



wendish news

WENDISH HERITAGE SOCIETY AUSTRALIA

NUMBER 56 MARCH 2016



Clockwise from top:

1. *Mary Cooper at our Research Centre with our new sign, made by John Modra.*
2. *Janice Blackburn.*
3. *Richard Albert.*
4. *Glenys Wollermann.*
5. *Beryl Nagorcka.*
6. *Betty Huf and Mary Cooper.*

PHOTOS SUPPLIED BY JOHN MODRA AND JOEL & JANICE BLACKBURN.

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Calendar of upcoming events

Annual General Meeting

Saturday 2 April 2016

Our Society's AGM will be held at 1.30 pm, followed by afternoon tea. All are welcome.

The venue is our meeting room at **St Aidan's Community Centre, 12 Surrey St, Box Hill South, Victoria.**

Proxies will be accepted. Please appoint a proxy if you are unable to attend, to ensure that we have a quorum for this important meeting. Please see the enclosed proxy form. We need 26 members, including proxies, for a quorum. Committee members may be appointed as proxies eg. Secretary.

Please post the proxy form to reach us by Friday 1 April. Alternatively, you may email a message appointing a proxy to the address below.

Please RSVP to Glenys Wollermann (Secretary)

Telephone (03) 9891 6652;

email: wendsociety1@optusnet.com.au

Saturday 16 April 2016: Wend/Sorb Society of S.A. Historical Bus Trip

The bus trip will start at 8.30 am sharp from the south side of South Terrace, Adelaide. The destinations include Gawler, Concordia, Bethany, Tanunda, Moculta, Keyneton, Sedan, Cambrai, Birdwood and Oakbank. The cost is \$45 per person. Payment to "Wend/Sorb Society of S.A." is required with booking before 26 March. Book early to secure a seat.

Contact Ruth Walter: (08) 8269 7168

and post to 43 Clifton St. Prospect, S.A. 5082

or email ruth.walter43@gmail.com

Saturday 15 October 2016: 30th Anniversary Luncheon

A special Luncheon will be held at the German Club Tivoli to celebrate our Society's 30th Anniversary. Full details will be provided in our September newsletter.

Past events

Luncheon at the German Club Tivoli, Saturday 17 October 2015

This special Luncheon featured Clay Kruger's slide-show presentation on the Schürmann weekend held at Tarrington, Victoria in June 2015. Clay also showed video relating to the upcoming 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's Reformation, to be celebrated in Germany in April 2017. This Luncheon was a very successful event, thanks to Clay's planning and preparation. Good German food and hospitality was enjoyed by the 28 people present.

Wendish Descendants at the Ballarat Fine Music Festival, 8–17 Jan. 2016

The City of Ballarat welcomed some Wendish descendants as performing musicians to its impressive Festival of Fine Music from 8 to 17 January, 2016.

The informative Program Notes contained information in relation to 25 Concerts, which included singing by choirs and soloists and performances on keyboards and on orchestral instruments. In addition, there was an official Festival Breakfast, a Lunch

and a Dinner, as well as a relaxing paddle-boat ride on Lake Wendouree.

The performances were all on a world-class level and the recitalists, including Robert Ampt, Amy Johansen and Calvin Bowman, could claim to have Wendish ancestry. Robert Ampt, who is the Sydney City organist and a composer of music on the Birralee Publishing label, performed as both a solo and duet player, playing with his wife Amy Johansen. At his recital at the Carngham Uniting Church in Snake Valley, Robert played Bach's mighty "Passacaglia and Fugue in C Minor" as the climax to his theme, "Bach and His Variation Friends". The church itself was built as a smaller version of Scots Presbyterian Church in Collins St, Melbourne.

