

MESSER / NEU MESSER

Newsletter 5

November, 2014

Hello Everyone,

I hope all of you had a nice summer and early fall. Here is another Messer / Neu Messer Newsletter. I would like to thank all of you for your suggestions and contributions to this newsletter. Please keep sharing your ideas. It was wonderful to see many of you at the Convention in Lincoln last July. It was a great Convention and I hope those of you who attended enjoyed it as much as I did. Best wishes to you and your family and friends for a wonderful Holiday Season.

Regards,

Mike Meisinger
Village Coordinator for Messer and Neu Messer

Technology Update: As you know we have moved our Obituary database to FamilySearch. We now have over 400,000 English language obituaries of Germans from Russia fully indexed and available for viewing. They can be accessed via our AHSGR.ORG website or directly at:

<https://familysearch.org/search/collection/2367299>

A project is underway to index the German language obituaries from our collection. As of October 27th, 15% of these obituaries had been indexed. (There are approximately 40,000 German language obituaries.) If any of you can read German and would like to help, here are the instructions to get started:

1. Go to <https://familysearch.org>
2. Click "Indexing"
- 3a. If you have not indexed for FamilySearch before click on "Get Started" and follow the instructions to download the indexing software and register as an indexed
- 3b. If you are already a registered indexer, click "Find a Project"
4. On the next screen click "Projects"
5. On the next screen click "U" since our project is United States Based
6. On the next screen scroll down to the next to last project on the page, "US - Todesanzeigen für Deutsche Einwanderer, 1871 - 2013 [2. Teil]"
7. Click on "Get Started" under "US - Todesanzeigen für Deutsche Einwanderer, 1871 - 2013 [2. Teil]" to download and begin indexing your first set of obituaries

In the last newsletter, I reported that in addition to Obituaries, Cemetery Records, Federal Land Records, and Passenger Lists are also available on our "Research your German Russian Ancestors" web page. We have added our Work Papers and Journals through 1998 to that page and they can now be searched as well. The Work Papers and Journals are in pdf format so you can use the pdf search function to search for specific items. The URL for the

“Research your German Russian Ancestors webpage is:

<http://ahsgr.org/GR-Research.htm>

AHSGR is also in the early phases of an upgrade to our website. When complete, the new web site will include a members only portion, (where we plan to make additional collections available online to our members), a new online bookstore, and an online member database where users can update their information. We are also planning to totally redesign the entire website to make it easier to navigate. In addition, we are looking into how we might use Social Media to help publicize our organization and attract new members.

2014 Convention – Messer Dinner: We had 13 attendees at the Messer Dinner during the Lincoln Convention in July. We had a great time sharing photos and stories and enjoying a good meal.



Clockwise from bottom left: Juanita Hanhardt, Ron Hanhardt, Arlene Beckman, Cyndy Patrick, Taylor Patrick, Arlene Rolfs, Mike Meisinger, Shirley Betz, Sharon Buckner, Karen Johnson, Betty Weibert, Jim Weibert, and Charles Meisinger

Messer Immigrants to Argentina: In addition to migrating to the United States, many of the colonists from Messer and Neu Messer went to other countries, including Argentina. One of my distant Meisinger relatives, a descendant of Johannes Meisinger who went to Argentina in 1892, recently sent me some family pictures taken in Argentina in the early 1900s. I thought you might enjoy seeing them.



Johannes Meisinger Sr. and Family in Argentina



Johannes Meissinger Jr and family members having a BBQ at their farm in Aldea, San Juan, Entre Rios, Argentina



Another photo of Johannes Meissinger Jr and family members at their farm in Aldea, San Juan, Entre Rios, Argentina

2015 Convention: The 2015 AHSGR Convention will be held in Billings, Montana July 12 -19. I am sure it is going to be a great convention, in a beautiful setting, and I hope to see many of you there. Please mark the dates on your calendars. More information will be coming as the event draws near.

Messer Colonists found in “German Migration to the Russian Volga (1764 – 1767)”: I have found references to several Messer Colonists in this book by Brent Alan Mai and Dona Reeve-Marquardt. I doubt I have found all of the Messer Colonists, but these entries may be of interest to some of you:

Page 27, Entry 222: **Caspar Schott**, tailor (Schneider) from Heingrintau in the county Büdingen, and Anna **Margaretha Weingartner**, married 17 May 1766 in Pastor Möllraht's house in Lübeck.

Page 55, Entry 441: **Johannes Lehr** and **Margaretha Joss** married 18 March 1766 in Büdingen.

Page 64, Entry 503: **Caspar Bopp** from Vonhausen and **Anna Dorotheae Daut**, widow of **Friedrich Daut** from Diebach, married 9 April 1766 in Büdingen.

