



# wendish news

WENDISH HERITAGE SOCIETY AUSTRALIA

NUMBER 50 MARCH 2013



*Clockwise from top left: Ziebell's Farmhouse Garden (see p.3); Matiss Schubert performs at the Nieder-Weisel Memorial Event (see p.4); Women in period costume from the local Woody Yaloak Historical Society at the Nieder-Weisel Memorial Event (see p.4).*

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# Calendar of upcoming events

## Labour Day Weekend Tour, 9-10 March 2013

Our tour destination will be the Grovedale and Freshwater Creek area, near Geelong, Victoria. The proposed itinerary, organised by June Winter, is as follows:

On Saturday 9th March at 11.30 am we will meet in the church hall at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, cnr Torquay Rd and Heyers Rd, Grovedale. (Enter from Heyers Rd.) Please join us for lunch at "Brunch on Peter Street", a short distance from the church, or BYO lunch if you wish. We will then tour the local area, including historic Cobbin Farm (originally a Hartwich property). Afternoon tea will be at "Brunch on Peter Street." The evening meal will be at the Mount Moriac Hotel.

Accommodation options include the *Golden Palms Motel* (234 Torquay Rd, Grovedale) Ph. (03) 5243 1077; *Waurn Ponds Hotel Motel* (Princes Hwy, Waurn Ponds) Ph. (03) 5243 1154 or the *Aristocrat Waurnvale Motel* (90 Princes Hwy, Waurn Ponds) Ph. (03) 5241 8211. Please make your own bookings.

On Sunday 10th, we will have the opportunity to attend a church service at St. Pauls, Grovedale at

9.30 am. This church was built in 1870. The church service will be followed by morning tea and lunch in the church hall. We will then tour the Grovedale (Germantown) Cemetery and the heritage-listed church and cemetery at Freshwater Creek.

For those who wish to stay, there will be an opportunity on Monday to visit Geelong's Wool Museum and the Botanical Gardens near the waterfront.

*Please book by Sunday 3rd March with June Winter (03) 5266 1383.*

## Pleasant Sunday Afternoon, Sunday 7 April 2013

We will begin with a community lunch at 12.30 pm followed by a brief AGM before hearing our guest speaker at 2.00 pm. As this year marks the 200th Anniversary of the birth of Ludwig Leichhardt, we will hear about this famous German explorer and naturalist whose 1848 disappearance in inland Australia remains a mystery.

The venue is the Ivanhoe Lutheran Church, 27 Livingstone St, Ivanhoe, Vic. (Melway 31 E7). Please bring some finger food for lunch. All are welcome.



*Ziebell's Farmhouse Garden and St David's Lutheran Church, Freshwater Creek.*



## Past events



*Guest speaker Helen Petschel at the Wagon Treks Luncheon; John Noack speaking at the Wagon Treks Luncheon.*

### Wagon Treks Commemorative Luncheon, Saturday 13 October 2012

Our Wendish Heritage Society's 2012 Trek Luncheon was held on Saturday 13 October 2012 at 12.30 pm at Melbourne's picturesque Austrian Club and Cultural Centre, located at 90 Sheehan Road in Heidelberg West. About 45 people attended.

This Trek Luncheon enabled the participants, including descendants of the many wagon-trekking families back in the 1800s, to recall and to commemorate the many slow and often very long Wagon Treks from one area of Australia to another. Their transport was by covered wagons drawn by horses or bullocks. The 1852 Wagon Trek from Rosenthal/Rosedale (S.A.) to Portland (Victoria) and the 1868-69 Wagon Trek from Ebenezer (S.A.) to Walla Walla (NSW) have been deservedly commemorated, fully or partially re-enacted and also recorded in history books.

Pioneers involved in Wagon Treks include the ALBERT, BURGER, DEUTSCHER, GERSCH, HUF, HANDRECK, HUNDRACK, LIESCHKE, MATUSCHKA, MIRTSCHIN, NOACK, PETSCHEL, PUMPA, RENTSCH, SCHEETZ, STARICK, STEPHAN, TOWK, WENKE and various other families.