Robert's Wendish ancestors, Johann Noack and his wife Anna nee Hondow, lived at Schoenhoehe and at Tauer in Lower Lusatia. They arrived with their children, including Anna's children Martin Hondow and Maria Nowsch, and Johann and Anna's son Friedrich, on the ship *San Francisco* in October 1850. They eventually settled on their farm at Peter's Hill, which is located east of Riverton in South Australia. Here they raised their family, helped



Clockwise from top: 1. Ballarat Central Uniting Church. 2. Amy Johansen and Robert Ampt. 3. Paddle boat ride on Lake Wendouree. PHOTOS SUPPLIED BY JOHN NOACK.

to establish and maintain the Lutheran Church and School and both Johann and Anna are buried in the Pioneer Cemetery. Their son Friedrich later moved to the Victorian Wimmera and then to Hopevale, east of Rainbow in the Mallee region. Robert's grandfather, Pastor J. F. Noack, lived and worked in Natimuk. Robert's parents Louis Ampt and Dorothy, nee Noack, lived and worked in Horsham, where Robert was born in 1949. More details about Robert are presented on page 591 in the *Noack-Hondow-Schmidt Family History* book.

Amy Johansen, who is at present the University organist and carillonist at the University of Sydney, was born and educated in the United States of America. Her father worked for the Air Force, so her family, which can also claim some Wendish

ancestry, lived in various locations, including Texas and Honolulu. Amy was educated at the University of Florida and at Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Her promotion and performances of the organ works of Composer Naji Hakim have been widely acclaimed.

The "Duo Organ Recital" presented together with Robert Ampt at the large Ballarat Central Uniting Church included the lively "Arrival of the Queen of Sheba" by George Handel and "Waltzing Matilda for Four Feet" by Robert Ampt. Amy also played the organ at the recital at St Alipius Church, which included Gregory van der Struik playing the trombone. Together, they presented some very lively duet-music of Gustav Holst, Brendan Collins, Antonio Vivaldi and Robert Ampt.



Past events... continued



From left to right: 1. Calvin Bowman and Emma Horwood. 2. Frieda and Lena Mirtschin.

PHOTOS SUPPLIED BY JOHN NOACK.

Dr Calvin Bowman, organist, pianist and composer, has been described as “one of the finest musical minds this country has produced”. He is a Graduate of the University of Melbourne and of Yale University, where he was the first Australian to graduate with a Doctor of Musical Arts Degree.

In Ballarat, Calvin is their “Local Boy”. Although he was born in nearby Ararat in 1972, he grew up in Ballarat with his sister Nadine. Both displayed an early interest in playing the piano and Calvin’s interest in performing the works of J. S. Bach led to his mastery of Bach’s organ works.

His Wendish ancestry can be traced back through his mother, Lynn Bowman, nee Friebel, and his grandfather Clyve Friebel of Rainbow to his great-grandmother, Martha Gersch. It was Martha’s grandfather Johann Gersch, who, as a Wend, was born in Buchwalde in Lusatia, Germany and who, with his wife Hertha and his family, sailed to Australia on the ship *Steinwarder* and arrived at Adelaide in November 1854. The family eventually settled at St Kitts in South Australia and from there, subsequent family members moved to many parts of Australia, including Ballarat. Calvin’s childhood fondness of music and his piano and the violin lessons, are mentioned on page 221 in the Gersch Family History, *Of Pioneers and People: The Johann Gersch Story*.

Calvin was joined by the Soprano Emma Horwood, a member of the award-winning “Adelaide Chamber Singers” and who is widely “renowned for her purity of tone, musicality and engaging stage presence”.

They presented works by Samuel Barber and works composed by Calvin in homage to Barber. One of these works was Calvin’s “Seven Songs” from *A Child’s Garden of Verses* by Robert Louis Stevenson. The final item was the world premiere of Bowman’s “Little Prelude after the Master”.

The Ballarat District has hosted this “Festival of Fine Music” for the past 21 years, with the organist Sergio de Pieri OAM as the Director. The registered participants numbered over 400 and some had attended every previous Festival.

However, the Wendish descendants Lena and Frieda Mirtschin, who in the past have enjoyed many of these excellent concerts, were unable to attend this year. They are both now residents at the Kirillee Nursing Home in Richards St, Ballarat. During my visit, they were pleased to be able to hear about some highlights and to inspect some of the 200 photos taken of the various performers, venues and activities during this Festival. The members of the Mirtschin family are also proud of their Wendish ancestry and origins in Upper Lusatia in Germany and Lena and Frieda have gained much from their own eventual destination of Ballarat.