Page 65, Entry 506: **Johann Gebel** from Petersroth and **Anna Magdalena Kraus** from Spielberg married 9 April 1766 in Büdingen.

Page 96, Entry 707: **Johann Heinrich Wiederhold** from Niedergründau and **Elisabetha Heil** from Unternaubel married 22 June 1766 in Büdingen.

Page 108, Entry 761: **Johann Christoph Meisterling** from the Palatinate and **Anna Maria Dorothea Schultz** from the Palatinate, married 2 June 1765 in Danzig.

Page 167, Entry 1188: **Johann Konrad Popp** and **Philippine Willman** married 31 May 1766 in the Reformed Church in Lübeck.

Page 167, Entry 1190: **Johann Meysinger** and **Eva Popp** married 31 May 1766 in the Reformed Church in Lübeck.

Page 178, Entry 1258: **J. Valentin Meissinger**, with his wife, (no number) daughters, (no number) sons from Aulendiebach. (This is from a section of the book with the description, “Parish records in Rohrbach include a listing of colonists who left for Russia in 1766 from Rohrbach and the neighboring parish of Aulendiebach (LDS International Film Number 1201847).”)

Letters from Hell: During the period 1920 – 1925 and 1930 – 1934, “Die Welt Post”, a German Language Newspaper in Lincoln, Nebraska published approximately 1000 letters from Germans from Russia detailing their struggles during the famines of those years. 600 of those letters have been translated thus far. I have received copies of the translated letters sent from Messer. (So far none have been translated that came from Neu Messer.) Listed below are letters I have received. Please let me know if you would like copies of any of them.

Date	From	To:
01/06/24	Franz Wolf	Heinrich Wolf
04/28/24	Alexander Lorenz	Friedrich A Lorenz
11/01/22	Amalia Fischer	Friedrich A Lorenz
06/01/24	Eduard Eichhorn	Henry Weibert
p: 06/18/23	Eduard Eichhorn	National Lutheran Council
12/15/21	Franz & Peter Lorenz	Anna Maria Popp
01/12/24	Franz Lang (Mauters)	Jacob & Annamaria Triebelhorn
11/22/22	Franz Lang (Mauders Fraenzchen)	Friedrich Lorenz
01/22/23	Franz Lang	Jacob & Maria Triebelhorn
01/06/24	Franz Wolf	Heinrich Wolf
11/07/22	Heinrich Franz Lorenz	Friedrich A Lorenz
Dec, 23	Heinrich Franz Lorenz	Friedrich A Lorenz
02/04/23	Heinrich Weber (Lehne Heinrich)	Heinrich Betz
05/11/22	Heinrich Weigand (Ickes)	Heinrich Betz
11/25/22	Jacob Lorenz	Friedrich A Lorenz
12/14/21	Jacob Lorenz	Mr. & Mrs. Peter Goebel
p: 04/20/22	? Rady	Jacob Rady
12/24/23	Johannes Lorenz	Jacob & Annamaria Propp & Heinrich, Amalia, & Maria Meisinger
12/24/23	Heinrich Franz Lorenz	Annamaria & Jacob Propp
12/23/23	Johannes Lorenz	Jacob & Annamaria (Propp?)
06/28/22	Johannes & Heinrich Lorenz	Jacob & Annamaria (Lorenz-Meisinger-Propp)
06/28/22	Anna Margaretha Lorenz	Jacob & Annamaria Propp
10/01/23	Karl Schmidt	Johannes & Maria Katherina (Wolf) Geis
10/01/22	Karl Weber	Amalia (Weber) Hill
10/01/22	Karl Weber	Heinrich Weber
11/06/22	Karl Weibert	Heinrich Peter Goebel
11/13/22	Katharina Margaretha (Lorenz) Weibert	Friedrich Lorenz
p: 08/10/22	Maria Lipps	Brothers & Sisters
03/01/22	Heinrich Franz Lorenz	Heinrich Peter, Heinrich, Friedrich, Jacob, Peter, Johannes, & Friedrich Lorenz
03/05/22	Heinrich Franz & Alexander Lorenz	Friedrich Lorenz
03/28/22	Alexander Lorenz	Friedrich Lorenz
12/31/22	Peter, Friedrich, & Karl Weber	Friedrich A Lorenz
p: 03/15/23	Unknown	(Mentions Lehr, Werth, Meininger, Brauer, Lang, Mauters, Wunder, Nestert, Weber, Moehr, Willmann, Brug, & Lorenz families.)

Stories of life in Neu Messer: Fred Betz has provided me with information on three stories on life in Neu Messer. **Thank you Fred!** The first is Freida Reinhardt's description of Neu Messer which can be read in its original German form at:

<http://www.russlanddeutschesgeschichte.de/kulturarchiv/schicksal/einzel/frieda.htm>

I have used Google Translate to provide the following crude English translation. (Not perfect, by any means, but the general sense of the article can be understood.)