Guest speakers included Helen Petschel, one of the tour organisers for the Retracing of the 1852 Wagon Trek on 3-6 May 2012. She spoke about the wonderful experience, especially for descendants of the

original wagoners, of following in their footsteps and re-living their journey. Stories or accounts known by descendants about the various treks were welcomed at this Luncheon, which also featured displays of early family memorabilia and posters.

*Highlights of "Retracing the 1852 Wagon Trek" on dual DVD & Video Pack are available for \$18.00 (including postage), from Clay Kruger. See contact details in the Directory on page 12. Please make cheques payable to "Wendish Heritage Soc. Aust. Inc."*

JOHN NOACK, PRESIDENT

### Ziebell's Farmhouse Open Garden, 17 & 18 November 2012

The historic Ziebell's Farmhouse Garden was included in Australia's Open Garden Scheme for the first time last year. The Garden was open from 10 am to 4.30 pm on both Sat. 17 and Sun. 18 November. This event was a resounding success, with 270 visitors, most of whom had never been to Ziebell's Farmhouse before. There are plans for this to become a regular event. The next Open Garden Australia weekend at Ziebell's will be held on Sat. 16 and Sun. 17 November 2013.

*Ziebell's Farmhouse (c. 1850-51) is Victoria's oldest German immigrant building. It is located at 100 Gardenia Rd, Thomastown, (Melway 8 H5) and is open on the second Sunday of each month, from 1.00-4.00 pm.*

ROBERT WUCHATSCH, RESEARCHER



# Research



## Melbourne General Cemetery Stories Project

A Cemetery Stories Project is at present being planned in relation to the Melbourne General Cemetery. Research will involve the locating and recording of personal information about the Cemetery's more than 1,600 persons with Germanic and Wendish ancestry, in order to recreate their life stories and to shed more light on life in Victoria in the pioneering days of the 1800s. The Organiser is Herbert Mees and these plans are at present being put to history-related groups in Victoria for their consideration and future involvement in this historically valuable task.

If you can assist in any way, please contact Herbert Mees; email: [herbertmees@bigpond.com](mailto:herbertmees@bigpond.com) or John Noack on [email.johnnoack@yahoo.com.au](mailto:email.johnnoack@yahoo.com.au).

*For more information, see our website under Publications / Cemetery Stories Project.*

JOHN NOACK, PRESIDENT

*Below: A Section of the gathering at Smythesdale for the Nieder-Weisel Memorial Celebrations; opposite page: Pastor Kevin Zwar and the Nieder Weisel Plaque.*



## Nieder-Weisel Plaque for Victorian Goldfields

The largest number of people to emigrate to Australia from any town in what is now Germany came to Victoria from Nieder Weisel in the 1800's, a Lutheran village in the Country called Hesse. The village had 2,300 inhabitants in the 1800's, until over one thousand made their way to Victoria, mainly in the gold rush years.

Nieder Weisel was mainly a fabric producing cottage industry village, however, the English production of steam engines and factories put the cottage industries out of business. In desperate efforts to survive, some of the Nieder Weisel folk went to England to work in the linen-producing factories. To avoid the costs of looking after and feeding the poor families in Nieder Weisel, the local government refused young couples a licence to marry unless they were financially well off! So couples naturally had children anyway, and poverty became worse.

When news of the gold rushes came, those who had gone to England headed for Victoria, and were soon joined by relatives and friends from Nieder Weisel. Many made their way to England to catch 37 different ships to Melbourne in the 1850's. Others left on eight different ships from Hamburg. From Melbourne they walked to the goldfields, where they suffered difficulties and tragedies trying to survive and buy land. For example, when Phillip Hildebrand returned home from working away and met with his wife Margaret, who was pregnant, he learnt she had buried their daughter Ethel, her younger sister Lotta and their brother Philip during an epidemic of diphtheria. About a quarter of those who went to Australia returned to Nieder Weisel, a few as wealthy people.