No doubt the members of the very appreciative audience hope that this Festival can continue well into the future.

JOHN NOACK

March Tour to Dimboola and district, 12–14 March 2016

A full report of this very successful tour will be published on our website and in our next Newsletter.



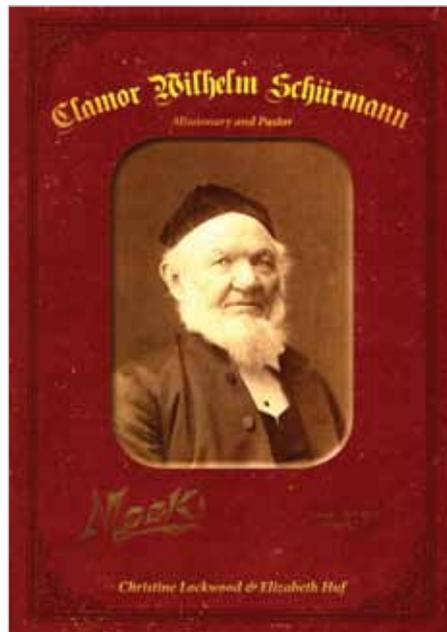
What's new at the library?

Clamor Wilhelm Schürmann: missionary and pastor, by Christine Lockwood and Elizabeth Huf

Published in 2015 for the 200th anniversary of his birth, this book is an account of the life and work of Clamor Wilhelm Schürmann, missionary and pastor, who was born in Schleddehausen, Hannover on 7 June, 1815 and died in South Australia on 3 March 1893.

Part 1 is a brief overview of Schürmann's background, and covers his time as a missionary in South Australia from the time of his arrival in Adelaide on 13 October, 1838 until early 1853. Appointed by the Dresden Society as a missionary to the Aboriginal tribes of Adelaide and Port Lincoln, his work with the Aborigines would come to have great significance in the preservation and restoration of several Aboriginal languages in present-day Australia. For example, together with fellow missionary, Christian Gottlob Teichelmann, he published a Kaurna grammar and vocabulary. The Kaurna people are a group of indigenous Australians whose traditional lands include the area around the Adelaide Plains of South Australia. Kaurna culture and language was almost completely destroyed within a few decades of European settlement of Australia. However, extensive documentation by early missionaries, such as Schürmann, enabled a modern-day revival of both language and culture.

Part 2 covers the period 1853 to 1893 during which Schürmann was a Lutheran pastor in Western Victoria and president of the Victorian Branch of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Australia. As the pioneering pastor of this district he has left a lasting legacy to the Lutheran Church in Western Victoria where his journeys to Warrnambool, Mount Gambier, Waldkirch and the Wimmera resulted in the establishment of a number of Lutheran churches, most of which are still in existence today. He believed strongly too in the importance of Lutheran



education, and several schools were established within his parish. Concordia College at Murtoa in Victoria was also commenced during his time as President of the Victorian Synod. The College, opened in 1890 for the training of pastors, began with one student. Relocated to Adelaide in 1905, Concordia College, now with over 850 students, celebrated its 125th anniversary in 2015.

Sunday, 7 June 2015 marked the 200th birthday of Schürmann and a weekend of events was held to commemorate the occasion. Historian Betty Huf, co-author of this book, led a tour which visited historical sites, including Tarrington (Hochkirch), Tabor, and Byaduk, places closely associated with his life and work. The group also visited his final resting place in South Hamilton Lutheran Cemetery.

For a full description and photographs of this event refer to "Wendish News", Number 55, September 2015.

JANICE BLACKBURN, LIBRARIAN

PHOTO OF BOOK COVER: JOEL BLACKBURN.

For a complete list of our library holdings, visit our website:

<http://www.wendishheritage.org.au/research/library-resources/our-complete-library-catalogue/>

JANICE BLACKBURN, LIBRARIAN



Tours



Raymond & Sandra Matthijetz, Joyce Bise, Rob Wuchatsch, Raymond “Red” Ardl.

PHOTO SUPPLIED BY RICHARD GRUETZNER.

