP) databases and to include links to the original records for every entry. I am pleased to report that the work is more than 98% completed. As of May 2022 this Indexing Project is slowly drawing to a close and is expected to be completed within the next six months. For a summary of birth & confirmation, marriage, and death records extracted so far, almost 195,000 in total, please see the preambles on the three search pages:

<https://www.sggee.org/research/StPeteBirth.html>

<https://www.sggee.org/research/StPeteMarriage.html>

<https://www.sggee.org/research/StPeteDeath.html>

Dick Stein, Coordinator

### **Radom Parish Indexing 2021-2022**



In 2021, it was reported that FamilySearch has posted scans of Evangelical Church birth records for Radom, Poland, 1866-1872 here:

<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QSQ-G99H-8DXS?wc=QZW1-QHN%3A1588932888%2C1589087960%2C1589087958%2C1589087957&cc=2564996>

Records for 1866-1867 are in Polish, those from 1868-1871 are in Russian. Records may be downloaded from the FamilySearch site. Many of the families who lived in Radom parish later moved to the Lublin and Chelm areas or to Volhynia.

When the final checking is done, the published indexes of Radom records will be a new distinct database in our members area which will take the same form as VKP, Lublin, and PRI databases. As more records are posted online, we will notify the membership.

Sigrid Pohl Perry – Team Leader

### **Indexing Passenger Lists of Ships Arriving in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.**

In 2019, we contracted a SGGEE member, Milena Fiepke, from Brazil to index German names from Passenger Lists arriving in Rio de Janeiro covering January 1909 to about 1914 time period.

We have received over 20,000 lines with names, from 537 passenger lists of ships departing from Bremen, Hamburg and Amsterdam. With each Excel file we also received a digital copy of the original passenger list.

These passengers are from various areas in Germany, Poland and Volhynia area.

At present these records are on Excel spreadsheet and will need to be edited and formatted before posting on the SGGEE website.

Unfortunately this project was set aside in 2020 and not much progress has been made since then. We have a volunteer who has offered to proof the data on the spreadsheets, but could use more help. We could use at least one more volunteer.

Once done, we will notify the membership when the indexed records are posted on the SGGEE website.

If anyone would like a lookup from these passenger list, please contact [databases-sgghee@googlegroups.com](mailto:databases-sgghee@googlegroups.com) and quote Brazil Passenger lists in the subject line.

Submitted by Rose Ingram, Research Coordinator

### **Databases Report**

There are several existing databases that SGGEE maintains, and from time to time, some planned that have not yet been received or posted on the SGGEE website:

#### **A. Existing databases**

##### **1. The Master Pedigree Database (MPD)**

This database contains data from original Polish records, and also from the research of our members. It currently contains 539,645 (a net increase of 4265 above that at the last convention). The database is in a constant state of change because new data is always being added as well as merged (there were approximately 5,000 new records added this past year, so there were many records that were merged in order to show only the slight increase in the number of records). The merge process establishes links between the

various family files in the database and is the process by which we determine who among our members are cousins. This database now shows almost all given names as the most common German form as an aid to the merging process, which requires that the first 6 characters of the given name match for an automatic computer matchup. The exception to the most common German given name is for all SGGEE members and their spouses, which are maintained as submitted. The MPD contains the SGGEE001r10 update, the last one received before the death of its author, Al Muth. A major undertaking this year was the review of the data for consistency (parent's birth, marriage and death dates, and those of the children, determined as possible for the formed families) - this work is still in progress, and should help members submit better data using the MPD as a source. Gary Warner maintains this database.

See: <https://www.sggee.org/members/genealogy.html>

## 2. The Parish Records Index (PRI)

This database is a listing of individual birth, marriage, death, and confirmation records extracted from original records in Poland. It currently contains 364,375 names (same as at last convention). The size of the database is increased by research supplied by volunteers, and is reduced as yet other volunteers transfer the portions of the database that have the most complete data to the Master Pedigree Database. Gary Warner maintains this database by updating it with new data provided by SGGEE volunteers.

See: [https://www.sggee.org/members/pri\\_guide.html](https://www.sggee.org/members/pri_guide.html)

## 3. The Alternate Surnames List

This database is a listing of all of the alternate surnames used in the SGGEE Master Pedigree

database. It is useful for members in determining what names their ancestors might have used in Poland or Russia as the result of their original surnames being corrupted to change to the Polish or Russian equivalent of the German name. For instance, the surname Schwarz (meaning the color black) has the Polish equivalent of Czarnecki.

There are substantiated alternates - those confirmed by others who have not just submitted names to the Master Pedigree Database. This list is unchanged in the last year. There are also unsubstantiated alternates- those submitted by SGGEE members which may or may not be true alternates. This list also remains substantially unchanged for the past year. The substantiated alternate names database is currently seven pages of double column text. The unsubstantiated alternate names database is currently 218 pages of single column text that show the unsubstantiated alternates. Gary Warner maintains this database.

See: <https://www.sggee.org/research/AlternateSurnamesDatabaseSubstantiated.pdf>

and also

<https://www.sggee.org/research/AlternateSurnamesDatabase.pdf>

## 4. The Alternate Christian Names List

This database is a listing of all of the various given names in the Master Pedigree Database, and their most common German equivalent, if any. The list was developed to assist in the merging of the records in the Master Pedigree Database, since the computer matchup of names to be compared requires that the first six letters of the given names be the same for a matchup. The list is currently fifteen pages of double column German names with their more common English, and other language equivalents, and another 32

pages of double column English and other language names alongside their most common German name equivalent. Frank Stewner, Ed Koeppen, and Gary Warner maintain this database. No significant changes in the last year, but a few corrections were made.