In 2010 the Lutheran Pastor in Nieder Weisel dedicated a plaque in the Lutheran Church grounds in Germany in memory of those who had gone to Australia in the 1800's. This was due to the work of Kevin Williams in Australia who had researched and written up the history of each person and family in both Victoria and in Nieder Weisel. After his death his work was downloaded to the internet by the Hauser family and you can visit it at

<http://www.niederweisel.com/>

A number of Australians went to Nieder Weisel for the unveiling of the plaque in 2010 and to visit the village of their ancestors.

The descendants in Australia had never met up.

Don Hauser was the energetic leader who thoroughly organised the first reunion of Nieder Weisel folk in Australia. In a weekend of reunions and many events including a Dinner and a Luncheon at Ballarat and Smythesdale on 19th and 20th January, nearly 300 folk met up for their first reunion. About 20 joined in from Nieder Weisel in Germany.

A focal point was the unveiling of a bronze plaque identical to the one unveiled in Germany – except this one is in English – and Lutheran Pastor, Kevin Zwar, made the dedication with a blessing in the same words – but this time in English – as used in the dedication in Germany in 2010:

*“May this commemorative plaque keep alive our memories of those who were forced by hardship to leave their homes in search of a better future in a distant land.*

*May this commemorative plaque be a sign of the bond between the people here in Australia and those in faraway Nieder-Weisel.*

*May this bond nurture responsibility for one another and interest in each other.*

*May God's Spirit continue to breathe a new life of love and peace between people.*

*May peace grow between nations, as people of different cultures come to meet and understand each other.*

*May the blessing of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, abide with us today and for evermore.”*

KEVIN P. ZWAR, RESEARCHER

## Reunions and Tours

### Reunion of Descendants of *Solway* Passengers, 13–16 October, 2012

Pauline Cockrill reported in *The Islander*, Kangaroo Island's local newspaper, that a very successful Reunion was held for the descendants of German pioneers who arrived at Kangaroo Island, South Australia aboard the *Solway*, 175 years ago in October 1837.

The 70 passengers aboard the *Solway* were some of the first German settlers to arrive and remain in South Australia. Surnames included BAUER, BREMER, CHRISTIAN, DEBUS, DIESE, DREBING, DRESE, FLEIM, FORTSCH, GRAMP, GRUNHAGEN, HANSON, HAUSER, HUTSCH, KLEEMAN, KOEHLER, KRAMER, LAGE, MILDE, NEANDER, OPPEL, OELRICH, PFEIFFER, PIPKORN, PROPHET, SCHAEFFER, SCHMIDT, STURN, THEILMANN, WALLSCHLAGER and ZILM.

This very successful event was organized by Rev. David Christian and Jan Heppner. Jan reported that

attendees came from all over S.A. and the eastern states. A commemorative plaque was unveiled at Reeves Point, Kingscote on Kangaroo Island.

Contacts: Jan Heppner (08) 8541 2820; email [janhch@bigpond.com](mailto:janhch@bigpond.com) or Rev. David Christian (08) 8391 0063; email [davjoyxian@adam.com.au](mailto:davjoyxian@adam.com.au)

### Touring the Land of the Wends

Chris Elmore, the writer of this report, is a great-great-grandson of Johann Samuel Rohr (1810–1890) and Anna Dorothea Petras (1822–1911). In this report he describes the experience of visiting the homeland of his Wendish ancestors. A more detailed version of this report, with photos, is available on our website.

As part of an extended trip to Europe from August to October, 2010, my wife and I visited some of the areas from which my Wendish ancestors originated. We left Berlin and drove to Cottbus, which, in former times, was situated in the centre of the Wendish cultural area.