Recent Visit to the Texas Wendish Heritage Society

In November 2015, I had the great pleasure of staying for four days with Raymond and Sandra Matthijetz at Winchester, Texas. Sandra had kindly invited me following our email correspondence regarding her MIERTSCHIN ancestors who emigrated to Texas on the Ben Nevis in 1854. Raymond’s Matthijetz ancestors had emigrated in 1853. Both Sandra and Raymond are 100% Wendish and are members of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society.

Sandra’s ancestor, Andreas Miertschin, lived next door to my great grandfather, Johann Wuchatsch, in Särka, 15 kilometres east of Bautzen. I knew this from several visits to the Bautzen State Archives and I was able to provide Sandra with research material about her Miertschin family.

Serbin

On 4 November, Sandra drove me to Serbin, where the Texas Wendish Heritage Society’s Museum is located. After an interesting talk by Jack Wiederhold at Serbin’s St Paul’s Church, where he

was conducting a tour for members of a northern Texan Lutheran congregation, we visited the Texas Wendish Museum and also had a very enjoyable lunch. I passed on greetings to the Texas Wendish Heritage Society from both our society and Lyall Kupke of the Wend/Sorb Society of South Australia.

Presentation

On 5 November, we returned to the Wendish Museum and I met more Texas Wends, prior to presenting a talk and slide show that evening about “Australian Wends, Westgarthtown and my Wuchatsch family research in Germany.” It soon became clear, however, that Texas Wends were very aware of Wendish settlement in Australia, but not about the valuable land and other village records held at the Bautzen State Archives. I therefore revised my presentation to concentrate mainly on research in Upper Lusatia, using my Wuchatsch family research as a case study. Several of the Texas Wends, including Sandra Matthijetz and Richard Gruetzner, expressed their intention to visit the Bautzen State Archives in the near future to research their families.



Richard Gruetzner and Rob Wuchatsch

PHOTO SUPPLIED BY RICHARD GRUETZNER.

Budissiner Nachrichten

A side-benefit of my visit to Texas was the discovery that the Bautzen German language newspaper *Budissiner Nachrichten* has been digitised from 1828-68 and is now available online at www.digital.slub-dresden.de although not searchable. In 2010 I purchased microfilm copies of this newspaper in Dresden and had sent George Nielsen any information I found which related to Texas Wends. In October 2015, Weldon Mersiovsky of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society asked if I would bring my microfilms to the US, so they could have them digitised. In checking the legality of such action, one of my relatives in Germany advised me that digitisation of this paper had already commenced, so I did not need to carry my rolls of microfilm to Texas.

In the Footsteps of Martin Luther – April 2017



Rev Noel Noack, former Lutheran Bishop of Qld, and Dr Meg Noack, together with Mr Stan Klan, Principal of Great Trains of Europe Tours (Toowoomba), invite you to join them on a pilgrimage tour through Europe, in Martin Luther's footsteps.

This pilgrimage tour will honour the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. It will include a pre-tour of Israel, "In the Footsteps of Jesus". The tour will depart on 24 April 2017, for 14 days.

Contact: Great Trains of Europe Tours,
PO Box 4553, Toowoomba East,
Qld 4350, Australia.

Telephone: 0488 423 848

Email: greattrains@bigpond.com

Website: www.greattrainsofeurope.com.au

Visit to Upper Lusatia

Our September issue of *Wendish news* will feature an article by Geoff Saegenschmitter on his visit to Upper Lusatia in August 2015.

Tydzenske Nowiny and Serbske Nowiny

Weldon Mersiovsky has since advised that the Sorbian Institut in Bautzen has also begun digitising the old Wendish newspapers *Tydzenske Nowiny* and *Serbske Nowiny*. These are now available online at www.serbske-institut.de under Bibliothek/Archiv. Dr Charles Wukasch of Austin has graciously volunteered to read through these online newspapers for references to Texas and Australia and Dr Gerald Stone of Oxford has kindly agreed to translate relevant articles.

My visit convinced me of the increased benefits to be gained from greater co-operation between our various Wendish heritage societies, whether in Australia, the US or Germany. It was also a thoroughly enjoyable experience.