See: <https://sggee.org/research/AlternateChristianNames.pdf>

#### 5. The SGGEE001x database

This latest version of this database was provided by Al Muth in 2009. We have been unable to obtain any of the work he completed between 2009, and his death in 2013. The current version of that database is SGGEE001r10, and contains 194,000 names.

The data is exclusively from Al's extractions of Polish birth, marriage and death records. This data is incorporated into the Master Pedigree and mostly merged with it. Gary Warner is the keeper of this database

See: <https://www.sggee.org/members/parallel.html>

#### 6. The Lodz Trinity database

This is a database of original Polish records for the Lodz area, as input by John Marsch from transcriptions of the original Polish Lutheran records of the Lodz Trinity church. It is now complete and contains 34,492 names. This database is now a part of the Master Pedigree database, and is almost completely merged with the Master Pedigree Database. Gary Warner is the keeper of this database.

See: <https://www.sggee.org/members/lodz.html>

#### 7. The Membership Database

This is a database maintained by Renate Dilk that contains the contact data for all present and former members of SGGEE. It is updated every time a change or membership application is received and posted on the website usually the same day as a membership application is received. As of 31 Mar 2021, the database contained the names of 2686 present and past members of SGGEE, an increase of 68 names since last year. Renate Dilk is the keeper of this database.

See: [https://www.sggee.org/members/member\\_data.html](https://www.sggee.org/members/member_data.html)

#### 8. Volhynia-Kiev-Podolia (VKP) Births, Marriages, and Deaths Databases

These VKP databases, also known as the St. Petersburg databases, were formed originally with the data extracted from Lutheran church records held in the St. Petersburg Archive for Volhynia, Kiev, and Podolia. They contain data on births, marriages, and deaths for these three regions for the years 1836 to 1885 with some years missing.

Later, online scans of Lutheran church records for Polish Volhynia were made available by Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych (AGAD) in Warsaw. SGGEE decided to extract the data and add it to the VKP databases to supplement the original St. Petersburg Archive data.

Areas included are the parishes of Rozyszcze, Wladimir-Wolynsk, and Lutzk as well as 19 kantorates as far east as Tutschin. The data consist of births, confirmations, marriages, and deaths for the years 1862 to 1939 although some of the post-1900 years are missing. As the AGAD data is added to the VKP databases, a clickable link to the online scan is included for every entry.



The extraction work is nearing completion.

As of 1 June 2022, the VKP databases list a total of 281,787 events, as follows:

Births and Confirmations	181,456
Marriages	32,920
Deaths	67,411

Including approximately 195,000 entries from the AGAD records with links to online scans.

Gary Warner is the keeper of this database and the supplemental data was provided by Dick Stein.

See: <https://www.sggee.org/research/StPeteBirth.html> <https://www.sggee.org/research/StPeteMarriage.html> <https://www.sggee.org/research/StPeteDeath.html>

#### 9. Galicia Index of Individuals

This is a database of people who lived in various villages in Galicia. It contains birth, marriage and death data of the villagers and their ancestors. The database is very extensive and was prepared by Bill Fife, and has remained unchanged in the last year. Bill Fife is the keeper of this database.

See: [https://www.sggee.org/members/galicia/galicia\\_records.html](https://www.sggee.org/members/galicia/galicia_records.html)

#### 10. History Books Database

Many of the areas in which our ancestors settled in Canada and the USA have produced history books of the area, variously called Centennial books, Anniversary books, Jubilee books etc., which describe or tell about the original settlers in these areas. This database is a listing of the books (and the individuals in the

books) held by either our members, or in the SGGEE Library. This database currently contains 26,000 names. Gary Warner is the keeper of this database.

See: <https://www.sggee.org/members/localhistory.html>

#### 11. Library Materials Database

All library material was transferred in 2020 to Edmonton where the Historical Society of Germans from Poland and Volhynia (HSGPV) is housing it with their library collection and is cataloging it.

See: [https://www.sggee.org/members/library\\_contents.html](https://www.sggee.org/members/library_contents.html)

#### 12. Lublin Digital Archive Database

This project of extraction of the Lublin, Poland parish records is complete and is in the process of being moved from the public area to the members only area. It contains 103,340 records, of which 58,636 are baptisms, 31,499 are deaths, and 13,205 are marriages. Years covered are 1838-1940 with some big gaps.

#### 13. KGB Files Database

The KGB file from Zhitomir Archives contains 4178 lines of data. Names of people arrested about 1931 to 1945 and their fate. Also includes birth dates and names of family members.

See: <https://sggee.org/members/MembersIndex.html#kgb>

#### 14. 1930s Resettlement/Repatriation

Resettlement or Repatriation of 1930's file from the Zhitomir Archives contains 13,851 lines of data. Gives place of resettlement plus former residence.

See: <https://sggee.org/members/MembersIndex.html#kgb>

#### 15. Lemke Records

Eastern Volhynia records for Zhitomir by Pastor Samuel Sigfried Lemke, recorded October 1941 to November 1943. Baptism records contain 6977 names of those baptized, plus the names of the parents- most records are of people born in 1920's to 1943. Also 502 lines of Marriage records contain marriages performed in 1942 and 1943.

For access to these records, see:

<https://www.sggee.org/members/MembersIndex.html#lemke>

Additional information on these records is available, and was not shown on the website for privacy reasons (some persons would be less than 80 years old).