*Continued overleaf >*



*Clockwise from Above: The façade of the Wendish Museum; Display of Wendish dress, Wendish Museum; Cottbus old town; City Square, Cottbus; A view of the exterior of the church in Klepsk; The player's console of the smaller Silbermann organ in Freiberg Cathedral; Portrait of a group of Wendish Weavers, Wendish Museum.*

### **Pottery and Spinning in the Spreewald**

When we arrived at Cottbus there was a pottery festival in progress. Pottery is one of the traditional crafts of the Wends and it was good to see such ancient skills continuing into the present day. The Wends were also famous for their spinning and weaving and this too was clearly in evidence as part of the festival. We wandered around looking at the pottery displays and then took a stroll around the town.

### **Wendish Museum at Cottbus**

I spent the afternoon looking through the Wendish Museum. It is situated in the historic part of Cottbus in a beautifully restored two-storey former residence. It has displays of Wendish national costumes, embroidery, literature, music and art. It also has displays showing aspects of village life, housing construction, pottery, fabric crafts and the archaeological record of the Wends dating from the earliest times.

The displays have been thoughtfully prepared and were of a high standard. They included mannequins in traditional Sorb dress, old tools and implements, examples of pottery and weaving, old photographs, display text (little of which I could read), and some artefacts from archaeological digs going back to the period of first settlement. By spending a good half day in the museum, I learned a tremendous amount

about the Wends, mainly through the photographs, models and various objects on display.

### **Klemzig in Brandenburg (now Klepsk in Poland)**

From Cottbus we travelled across the border into Poland. We visited the largish town of Sulechów, which is the birthplace of my great-great-grandmother, and the much smaller village of Klepsk, just a short distance from Sulechów, which is the birthplace of my great-great-grandfather.

In Klepsk we saw the very famous and magnificent wooden church which, in the time of my ancestor, was used by the local Lutherans. The exterior was clad in wood and brick, and the roof was made of wooden shingles. The interior was panelled in wood, both walls and ceiling, and each panel had been painted with a biblically-themed picture, including various angels, Adam and Eve, the apostles, and so on.

### **To Berlin via Hungary, the Czech Republic and Leipzig**

After leaving the land of the Wends, we travelled south to Hungary and Czechia (the Czech Republic), before completing the loop and returning to Berlin. On the way back to Berlin we passed



through some of the famous “Bach towns” including Weimar, Leipzig and Kothén (known in Bach’s time as Anhalt).

We also spent some time driving through Saxony where we visited a number of Lutheran and Catholic churches with some beautiful old baroque organs in them, manufactured by Gottfried Silbermann, a contemporary of Bach. Two of the best and most interesting may be found in the town of Freiberg,

where we attended recitals on these magnificent instruments.

I have assembled a photographic record of my visit to the land of the Wends and published it in book form. I have donated a copy of this book to the Wendish Society Library so that others may share some of my insights into the life of the Wends.

CHRIS ELMORE



# What's new at the library?

1. *History of the Lutheran Church in Mount Gambier*, compiled by members of the St. Martin's Church Anniversary Committee. This looks at the three individual Lutheran Congregations which have existed in Mount Gambier since 1859. They are:
  - St. Martin's Lutheran Church, Edward Street, 1860 to the present time
  - The Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of Boandik Terrace, 1859–1900
  - The Evangelical Lutheran St. Matthew's Congregation of Mark Street, 1948–1967.This book is written in memory of the pioneer forefathers who worshipped at Boandik Church, and to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the dedication of St. Martin's Church 1862–1987, and, also, in memory of the Pastors and congregation of St. Matthew's, the former Evangelical Lutheran Church in Mount Gambier.
2. *The Wellersdorf migration: a history of the Schultz, Sandmann, Topp families 1849–2011*, edited by Rex T. Motton and Phillip A. Richardson. The Schultz and Sandmann families left from Hamburg aboard the ship, *Dockenhuden*, in December 1848, arriving in Melbourne, Victoria in April, 1849. They settled in Wollert in 1853 before the expanding family moved to Gippsland in 1881. On 30th May 1999, at Neerim Hall in Victoria, a celebration was held to mark the 150th anniversary of the arrival in Australia of Maria Dorothea Topp (née Schultz), born in 1826 at Wellersdorf, Silesia, who became the matriarch of the Sandmann/Topp families. (Kindly donated by Phillip Richardson.)
3. *150th anniversary of worshipping God at Bethel* celebrates the 150th anniversary of the Bethel Congregation and looks at the history of the Bethel Lutheran Church and the Bethel area, near Kapunda, in South Australia. The pioneers who first came to settle in the Bethel area belonged to the Moravian Brethren. The late 1840's and early 1850's found members of the Moravian Brethren settled in an area of the Barossa Valley near Light Pass and Nuriootpa. They wrote to church authorities in Germany, asking that a pastor be sent, and Pastor C. S. D. Schondorf arrived in 1853. To keep his flock together he purchased, in 1856, 1912 acres of land six miles west of the then mining town of Kapunda, and named the area Bethel which means "place of God".
4. *Australasiatic reminiscences of twenty-three wanderings in Tasmania and the Australias*, by Daniel Bunce. [CD-ROM]. *Australasiatic reminiscences* was written by Daniel Bunce in 1857 as an account of twenty three years spent in "wanderings" in Tasmania and throughout Australia. It was written as personal memoirs and gives great detail of the author's experiences in his travels throughout Australia, as well as providing information and insight into the country during this period of time.