ROBERT WUCHATSCH



Research

Trove website: trove.nla.gov.au

Thanks to the Trove website with over a thousand Australian newspapers now available online, there are now fewer enquiries from Australians for information about their Wendish and German ancestors.

Overseas enquiries

There are still a few enquiries from overseas. In a recent one from Germany the enquirer had a copy of an 1860's marriage certificate, recording a marriage that was held in a home in Melbourne. The enquirer was convinced it could not have been a genuine marriage because, in Germany, a couple can only be legally married in a Government marriage office. The couple might then have a blessing of the marriage in a church or at their home. In Australia, the clergy are included in the people who do all the legal paperwork etc. for the Government and the actual marriage can be held in a church, or home, or outdoors, or in a registry office.

I wish to personally thank Herbert Mees who is fluent in German and is a great help to me, especially with records of early marriages in Melbourne. The Trinity German Lutheran Church in Melbourne has excellent records going back to the 1850's.

Pastor Schondorf

An interesting account of the pastor of the Moravian Brethren and his ministry to the early Wends at Ebenezer in South Australia, by Trudla Malinkowa, and translated into English by Chris Greenthaner, can be found on the becker-zwar.com website. Trudla Malinkowa (German: Gertrud Mahling) is a leading scholar of the Wends, and lives in Bautzen in Germany.

KEVIN P. ZWAR

1854 Kleinwelka Bell Order

Our last newsletter included an article by Robert Wuchatsch on the mystery of the bell ordered from Kleinwelka (near Bautzen) in 1854. Mrs Gertrud Mahling of Bautzen, author of *Shores of Hope: Wends go Overseas*, discovered the bell order during her research and contacted Robert to ask if we knew which group of Wends in Australia ordered the bell.

On 4 October 2015, Robert received this response from Richard Gruetzner of the Texas Wendish Heritage Society:

Working at the Texas Wendish Heritage Society Museum in Serbin today, I found the September 2015 issue of the Wendish News... I noticed a brief query on the research page in which Gertrud Mahling had inquired about a bell cast for the Wends in the foundry in Kleinwelka in 1854. She indicated it was for the Wends going to Australia and your response indicated the bells in your area were all from later in the century. ...Could the bell order Ms. Mahling is researching have actually been one that ended up going to Texas with Pastor Kilian and his congregation and not one intended for a congregation in Australia? It has been said that the congregation originally intended to go to Australia but was dissuaded by letters of complaint from earlier settlers and then decided to go to Texas.

I have attached a photo of "our" bell as it is currently displayed at Concordia Lutheran University in Austin, Texas. As shown in the foundry casting, the bell was cast in 1854 at Kleinwelka. It was carried to Texas with the Wends under Pastor Jan Kilian and placed in the steeple of St Paul Lutheran Church. From there it was later transferred to Concordia Lutheran College site in Austin where it was placed in front of Kilian Hall. When that site was sold and the (now) university moved to a different location, the bell was relocated to its present location which is shown in the photo.

Richard Gruetzner

Texas Wendish Heritage Society

On 16 October 2015, Robert received the following response from Gertrud Mahling:

Thanks for the message... ..I know about the bell in Texas – I have seen it at its old and its new place in Concordia, Austin. But I have a source, that they made in 1854 in Kleinwelka two similar bells – one for Texas and one for Australia. But if in Australia nothing is known about such a bell, maybe the source is wrong.

Greetings from Lusatia

Gertrud

Thanks to Gertrud Mahling, Richard Gruetzner and Robert Wuchatsch for this information.

**For research queries,
contact Kevin Zwar at email:
wendsonline@optusnet.com.au**



Windish / Slovenes in Hungary

Our September 2015 newsletter also included an article about the Windish /Slovenes in Hungary. On 2 February 2016, we received the following response from Martin Brützke of the Sorbian Museum in Bautzen:

This weekend I finally managed to read last September's edition of the "Wendish news". In the research section I read the correspondence between Mr. Zwar and two gentlemen from Germany about the different meanings of the terms wend / wendish / windish. I would like to add something:

I think the "Sorbisches Kulturlexikon" published by the Serbski Insitut gives a good definition of the term "wendish":

- 1. In the wider sense it applies to the [general] language of the western Slavonic tribes, settling in the region of the Baltic sea, nowadays East Germany, but also in the Alpine area (then referring to the later Slovenes as "windish").*
- 2. In a narrower sense it applies to the Sorbian Wends, such as Lower Lusatian Sorbs and Upper Lusatian Sorbs.*

That means, that looking at the widespread areas in medieval Germany where Wendish-speaking parishes / settlements could still be found, outside the Sorbian settlement area, they were still Wendish, but not exactly Sorbian.