#### 16. Gazetteers

Gazetteers for Congress Poland, the old German, Russian and Austrian Empires, and also for Volhynia and Galicia. These have been created by Frank Stewner to show present-day and old names for each of these areas, and includes coordinates for ease of locating on maps. Present villages identified in each area are as follows:

Congress Poland- 6450 villages and towns  
[https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer\\_Poland.pdf](https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer_Poland.pdf)

German Empire- 5563 villages and towns  
[https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer\\_German\\_Empire.pdf](https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer_German_Empire.pdf)

Russian Empire- 635 villages and towns  
[https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer\\_Russian\\_Empire.pdf](https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer_Russian_Empire.pdf)

Russia- 1163 villages and towns  
[https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer\\_Russia.pdf](https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer_Russia.pdf)

Austrian Empire- 5123 villages and towns  
[https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer\\_Austrian\\_Empire.pdf](https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer_Austrian_Empire.pdf)

Galicia- 974 villages and towns  
([https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer\\_Galicia.pdf](https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer_Galicia.pdf))

Ukraine-1747 villages and towns  
[https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer\\_Ukraine.pdf](https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer_Ukraine.pdf)

Volhynia- 7454 villages and towns  
[https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer\\_Volhynia.pdf](https://sggee.org/research/Gazetteer_Volhynia.pdf))

#### B. Databases In Progress

1. Birth, Marriage and Death indexes from the Lutheran Records in Zhitomir, Rowno, and Lutzk archives covering church books for time period 1900 to about 1915 are posted in the website on the Volhynian Archives Index webpage. Even though most are temporary files, they are searchable.

Corrections to spelling and typographical errors in these files are still ongoing and updated files will be uploaded when finished. If you have any questions please write to:

[databases-sggee@googlegroups.com](mailto:databases-sggee@googlegroups.com)

## 2. Rozyszcze Project

The purpose of the Rozyszcze Project is to extract data from Volhynia church register books dating from 1862 to 1939 held by Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych (AGAD) in Warsaw for insertion into the Volhynia-Kiev-Podolia (VKP) databases. As of June 2022, the VKP databases list almost 195,000 birth, confirmation, marriage, and death events extracted from AGAD for the Rozyszcze, Wladimir-Wolynsk, and Lutsk parishes and 19 kantorates mostly in the Rowno-Tutschin area. For each event there is a link to the online scan of the page containing that event. The Project is very nearly completed.

3. As mentioned previously, in 2019, we contracted a SGEE member Milena Fiepke from Brazil, to index German names from Passenger Lists arriving in Rio de Janeiro covering January 1909 to about 1914 time period.

We have received over 20,000 lines with names from 537 passenger lists of ships departing from Bremen, Hamburg and Amsterdam. With each Excel file, we also received a digital copy of the original passenger list.

These passengers are from various areas in Germany, Poland, and Volhynia area.

At present these records are in Excel spreadsheet format and will need to be edited and formatted before posting on the SGEE website. Unfortunately this project was set aside in 2020 and not much progress has been made since then.

We have a volunteer who has offered to proof the data on the spreadsheets, but could use more help. We could use at least one more volunteer.

Once done, we will notify the membership when the indexed records are posted on the SGEE website.

If anyone would like a lookup from these passenger lists, please contact [databases-sggee@googlegroups.com](mailto:databases-sggee@googlegroups.com) and quote Brazil Passenger lists in the subject line.

Submitted by Gary Warner, Database Coordinator

**Membership** - This document provides the membership status as taken on May 31, 2022

This will be the last membership report that I will be submitting as a membership volunteer with SGEE.

In 2012, I introduced myself to Ted Belke and offered to assist him with membership duties and we worked together for many years as he transitioned the tasks to me. Even after the transition, we frequently spoke about ways to make changes that would benefit the members and the volunteers.

It has been a pleasure to meet all of the members and help out where I could. Also to work with Sigrid, Edie and Ruth to brainstorm new ways of doing things and always trying to improve upon our last change.

	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
Paid members*	678	636	707	627	649	604	591	622	615	617	567	575	584	519
Honourary members	20	19	10	10	10	10	10	11	11	12	13	13	11	10
Journal subscribers	2	2	3	3	3	1	1	?	2	2	2	2	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>657</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>615</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>631</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>590</b>	<b>597</b>	<b>531</b>

\* the 2022 numbers are as of May 31, 2022

**Table 1 - Membership Trends of May 31, 2022**



The past two years were challenging but also allowed us to move towards a more streamlined process as we moved to using FormSmarts and PayPal solutions to decrease the load on the membership volunteers.

### **Membership information for the past year**

See Table 2 for the categories of membership transactions for 2022 (Oct 1, 2021 to May 31,

<b>Period: Oct 1 2021 - May 31 2022</b>					
<b>Total memberships processed</b>			<b>642</b>		
	<b>CAN</b>	<b>USA</b>	<b>GER</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
New memberships received by mail	0	0	0	0	0
New memberships received electronically (Web)	0	0	1	0	1
New memberships received electronically (Link)	40	32	1	38	111
Renewals received by mail	37	15	0	9	61
Renewals received electronically (Link)	146	181	100	20	447
Honorary	5	7	8	2	22
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>642</b>

**Table 2 - Total Memberships Processed including Twenty Honorary Memberships**

2022) are:

Over the past year there were:

- \* 112 New memberships
- \* 508 Membership renewals

In 2019, we started to track members that returned after an absence of greater than one year. See Table 3.

2019		2020		2021		2022	
Previous Membership Year	# of Returning Members	Previous Membership Year	# of Returning Members	Previous Membership Year	# of Returning Members	Previous Membership Year	# of Returning Members
2000	1	2008	1	2007	1	2004	1
2001	1	2009	1	2008	2	2005	1
2010	1	2011	3	2010	2	2011	2
2011	4	2013	1	2011	2	2013	2
2012	3	2014	1	2013	4	2014	1
2013	2	2015	3	2014	1	2017	3
2015	4	2016	7	2015	3	2018	9
2014	1	2017	12	2017	2	2019	6
2016	5	2018	42	2018	5	2020	19
2017	17	2019	1	2019	9		

**Table 3 - Returning Members**

## Our Members

The majority of our current members are from Canada, United States and Germany See Table 4.