A large section of the book includes Bunce's diary of the expedition to northern Australia and an account by Ludwig Leichhardt of a journey to the westward of Darling Downs. The book was originally published with the subtitle "Including travels with Dr Leichhardt in north of tropical Australia."
5. *School days at Friedensberg*, compiled by David Herbig in 1986 from interviews with former students. The Friedensberg (meaning Hill of Peace) Lutheran congregation at Black Springs – 20 km from Blumberg (now Birdwood) in South Australia – was formed in 1859. The Friedensberg church and school was built in 1861 on land donated by George Angas. The old building deteriorated over the years to a near-derelict condition until, in 1991, The Friends of Friedensberg worked in conjunction with St. Luke's congregation to restore the Friedensberg church and school. It was opened as an Early German School Museum in 1995, and with the Herbig Family Tree and the Friedensberg Pioneer Cemetery, it comprises the Springton German Heritage Excursion for schools.
6. *Wagon trek, Rosedale to Hamilton: 160th anniversary wagon trek, May 3–6, 2012*. [DVD]: filmed, photographed and produced by Clay Kruger. This gives highlights of the Wagon Trek Re-enactment, on video disk and slide show. The video disk is divided into 6 sections: Rosedale, Murray Bridge, Kingston, Portland, Heywood and Hamilton.
7. *Emigration: from the Brandenburg-Silesian-Posen borderland to South Australia in the 19th century*, by Anitta Maksymowicz. [Translated into English from German.] The author, a curator at the Muzeum Ziemi Lubuskiej (the Lubuska Land Museum) in Zielona Góra, Poland, presents factors relating to the 19th century emigra-



tion to South Australia from the borderland of the Prussian provinces of Brandenburg, Silesia (which was called Schlesien in German) and Posen, now the Middle Oder Region in western Poland. The exodus began in 1838 with a group of about 500 Lutherans from Züllichau (now Sulechów), Klemzig (Klepsk), Langmeil (Okunin), Kay (Kije), Harthe (Karczyn) and Tirschtiegel (Trzciel) and surrounds who, led by Pastor August Kavel, fled their homeland for religious reasons.

8. *Martin & Bendix Berg: pioneers from Germany to Creswick & Blackwood*, by Yvonne Edward. Martin and his wife left Schleswig-Holstein and emigrated to Australia in 1854 on the ship *Sophie*, settling in Creswick, Victoria, following the gold rush. Martin's brother, Bendix Berg, followed in December, 1856, on the ship *Bielefeld* and settled in North Blackwood, 50 km east of Creswick. The two brothers had migrated to Australia with the expectation of making their fortune in the gold fields.

9. *Christian Haffner, in Reddighausen geboren und in Australien gestorben*.