Concerning the word "windish", it is mostly used to refer to Slovenes, but in the former versions of the written German, it was sometimes also used for their northern brothers/cousins. (The famous Slovenian reformer Primus Truber referred to the Biblical translations he co-edited as made for these peasants, who speak Windish, but lack knowledge of German. The elite would speak an Austrian style German, though.)

I think the best way to put it would be to say that, "Wends" is the term for these Western Slavs, who did not have their own state-like territory; and in a narrower sense, it refers to the Lusatian Sorbs. (But this is just an individual view).

Best regards,
Martin Brützke / Měrcin Brycka
Sorbian Museum



New Website

We are pleased to announce that our website has had a much-needed upgrade.

The new website houses our complete library catalogue of over 2300 items, as well as many articles, historical letters from early Wendish Immigrants, biographies of Wendish Immigrants and an A-Z list of the Surnames of Wends who immigrated to Australia in the 19th century.

For members, there is a Calendar of events which can be updated at any time. All articles and images from this printed newsletter will also appear in the "news" section of the website.

We are very grateful to Robyn Zwar for her work in designing this wonderful resource for sharing Wendish culture, history and heritage. The new site went live on 3 March 2016.

See <http://www.wendishheritage.org.au>

Feedback

We have already received some good feedback about our new website. Martin Brützke emailed this message:

Congratulations on your beautiful new website. The combination of the two leaves of eucalyptus and linden is quite a matching pun. I wonder how that translation tool works.

The photographs on your welcoming site look as if they were taken from the north side of the Czorneboh mountains near Hochkirch (Upper Sorbian: Bukecy), Rachlau (Upper Sorbian: Rachlow) and Kleinkunitz (Upper Sorbian: Chojnicka).

In case I am wrong – please excuse me. (I live in Kubschütz.)

Best wishes to your side of the globe!
Martin Brützke / Měrcin Brycka
Sorbian Museum



Tributes to Alfons Frencl



Alfons and Ursula Frencl. PHOTO SUPPLIED BY KEVIN ZWAR.

Alfons Frencl (1946–2015)

A great friend of Australian Wends, Alfons Frencl, passed away in Lusatia after a long illness on 27 October 2015, aged 68.

Alfons Frencl (German: Frenzel) – a writer and poet – was a modern Wendish patriot who devoted his life to the maintenance and promotion of Wendish culture. Alfons and his wife Ursula lived at Rosenthal, north-west of Bautzen, near Kamenz. A school teacher for over 40 years, he taught History and English at Ralbitz for many years, until his retirement. In 2012, when I purchased a book by Alfons at the Domowina Bookshop in Bautzen, the sales lady very proudly exclaimed, “He was my teacher!”

For much of the last 25 years, Alfons had devoted his spare time and travels to researching and writing about Wends wherever he found them in the world. He visited Australia in 1990 to meet Australian Wends and study our Wendish settlements. He made many friends here and over the next 20 years he helped many Australian Wends during their visits to Lusatia. Kevin Zwar and I were two Australian Wends who have reason to be particularly grateful for Alfons’ hospitality. Kevin’s very personal recollections of his 1994 visit to Lusatia appear below.

When I visited Lusatia in 1992, Alfons invited me to stay and the next day drove me from Rosenthal to Werben, to visit the village of my Proposch ancestors. In 2008, he took me to Görlitz and other historic places, including the grave of one of his

heroes, the Wendish composer Korla Awgust Kocor, at Kittlitz. We met again in 2010 when my late wife Gaye and I enjoyed a wonderful meal with Alfons and Ursula at a terrace restaurant high above the River Spree at Bautzen.