Country	# of Members	% of Total
Canada	259	37%
Germany	154	22%
United States	255	36%
Other	32	5%

**Table 4 - Member Locations**

We also have members from the following countries:

Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Czechoslovakia, Cypress, Denmark, France, Italy, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and Ukraine

Submitted by: Renate Dilk, Membership Chair

## **SGGEE DNA Committee**

The SGGEE DNA Committee established three DNA Projects at FTDNA.com in 2019 for Germans from Eastern Europe, defined as Poland and Ukraine for the purposes of the projects. These projects have been attracting both members and non-members and are also a source of advertising for our organization and new members. You do not need to be a member of SGGEE to participate since our goal is to study the Germanic peoples of our geographical area.

The Y-DNA project (Germans from East Europe SGGEE) is essentially a surname project since the Y-DNA follows the patrilineal line (fathers, only). We have 222 males in the project, a 23% increase from 2021. The most common haplogroup is R with 135 people or 61% of our ancestors. Other haplogroups are as follows: E – 11, G – 13, I – 43 (19%), J – 11, N – 8 and T – 1. I and R are the most common European haplogroups. G tends to be Middle Eastern. The Y-DNA project has now

connected at least 3 families that did not know they were related on their patrilineal lines until they tested their Y chromosome.

When a Y-DNA test confirms that two individuals who may share the same surname but whose ancestors lived hundreds of miles apart are the same family, that can be a big clue to finding other records. We are currently testing members of several other families that could lead to similar discoveries.

The mt-DNA (mitochondrial) project (East Europe Germans SGGEE mt-DNA) follows the matrilineal line of project members. We have 94 members, an increase of 20.5%. H haplogroup, the largest group, has 43 people, 46% of all matrilineal lines, U has 13 people or 14%. The other haplogroups are as follows: I – 3, J – 7, K – 8, L – 2, N – 1, R – 1, T – 9, V – 3, W – 1, and X – 3. It should be noted that mt-DNA is the least useful DNA test for genealogical purposes but can be used to solve matrilineal problems.

The atDNA (autosomal or Family Finder) project helps project members separate their FTDNA matches. It is for the benefit of participants and SGGEE does not benefit from this project except that we can help participants. This project has 283 members, a 25% increase since 2021. To join this project you just need to have a Germanic ancestor who lived in Poland or Ukraine and the project will help you find other matches with the same background.

The project administrators could use extra help from anyone who understands enough about genetic genealogy to assist project members and knows how to group project members by haplogroup and family.

A webinar entitled **FTDNA and DNA Projects** was recently produced and is available to members

on the SGGEE website to assist members to maximize the benefit of DNA testing.

On August 1<sup>st</sup>, SGGEE introduced a \$20 USD subsidy for new Y-DNA tests for SGGEE members or males in their family tree. The purpose of this is to encourage and expand the number of families in our Y-DNA project which will aid members to connect with others. This is limited at this time to \$360 USD and so far at least 6 members have utilized this offer and 2 individuals have joined SGGEE to get this offer. This is a highly successful beginning for this new SGGEE approach.

Submitted by: Earl Schultz, SGGEE DNA Committee and Projects Administrator

### Journal Report

First published in December 1998, the SGGEE Journal is provided to our membership on a quarterly basis. We provide the Journal electronically via download from the SGGEE.org website or for those requesting a paper copy, we mail them following their upload to the website.

We provide paper copies to various genealogical libraries and societies that request our Journal for the use of their members. The SGGEE website lists all the Journals that have been published at the following website:

<https://www.sggee.org/SGGEE2009/members/journals/journals.html>.

Most of the published stories are from our membership providing family experiences and historical narratives of the times that they lived through. The ability to share these stories and have them for future generations is a critical focus of each edition.

As with any publishing effort, the stories and articles submitted by our membership and contributors are key to enhancing our understanding of our ancestors' times. When possible, please provide your personal and family stories with pictures. We enjoy these personal accounts, and all articles are reviewed and edited for inclusion. We look forward to receiving your contributions.

Submitted by: Ray Bloch SGGEE Journal Editor

# 2022 SGGEE Convention Report

Written by Bill Tucholke, Convention Chair

**O**n September 23, 24 and 25 our 23<sup>rd</sup> and second virtual SGGEE Convention and Annual General meeting was held on Zoom. The convention theme was “**CROSSING BORDERS**” with featured *speakers* on the Ukraine, Pomerania,

Galicia, East Prussia, and Lithuania. Other topics included tips on conducting research, finding and preparing information for the SGGEE website during our question and answer breakout sessions.



A total of 162 registered for the convention. About fifty percent of those in attendance completed exit surveys that included many positive comments and suggestions for next year. The program was hosted by our Zoom team members Edie Adam, Ken Gregornik and Ray Bloch. Other committee team members who met monthly throughout the year planning this convention were: Karin Dilk-Kant, Clarissa Giese, Helen Gillespie, Rose Ingram, and Sigrid Pohl-Perry.

All presentations were recorded and are available on the SGGEE website. We plan to schedule additional Breakout sessions and Presentations prior to holding our next convention in 2023. Given a multitude of factors and the positive feedback from our virtual convention, it was decided by the committee to once again hold a virtual Convention and Annual Meeting in 2023. The committee will review the possibility of returning to an in-person convention in 2024.