[Text in German], by Dr. Rüdiger Schneider. This gives information about the Haffner/Hoare family who settled in Stawell and Horsham. Christian Haffner was born in Reddighausen in Hessen and died in 1895 in Pleasant Creek, Victoria.

10. *Wendish wagon trek, 1852; retraced May 2012*. [DVD]: with maps and historical notes by Helen Petschel and Christine Cook. The 160th anniversary of the 1852 pioneering trek from Rosedale (formerly Rosenthal) and Hoffnungsthal in South Australia to Portland, Hamilton, Gnadenthal, and Hochkirch in Western Victoria was celebrated in May 2012. Participants retraced by car in four days the route taken by the pioneers in horse-drawn wagons, a journey of over four weeks. (See *Wendish news*, number 49, August, 2012). This DVD is a collation of picture files, text files, and Powerpoint displays recording the re-enactment of the trek by about 80 people in 38 cars. Starting in Rosedale, South Australia and ending in Hamilton, Victoria, the four day tour followed in the footsteps of the 1852 pioneering families – Albert, Burger, Deutscher, Huf, Hundrack, Mirtschin, Petschel and Rentsch. (Kindly donated by Helen Petschel and Christine Cook.)

11. *Jan Kilian, 1811–1884: Kerluse, Choräle, Hymns*. [CD and book].

[Text in Wendish/Sorbian, German and English]. Jan Kilian was born in Döhlen, Upper Lusatia in 1811 and died in Serbin, Texas in 1884. He is remembered in Texas as a pastor and leader in the Lutheran community, but he was also an outstanding poet and musician and is known for more than fifty original songs and seventy choral translations into the Wendish language. To celebrate the occasion of his 200th birthday this CD presents a selection of 22 of his hymns to the broad public for the first time. The accompanying book contains the words, in Sorbian, German, and English, to all of the hymns on the disk. (Kindly donated by Robert Wuchatsch.)

12. *Jacza & Wanda. a radio play. The end of the Sprewanes, or, The legend of the Slavic Duke Jacza de Copnic and his wife Wanda* [CD]: ideas and text by Jochen Exler-König. This radio play takes place in Berlin-Brandenburg in the year 1157 and is partly based on historical incidents, partly on legend. (Kindly donated by Jochen Exler-König.)

To view a complete list of the holdings of our library visit our website at [www.wendishheritage.org.au/publications/library/](http://www.wendishheritage.org.au/publications/library/)

JANICE BLACKBURN, LIBRARIAN



Right: Ziebell's Farmhouse Garden



# Items from other Societies' journals

## **Diana passengers**

*Ances-tree* (Nov. 2010) from Burwood, NSW features Part 3 of Lisa Burton's "German ships with no ship lists." This deals with the *Diana* which sailed from Bremen to Moreton Bay in 1858. Burton includes a list of those who were likely *Diana* passengers.

## **Grasbrook passengers**

The July 2012 edition of *Ances-tree* features Part 1 of Jenny Paterson's 'Assisted German immigrants to Eastern Australia who weren't assisted.' This deals with the ship *Grasbrook* which arrived in Sept. 1855 at Moreton Bay with 112 such persons.

## **Retracing the 1852 Wagon Trek**

The October 2012 edition of *Australian Family Tree Connections* highlights an article by Chris Cook about the 1852 trek from Rosenthal to Hamilton undertaken by Wendish pioneers and the retracing of that trek 160 years on. Noted trekking settler families were Albert, Burger, Deutscher, Huf, Hundrack,

Petschel and Rentsch. The modern trek culminated in a wagon procession through Hamilton to the South Hamilton cemetery. A photo (courtesy of John Noack) of this wagon procession features on the front cover of the magazine.