For over 30 years Alfons edited *Serbska Protyka*, an Upper Lusatian Wendish yearbook. Alfons invited Kevin Zwar (1992) and both Ray Burger and myself (1993) to contribute articles about Wendish migration and settlement in Australia and published them in *Serbska Protyka*. In 2012 Alfons published an article about our Society’s 25th Anniversary.

Alfons also wrote many books about Wendish history, culture, migration and settlement. His 1996 book *Serbske Puce Do Sweta* (Wendish Ways Around The World) was the result of his research and travels around the world and much of this book was devoted to Wendish emigration and settlement in Australia.

We offer our sincere sympathy to Ursula Frencl on the sad loss of Alfons.

ROBERT WUCHATSCH

A Dream Came True – over three days

Alfons Frencl stayed with us when he visited Australia in 1990. He was delighted to see the blue skies and mountains covered with grey gum trees.

In 1994 Del and I had the privilege of staying with Alfons and Ursula Frencl for three days in Germany. For me it was the most exciting three days of my life. Alfons was an English teacher so we had no problems with languages. He was also fluent in Wendish, German and Polish.

Friday – Spreewald

On the Friday Alfons and Ursula took us for a boat ride in the Spreewald, a Wendish area of about 40 kilometres by 15 kilometres. There are no roads to travel on, but seemingly endless canals between and around the farms. On the way there and home we visited a variety of old Wendish churches, villages, and the lower Wendish ‘capital’ city of Cottbus.

Saturday – Poland

Early in the day we saw the impressive Wendish school at Milkel for German speaking students who wish to learn the Wendish language. We also saw a number of small lakes they call ‘fish ponds’. There are more fish ponds in the Wendish area than in the rest of Germany.



Interior of Polish church at Klemzig. PHOTO: M. COOPER.

We entered Poland at Bad Muskau after a wait of 40 minutes. (The large trucks had to wait for 35 hours).

We visited the Klemzig Church from where Pastor Kavel led a large group of Lutherans to Australia. It was a sensational experience for Del and me. Alfons said I was probably the first person from the Western World to video the inside of this church. The church was 600 years old, made entirely of timber. It is not large inside, but the whole ceiling is covered with paintings and the rest of the church is an art experience.

We then visited five churches where Del's or my ancestors had come from to Australia. Alfons would go down the street and ask in Polish who had a key to the church! Del played the old pipe organ in the Leitersdorf church where my Becker ancestors had worshipped. Alfons showed us an old Church at Sprey built only of wood – and no nails – where the altar was made in 1480. It was a wonderful day that can't be compared to any other day in our lives.

Sunday – Wendish festival

Alfons took us to a special Wendish church service in Luppaa. It is the only time I have ever been in a church service in the Wendish language of my ancestors. And the service was taken by Pastor Albert, the pastor who, years earlier, when living under Communist rule, had searched out the letters in old Wendish newspapers from my Zwar ancestors in Australia. He had translated them from Wendish into German, and then posted them to me in Australia.



On the way home Alfons took us to the large cemetery of his church (*pictured above*), where each grave is exactly the same, and each has the same white cross on it as a reminder that in death we are all equal. (On Easter Sunday this year, 27th March, a white cross will be placed on Alfons's grave and the Easter Horse Riders will ride round the cemetery three times.)

For lunch, Ursula served us the entrée for a typical Wendish wedding breakfast: Soup, consisting of beef broth with noodles and vegetables, with egg squares in it.

In the afternoon Alfons took us to Radibor for an outdoor Wendish Festival. It began with a band leading a procession of 14 different Wendish groups through the little town square. Then we followed them down to an oval to a large outdoor stage. For several hours there was a programme of Wendish dancing, music, choirs and plays. The performance by the Bautzen Sorb Ensemble was professional and absolutely out of this world. The Ensemble had been touring around the world. I have never seen folk dancing like it.

With special thanks to Alfons, these three days were like a Wendish dream that truly happened.