### ***“CROSSING BORDERS”*** **Convention Schedule**

#### **Friday, September 23**

##### Breakout Room 1 - 12 pm EDT

Question and Answer sessions with speaker room choices based on SGGEE presentations provided earlier this year.

The presentation choices were the following:

- If it's 1773, it must be Russia: A virtual presentation on changing borders by Edie Adam
- Family Tree DNA and DNA Projects: by Earl Schultz

- Navigating Online Records in Eastern Europe- Databases in Poland: Geneteka, Metyki & Family Search: by Sigrid Pohl-Perry

#### **Saturday, September 24**

Welcome and Opening Remarks - 12 pm EDT

“Driven by Faith: The Baptists and Mennonites in Ukraine” by Dave Obee - 12:10 pm EDT

SGGEE Annual General Meeting  
Hosted by President Ruth Boettcher - 1:20 pm EDT

“German Genealogy Research in Pomerania” by Donna M. Schilling - 2:30 pm EDT

“The Josephine Colonies of Austria Galicia” by Dr. Perry Buffie - 3:40 pm EDT

#### **Sunday, September 25**

Welcome - 12 pm EDT

“Expanding Your German Research” by Carolyn Schott - 12:10 pm EDT

“A Summary of How Germans came to East Prussia and Lithuania” by Cynthia Jacobson and Owen M. McCafferty II - 1:20 pm EDT

Breakout Rooms 2 & 3 - 2:30 pm EDT  
Question and Answer room choices were:

- “Preparing for and Submitting data to the SGGEE MPD” by Gary Warner
- “A Tour of the SGGEE Databases” by Karl Krueger
- “Research Tips and Tricks” by Sigrid Pohl-Perry
- “SGGEE Journal” by Ray Bloch

# Heritage

Written by Ruth C. Bauer

Edited by Jerry Frank

**Note:** The following is extracted from the original family booklet by Ruth Bauer, with her permission. It is presented exactly as originally written but with some points of history clarified by the editor and contained in square [ ] brackets.

**Comments from the Journal Editor**

This article was forwarded to me by Earl Schultz, our previous editor. Jerry had sent this to Earl in 2006 and it had inadvertently been left in an unused email account. So as many of our members know, Jerry was quite prolific in his support of SGEE.

## **Part II POLITICAL SETTING OF POLAND IN THE 1700's**

"Er weider mich auf einer grünen Aue"

"He leadeth me in green pastures"

Psalm 23:2

Didn't He always? Hadn't He led her  
grandparents from Germany to the Kolonie?

The "Kolonie" was a small village which  
belonged to the German settlement in the middle  
of Poland. It lay in the bend of the Vistula River,  
between the municipalities of Plock and Kutno,  
in the district of Gostynin.

Its first settlers came in the early 1800's  
from the town of Leonberg, near Stuttgart, Ger-  
many. They named the new community  
Leonberg too, as a reminder of the home they  
had left. The Poles called it Lwowek.

Because of powerful neighbors, Poland some-  
times was a large country, sometimes a small  
one, and sometimes no country at all.

History tells us that when Stanislaus  
Poniatowski ascended to the throne in 1763, Po-  
land, despite recent losses of territory, still cov-  
ered an immense area in Europe. It was larger in  
fact, than any other country except Russia.  
Because Stanislaus had formerly been the lover  
of the Tsarina, he was, even then, the tool of Rus-  
sia; and so the Constitution of Poland at that time  
was shaped by the Russians.

To the west, Frederick the Great of Prussia  
had set his eye on the sea-port of Danzig, and he  
dropped a hint into the ear of the Russian Amba-  
sador that if they could agree, they might help  
themselves to those parts of Poland which each  
desired. They approached Austria as well, and the  
three Powers bargained in secret  
regarding their individual shares of Polish  
territory. Their conditions were announced to the  
incredulous Poles who were powerless to resist.

In 1772, when the treaties of the First  
Partition had been signed, Prussia had annexed  
Warmia or Ermland and West Prussia. Austria  
took the whole of Galicia, and Russia claimed the  
relatively small areas of Belorussia and  
Livonia.

Despite Poland's now disadvantageous position, the next two years saw an increase in economic growth and a sharp increase in population, which numbered roughly about nine million.

The majority of these were Roman Catholics, with small numbers of Protestants and Jews.

Cities and towns were numerous, but small. In the year 1789, fourteen thousand towns were listed, but almost two-thirds of them had less than three hundred inhabitants. Only about fifty could have been described as being of moderate size. Foremost of these, of course, was Warsaw which was growing rapidly.

The people of Poland, though they disliked the Germans, despised and detested the Russians as enemies, both of their country and their faith.