## **Visitor from Poland**

The May 2012 and August 2012 issues of *FOLA News* report on the visit by Dr. Anitta Maksymowicz, of Zielona Góra (formerly Gruenberg, Silesia) to Australia, 20/3/2012–5/5/2012. Her research focuses on emigration from former Prussian provinces of Brandenburg, Silesia and Posen to South Australia in 1838–1914. Excerpts of her thesis have been made into the book, *Emigration from the Brandenburg-Silesian-Posen borderland to South Australia in the 19th Century*. Noted talks Anitta gave included one at Concordia College (2/5/2012) on the Klemzig emigration of 1838 when Pastor Kavel and his group left for Australia. A Polish re-enactment of this event took place in 2008/9. At Unley Uniting Church



## **Useful Websites**

*Australian Family Tree Connections* (Oct. 2012) gives this website for Victorian Government Gazettes 1836–1977: <http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au/>

Look for more genealogy websites at [www.aftc.com.au](http://www.aftc.com.au)

*Camden Calling* (June 2012) gives the website for the Australian Cemeteries Index: [www.austcemindex.com](http://www.austcemindex.com)

The *International Settlers Group Newsletter* (July 2012) reports that Trove is beginning to digitize some German language newspapers from South Australia. Some examples are the *Adelaida Deutsche Zeitung* (1851–1862) and *Süd-Australische Zeitung* (1860–1874). See <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>

For researching Posen, the website of the Posen List is: <http://www.posen-l.com>

*Pigeon House Tidings* (June 2012) informs us that the ACT electoral rolls 1916–1967 can be found at <http://canberraheritageportal.org/default.php>

The *South East Family History Group Newsletter* (Aug. 2012) gives this website for Outback Family History (WA): <http://www.outbackfamilyhistory.com.au/>

*Timespan* (Sept. 2012) gives this website for German settlers buried in Australian Cemeteries: [www.familienarchivpapsdorf.de/ozcemteries.htm](http://www.familienarchivpapsdorf.de/ozcemteries.htm)

For Broken Hill cemeteries, see [www.brokenhill.net.au/Cem.php](http://www.brokenhill.net.au/Cem.php)

For New Zealand Archives, see [www.archway.archives.govt.nz](http://www.archway.archives.govt.nz)

Some New Zealand newspapers to 1945 can be found at <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast>



(11/4/2012), Anitta spoke on the topic, *Where our ancestors lie – Searching for German graveyards in the Middle Oder region of Poland*. At Langmeil Lutheran Hall (18/4/2012), she gave a talk on *Rural life and wine growing in old Prussia*.

The August 2012 issue of *Mallee Roots* includes an article by Yvonne Penny, who travelled to Mildura to hear Dr. Anitta present a discussion on *Why and how did they leave their homeland?* regarding Prussian emigration to Australia.

### Nieder-Weisel Pioneer Memorial

The *Nieder-Weisel Memorial Newsletter* (Jan. 2013) gives information about the plans to unveil a pioneer memorial at Smythesdale, near Ballarat, Vic. on 19–20 January 2013.

### Texas Wends

The *Texas Wendish Heritage Society Newsletter* (April 2011) features a biography of Charles George WUKASCH (1875–1954) by Ken Wukasch. Charles left Serbin and farming, for Austin, Texas, where he built his business, *Charlie's Confectionery*.

In *Two Routes to Liverpool*, Dr. Nielsen explains how Texas bound Wends left Bautzen on 4/9/1854, without their pastor, Johann Kilian. He had been detained as a charge had been lodged against him for inciting people to emigrate. It was a close run thing he made the embarkation of the *Ben Nevis*. A map shows routes taken.

### Linden tree

The above newsletter also features an article on the significance of the Linden tree. We learn of its suitability for wood sculpture, ornate altarpieces and guitar making. In Slavic mythology it was considered a sacred tree. In German mythology, judicial proceedings were held under it as it was believed that the Linden tree had powers to help reveal the truth.

### Noacks in Texas

The *Texas Wendish Heritage Society Newsletter* (July 2012) includes an article *Wendish Siblings Reunited*, by Dorothy Noack Rothermel. She tells us about the Peter August Noack (from Groditz) family's emigration to the USA aboard *Meteor* in 1870–71. A family history about Peter and Johanna Noack, originally written in the late 1930s–40s by Esther Weigielt Black, is also included.