KEVIN P. ZWAR

Our Visit to Rosenthal in 2005

In 2005, Colin and I visited Alfons and Ursula Frencl at Rosenthal, where we spent an enjoyable afternoon discussing things Wendish. As a result, Alfons asked me to write short biographies about interesting Australian Wends for his yearbooks published in 2007 (James and June NAGORCKA and their tractor manufacturing at Waltana, Tarrington) and 2008 (Peter MIRTSCHEIN and his work with snakes at Tanunda, both in the collection of snake venom and research into its medical applications).

BETTY HUF



General News

Vale Stanley Groves

Stanley Groves died of cancer on 17 January 2016. His funeral was held on 25 January at the Tabor Lutheran Church, near Hamilton in Western Victoria. Stanley was buried at the Gnadenthal Lutheran Cemetery, near Tabor. He was a loyal member of our Society. We extend our sincere condolences to Ruby Groves (nee Burger) and family, and to all who are grieving for Stanley.

Radke Reunion, 13–16 May 2016

The Radke family will celebrate the 150th anniversary of their emigration from Prussia. The Reunion will be held at the Radke Heritage Farm, Station Rd, Bethania, Qld.

Contact: Philip Radke (07) 4635 6365;
(mobile) 0438 078 309;
email: philipradke28@hotmail.com

Directory

Aims: The Wendish Heritage Society Australia Inc., researches and promotes the Wendish/Sorbian and Germanic heritage and family history in Australia.

Postal Address: P.O. Box 4050, Box Hill South, Victoria 3128

Meeting Room and Research Centre: St Aidan's Community Centre, 12 Surrey St, Box Hill South, Victoria. (Melway 61 C1)

Hours: By appointment. Please contact the Secretary.

Our Society Logo: The logo, an Australian gum leaf and a Lusatian linden leaf, represent the connection between the Wendish descendants in Australia and the Sorbs in Lusatia.

Membership & Newsletter Subscription: \$30 for single membership and \$35 for joint membership for one calendar year due at the start of each year. The form is included in our September Newsletter for the following year. Additional donations can also be made for the expanding work of the Society and we thank most sincerely those of you who have made such generous donations.

Publicity: We welcome any publicity which you can give about our Society and its planned events.

Newsletter Design: Robyn Zwar Design,
www.robynzwardesign.com

Newsletter Editor: Glenys Wollermann

Librarian: Janice Blackburn

Website Consultant: Joel Blackburn

Office bearers:

President: Robert Wuchatsch, Stony Rises Homestead, 2020 Princes Hwy, Pirron Yallock, Vic 3249.
Mobile: 0400 127 830 Email: robert.wuchatsch@gmail.com

Vice-President: John L. Modra, 24 Moore St, Colac, Vic 3250
Tel: 03 5231 5497 Email: riskwithinreason@gmail.com

Secretary: Glenys Wollermann, 22 Bellara Street, Doncaster, Vic 3108. Tel: 03 9891 6652
Email: wendsociety1@optusnet.com.au

Treasurer: Clay Kruger, Good Shepherd Retirement Village, Unit 16/1–5 City Road, Ringwood, Vic 3134
Tel: 03 8838 8737 Email: ck_32@optusnet.com.au

Committee Members:

Mary Cooper: 22 Cherry St, Glen Waverley, Vic 3150
Tel: 03 9802 5433 Email: marycooper570@gmail.com

Betty Huf: PO Box 26, Tarrington, Vic 3301
Tel: 03 5572 4959 Email: bettyhuf@westvic.com.au *Researcher*

Geoff Matuschka: 6883 Hamilton Highway, Tabor, Vic 3289
Tel: 03 5573 5226

Beryl Nagorcka: 39 Kenilworth Crescent, Glen Waverley, Vic 3150 Tel: 9802 6487 Email: bnagorcka@bigpond.com

Moira Nagorcka: same address as Beryl Nagorcka.
Email: magina@bigpond.com

Wendish Heritage Society Australia Inc ABN 78 951 996 351

PO Box 4050, Box Hill South, Victoria 3128

Kevin Zwar is willing to help with research enquiries. Email: wendsonline@optusnet.com.au

Business Email: wendsociety1@optusnet.com.au

Website: www.wendishheritage.org.au

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