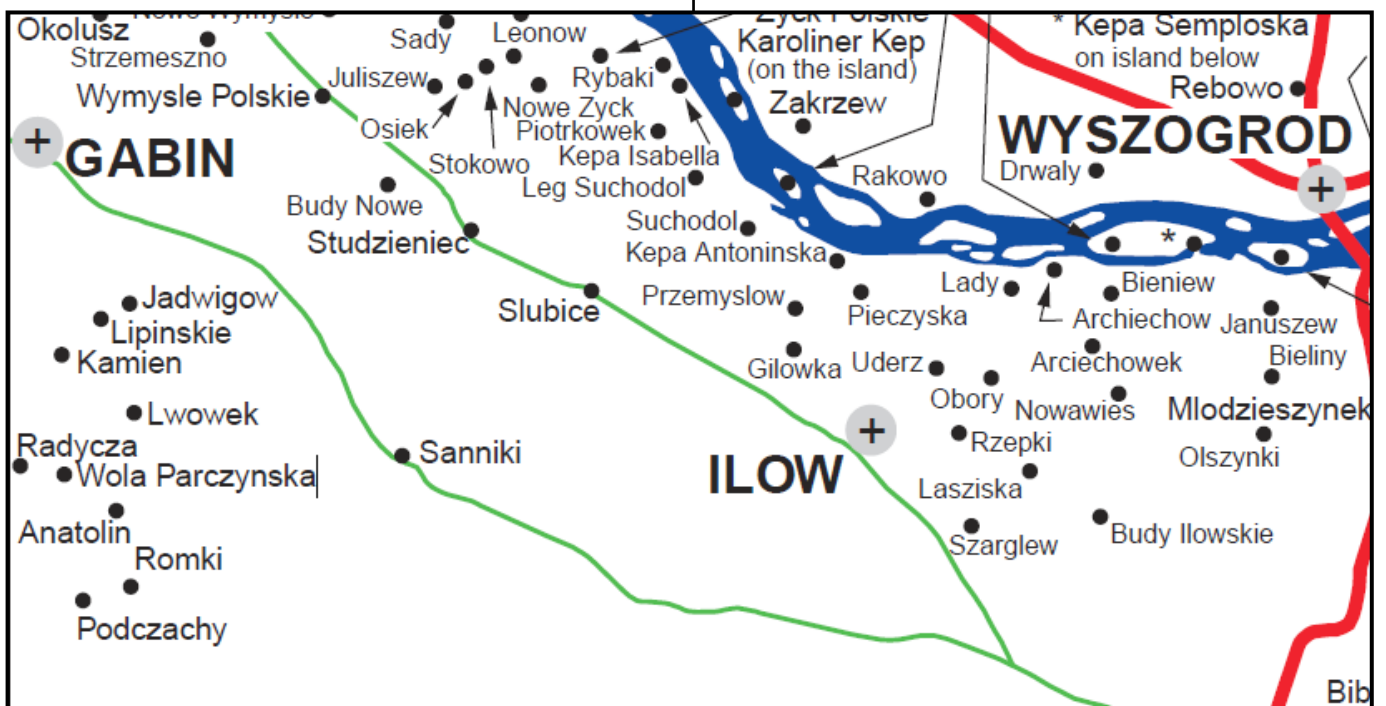
After much controversy, a delegation was formed, and the discussions which ensued resulted in the Constitution of May 3, 1791. This

document, confirmed by the King, gave the people a greater degree of independence from Russia and the prospect of more personal liberties.

Needless to say, this Constitution was strongly opposed by the Russians. Even some of the gentry from the Ukraine felt that their "golden anarchy" was being threatened. So these noble-men formed a Confederation with the purpose of resisting the Constitution and invoking Catherine's aid, if necessary. The Tsarina only waited long enough for the signing of peace with Turkey before she sent her armies into Poland. Frederick, seeing that Poland was falling into Catherine's hands, quickly allied himself with Russia.

So, between them in 1793, they dictated the terms of the Second Partition. Poland now was not much more than one-third of her original domain.

Military resistance collapsed when Stanislaus himself joined the opposition and adhered to the Confederation. The Tsarina



Lwówek, Poland (Leonberg) approximately five miles southeast of Gabin, Poland

Map courtesy of Jerry Frank

decided this was the time to liquidate Poland. Her Allies, the Prussian King, and the Austrian Emperor agreed, and in 1795 the Third Partition followed.

It was about this time that word spread through Germany that Catherine was offering free land to thrifty farmers who would occupy and develop the level parcels of land bordering the Vistula River.

[Editor's note: Regarding this last paragraph and the start of the next chapter, it is important to understand that the third partition actually placed the Leonberg region in South Prussia, not Russia. It would therefore be impossible for Catherine to offer free land to Germans along the Vistula. In fact, the Germans came to this region at the invitation of Polish (and some German) nobility who held land in this region and wanted to develop it. This region came under Russian control after the Congress of Vienna in 1815, some 19 years after Catherine's death.]

### **PART III**

#### **EARLY LEONBERG**

In the year 1802, the first pilgrims from Leonberg, Germany, set out. They packed their belongings in horse drawn wagons and ox carts, and, with their families, came to settle in the "Kolonie". Other families from the neighboring towns of Gerlingen and Sindelfingen soon followed.

The village had been built and made ready for them. It was designed with a center square, on which was situated the school house with a dwelling for the teacher, a tavern and a fire station. Its streets projected to the north, south, east and west from the square.

Editor's note: The author is correct about the village being created just for the colonists. The 1803 Gilley map does not show Leonberg. Only bush appears where the village was eventually located.]

The homesteads, each with its house and barn built close to the road, were long narrow strips of land, and lay side by side on either side of the streets.

The houses were built of large clay bricks, and were similar in design, although some were larger in size than others. The gabled roofs were of straw and because fieldstones were so plentiful in the area, the foundations as well as the fences which enclosed the front yards, were constructed of these stones.

Each dwelling was equipped with simple furnishings. It is said that when they arrived, every family found a kettle on the hearth, a bowl and spoon for each member of the family on the table, and a cow in the barn.

People of all occupations came to the village. They brought with them tools and materials for their trades, as well as farm implements. They also brought their customs and traditions, and their modes of dress. The women made colorful dresses and aprons for themselves and with wool from their own sheep, they spun and wove the material for the long blue or gray topcoats that men wore in winter.