### Wendish identity

In the above newsletter, the item *Current Issues in the Homeland of the Wends* briefly notes the trials the Wends endured under various regimes throughout history, especially in trying to keep alive Wendish identity. In Lower Lusatia, the discovery of coal led to the disappearances of villages due to mining expansion under East German rule.

PAUL KRUGER, JOURNAL REVIEWER

## General News

### Vale Ray Burger

Raymond George Burger died on 19 December 2012 at the age of 85 years. On 31 December 2012 his funeral was held at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Tabor, Victoria, followed by committal at the historic Gnadenthal Cemetery.

The Burger farm was part of the settlement of Gnadenthal, near Peshurst, founded in the early 1850s by Wendish immigrants. We owe a debt of gratitude to Ray for preserving the original wattle and daub Burger Cottages built in 1853. Since 1983 the Cottages have been used as a Museum housing furniture, photographs and household and farm objects. Ray enjoyed giving guided tours.

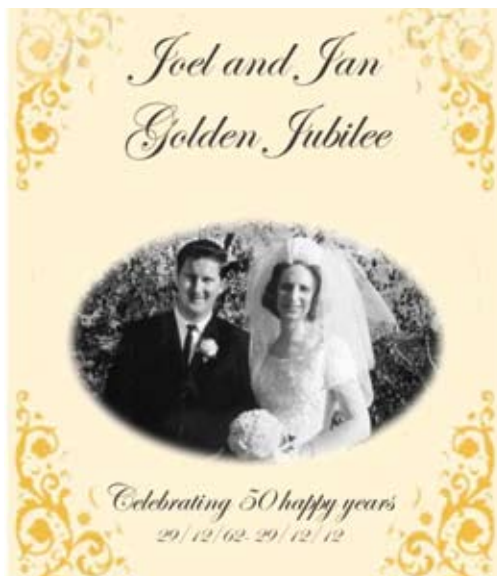
Ray helped to compile the Burger family history book and to organize the Burger Reunion in 1983. He wrote his life story, "Moments and Memories", published in 2008.



Ray Burger and the 1853 Burger Cottage.

Ray is survived by his wife Audrey, his daughters and sons Cheryl, Bruce, Valmai and Stuart, and their spouses, 5 sisters, Elsie, Viola, Stella, Gladys and Ruby, 13 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren. We extend our sympathy to Ray's family.

*continued overleaf >*



## Golden Wedding Anniversary

Congratulations to Janice and Joel Blackburn, who recently celebrated 50 happy years of marriage.

Janice is our Librarian and Joel is our Vice-President and Computer and Website Manager. We are very grateful for their dedication and efficiency in fulfilling these roles. Janice and Joel celebrated this very special Anniversary with a tour of Tasmania with their family. Their tour included Port Arthur, where they first met. We wish them many more happy years together.

## Wendish Library

All are welcome to visit our Wendish Library at 27 Livingstone St, Ivanhoe. It is open on the first Sunday of each month Feb.–Nov., from 1.30–5.30 pm.

## Directory

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

**Postal Address:** PO Box 307, Heidelberg, Vic, 3084.

**Meeting Room and Research Centre:** Ivanhoe Lutheran Church Meeting Room, 27 Livingstone Street, Ivanhoe, Victoria. (Melways 31 E7)

**Hours:** Open the first Sunday of each month from February – November, 1.30pm–5.30pm for research, working bees and socialising.

**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:** \$25 for single membership and \$30 for joint membership for one calendar year due at the start of each year. The form is included in our August 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](http://www.robynzwardesign.com)

**Newsletter Editor:** Glenys Wollermann.

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**Secretary:** Glenys Wollermann, 22 Bellara Street, Doncaster, Vic 3108. Tel: 03 9891 6652. Email: [wendsociety1@optusnet.com.au](mailto:wendsociety1@optusnet.com.au).

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