These early settlers were all "Schwaben"; and because it was of the utmost importance to them that they keep their customs, their faith and their dialect, they held together and became a closely knit community. In later years, if someone speaking another language came to live in the village, perhaps through marriage or because of occupation, it was understood that they would learn to speak "Schwabisch". Even the Polish



families who lived near the edge of the Kolonie soon learned to speak the dialect as fluently as the Leonbergers.

In future years almost the entire region near the Vistula was to be occupied by these German newcomers. The city of Lodz became known as the most German municipality in Poland, and churches, schools and colleges for German speaking people were eventually established there.

A religious revival was taking place in Leonberg, Germany, at the time these early Pilgrims were migrating to Poland. Among them were three men, a hatter by the name of Herr Bintz, a tanner, Herr Held from Sindelfingen, and Herr Kräter from Gerlingen, who felt that it was of the greatest importance to take this spiritual comfort with them. None were ordained men, but Bintz could sing, Kräter could pray and Held could read. So they brought hymnals and prayer books, and in 1816, when fourteen new families came to the Kolonie, Sunday worship was a regular occurrence for about thirty or forty people. Among these newcomers were Christoph and Peter Bauer, and families by the name of Schmidt and Schönherr. Gradually the little community was established.

Then, for a while, an anti-reformation took place in Poland, and its effects were felt even in the Kolonie. The little church's congregation dwindled to about twelve or fifteen persons; the social activities in the tavern were much more popular.

At that time only a few Protestant Evangelical churches remained in Poland. The colonists were registered as parishioners in the city of Plock, where religious records were kept. Plock was on the other side of the Vistula, and since there was no bridge, at certain times of the year when ice was breaking, they had no way of

crossing the River to attend services. So the children were baptized in the surrounding Catholic churches, and funerals, marriages, confirmation classes, and Sunday services were conducted by the Kantor or village school teacher.

[Editor's note: This region was indeed part of the Plock Diocese but they may have been served by the pastor of the already well established Lutheran Church at Ilow, some 20 kilometres to the east. Plock was about 25 kilometres to the north and a ferry was available for transport across the river during summer months. The birth and baptism of infants would have been recorded at the Catholic Church (under civil law) but the actual baptism would have been conducted by the Kantor. The Kantor was not authorized to conduct marriages nor to serve Communion.]

It was his duty also to supervise and direct the entertainment for the community get-togethers and amusements which were held in the local tavern. The young people would dance to the lively tunes played by Jewish violinists and clarinetists, while their elders played cards, drank beer and tapped their feet under the tables as they lustily sang the familiar melodies.

It is told that on one such festive evening, the Superintendent of the Consistorial Council from Plock was passing through the village on his way to Warsaw. When this august personage heard the revelry, he left his carriage and entered the tavern, unnoticed by the merry-makers. Just at that moment the director of the dance called, "left about turn"!, "No! Right about turn"! boomed the deep voice of the imposing figure in the doorway. All was suddenly very still. It was as though doom had struck. The music ceased.

The dancers stood motionless. For a few moments even the beer steins seemed frozen in the hands that held them. Quietly, the

revellers dispersed. Needless to say, that evening the village settled down for the night somewhat earlier than usual.

Soon thereafter, those evenings of merry-making lost their popularity, and as evangelical fervor again increased in the community, prayer meetings and Bible study took their place. The little flock of believers at that time received no spiritual encouragement from outside. Had it not been for the dedication and zeal of its founders, the congregation could not have survived.

In the 1820s a Lutheran Church was built in Gombin which was only seven kilometers from Leonberg. Now they no longer needed to cross the Vistula to celebrate the rites of their own church. Since families were large in the Kolonie, this was much more convenient.

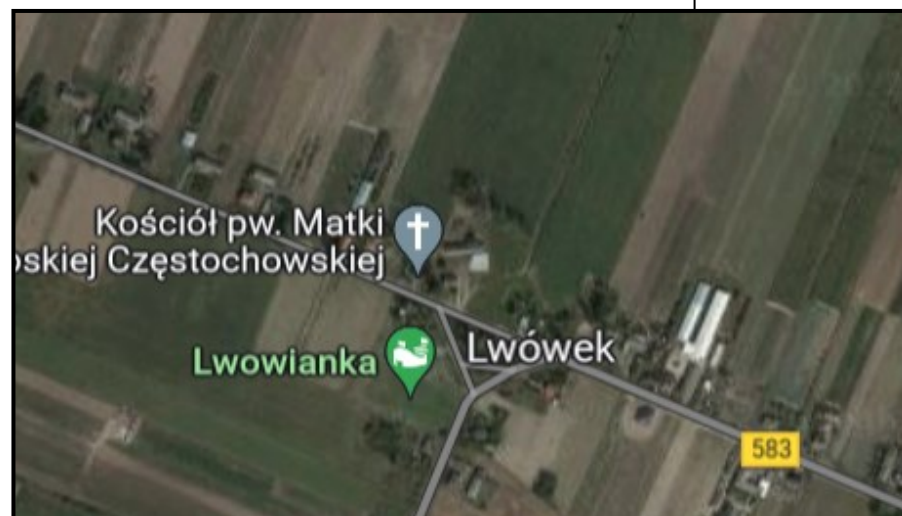
In 1833, another group of immigrants came to the Kolonie from the Stuttgart and Württemberg area. Among these were the Quecks from Gerlingen and the Beck and Sattelmeier families. In 1838 Johann Georg Queck married Friedericka Bauer, who had also recently come from Sindelfingen with her parents. Leonberg now had seventy-five homesteads and fifteen smaller dwellings.

Beate Queck was born in 1854. She was to become the bride of Johann Hell, and mother of Auguste. Of Beate's twenty-one children, thirteen grew to maturity and on her ninetieth birthday she could boast of seventy-nine grandchildren and one hundred and nine greatgrandchildren.

She was fondly known among the villagers as "*Ahne*" (ancestress) Hell, and to members of other family as "*Ur Ahna*." She lived an exemplary life, and it is said that she knew almost all the hymns in the "*Gesangbuch*" (hymn book) by heart.

From that time the settlement grew quickly. Most families were large and by 1865, the village was overflowing. Many families bought homesteads in the neighbouring villages of Anatolin and Jadwigow, as well as some Polish farms in Remki, Wolc and Radyce.

As children grew and married, the homesteads were divided, and from generation to generation they became smaller and smaller. Eventually it became necessary for the small farmer, in order to support his growing family, to find extra work to supplement his meager income. So arose the need for industry in the Kolonie.



Present day Lwówek, Poland (Leonberg)

Geographically, Leonberg was not an ideal site for a manufacturing enterprise. The nearest railway station was twenty kilometers away in Zychlin; the distance to the shipping port on the Vistula was fifteen kilometers, and the streets and roads were mainly graveled. Nor was there any industry in neighboring villages with which a consolidation could be formed.

Linguistically, too, the Kolonie was a German-speaking island in the middle of Poland. In spite of these obstacles, in about the year 1896, Friederich and Jakob Blümle, with Ferdinand Vogel, erected a foundry and manufacturing plant for agricultural machinery. In the face of overwhelming difficulties, these determined men, with the cooperation of skilled tradesmen and competent farmers from the village, persisted and persevered until the small business was in operation.

About nine years later, Vogel left the Blümle Company, opened his own machine shop, and also made farm implements. Six grown sons managed different departments in the factory and soon persuaded their father to modernize the business. In a very short time Leonberg became noted throughout the neighboring villages for its exceptionally well-made farm wagons.

These industrial ventures provided employment and additional income that was so vitally important to the small farmer at that time. In those years the Kolonie saw its first motor. Gradually the picturesque windmills had to give way to steam and diesel engines in the operation of the mills. As machinery became more modern in the outside world, so also were those advances eventually seen in the Kolonie. As the village grew, so also did the little congregation. They were official members of the Church in Gombin, but so too were other congregations in the area. Because of the remoteness and size of the membership there, spiritual ministrations for the individual was impossible.

Some of the Leonbergers remembered their earlier affiliation with a religious Brotherhood in Germany known as the "*Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine*". The little congregation applied to them for a Missionary to preach and conduct their Sunday services, prayer meetings and Bible

studies, and be their spiritual guide and counsellor. In 1858 their own "*Betsaal*" (house of prayer) was built and worship services were held there.

Now it was only necessary to travel to Gombin for Holy Communion, Baptisms, Confirmation and Wedding ceremonies.

The Betsaal could boast no cushioned pews. Its seats were wooden benches with no support for weary backs. On the main floor of the meeting house the women worshipped, and above, in the balcony which projected from the sides and rear of the hall, sat the men. The young men usually came early to obtain a front rail seat... the best place to watch the village girls.

There was room too in the balcony for the choir and the brass band which accompanied the singing of the hymns.

The evangelical zeal in the little congregation bore fruit, and by the early 1900s Leonberg was the center of religious activity in the district. It was to the Kolonie that the believers from surrounding villages came to celebrate their "*Fests*". Annually were held the "*Ehefest*" (for married couples), the "*Brüderfest*" (for the men), the "*Schwesterfest*" (for the ladies), and the "*Kinderfest*" (for the children). Then too, there was *Erntedankfest*" (Thanksgiving), as well as the yearly "*Bläserfest*" and "*Sängerfest*" in which the bands and choirs from the neighboring villages participated.

These get-togethers became not only an opportunity for the colonists to keep in touch, but also served to strengthen the religious life in the community.

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Part 2 will be published in the December 2022 SGGEE Journal.

# It's Renewal Time

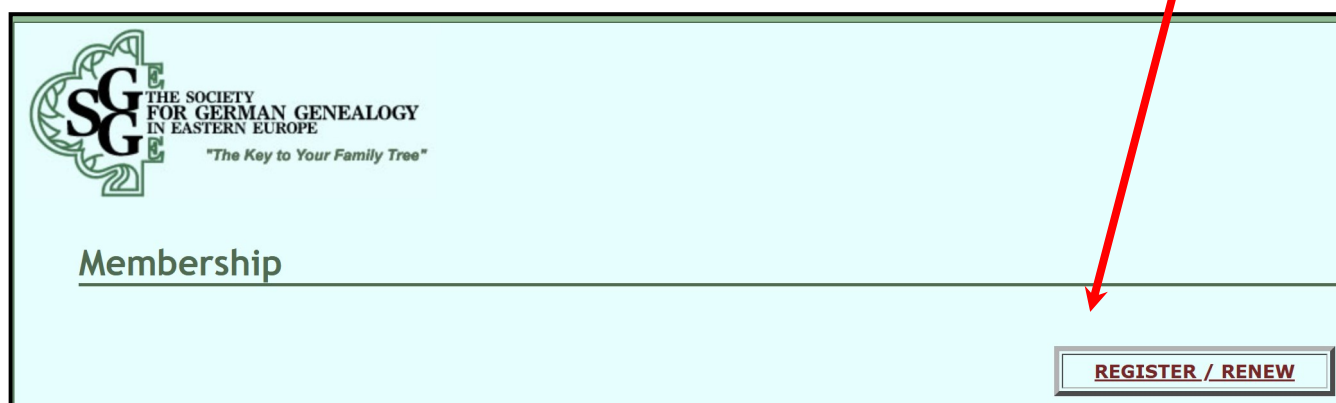
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