"I was born in 1935 in Neu Messer. My grandparents are pulled from Wolfsk to Neu Messer. When the village was too large in diameter Canton Balzer, residents of Messer in the 60s of the 19th century have established elsewhere in the canton Frank the Volga Republic a new village. It grew quickly and was in the 20's already over 2000 inhabitants. My grandparents have a house built there. Grandfather

and father worked as a blacksmith.

I can still vividly remember the village and our house. From the village street, a path led through the large courtyard gate around the house. We came into the hall by a flight of steps. From there we went right into the kitchen. Between the wall on the right and the large oven - a so-called "German oven" - there was the door to the living room and bedroom. The furnace was built by the wall. On the part of the oven which jutted into the bedroom, had admitted two boilers above. They were filled with sand. This should keep the heat as long as possible. The furnace was heated from the kitchen. Mother is always up very early in the morning in winter to heat. When I woke up, it was always nice and warm. Mostly mother was then already at work on the collective farm. She had made breakfast for me in the oven.

Except for heating and hot holding of eating large oven used for baking bread. In the oven, there was a fairly large interior space, square bottom and curved top. When the fire had burned, the ashes were removed and the floor swept clean with a wet broom. Mother has placed the shaped loaves on cabbage leaves and let the dough rise for a while. With a wooden slide she then pushed the bread in the hot oven. It took a good hour and the bread was ready. It was always crispy brown from the oven and smelled so wonderful. One of the major holidays, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost, also cake was baked at us. "Thin cake" we said to very low they had to be, just two fingers. The dough was rolled out on a large plate, topped with apple chips or sprinkles and then, after he had gone right, put in the oven. I could watch everything closely and look at whether the cake was baked well. "Oh, he already looks good. A few more minutes and then we can take him."

How wonderful the cake tasted, especially when he was still warm from the oven. As a young girl I was interested in cooking and baking very much. I have my mother's every move closely monitored. Later, when I grew up, I then like mother cooked for the family and even baked bread and cakes.

We cooked on the stove with the small iron plate in the kitchen. What remained of the meals, was kept in the furnace until the next meal. The furnace was the central and most important institution in our house. Yes, our big oven, that was the best. Below minus 40 ° C was not uncommon in winter. The snow was often several meters high. Since only had to be shoveled snow. We children could and could not go. The stove gave us such a strong frost warmth and security. I was there picked a particular place. No one was allowed to take it dispute me. When my two older brothers wanted to take it away from me once, then there was much bickering. Although I when she was much smaller, I sat through.

Like everywhere else in the village had our house only two rooms, a kitchen and a living room or bedroom. In this room slept seven people, my grandparents, my parents, my two brothers and me. To the left was the door of the stove, stood behind the bed of the grandparents. At the subsequent wall in the corner of the bed of my parents was set up, a "trundle bed", the evening was undressed. There, my brothers slept. My crib had laterally therefrom his place, next to my mother. Furthermore, were still in the room a large table with chairs, a cabinet and a sewing machine on the window side. If the trundle bed was pulled out, it was extremely tight in the room. During the day, my favorite place was at one of the two windows. From there I could see well what happened in the village street, and who came to us on the farm.

On the other, the left side of the hallway, our "summer kitchen", a cultivation was at the house. There was boiled and baked in the summer. By heating the big oven, it would become too hot in the kitchen

and in the bedroom. In the summer kitchen was also an oven - that's why we called this kitchen and bakery - and a large wash boiler. There bathwater was made warm. Bathed we have once a week in a wooden tub.

In the bakery we ate our meals in the summer. Since a large table with chairs stood around. In the morning there was coffee and bread and butter or milk soup. Since we were not rich, often was "Riebel soup" cooked, stirred together milk, egg, water and salt. When stirring is small "Riebel" had to make, so the soup Riebel soup was called. Sometimes were also pieces of potato in it. Often, millet gruel or porridge, bean, pea or lentil dishes were on the table. Everything was grown in our own garden.

Yet well I remember our coffee. It was the best coffee I've ever tasted. He was made from scraps of sugar beet. These were slowly dried in a large oven until they were golden brown, then ground in a mortar and sieved. The powder thus obtained is poured on mother with hot water. This tasted great. Often there were also tea for breakfast, a fruit or licorice tea mixture of sliced and then dried in the air liquorice. Real sugar we took only rarely, only when guests came. It was just too expensive. When relatives came from the city, grandmother said: "Today I have to again buy a little sugar; there are city people who want real sugar." Otherwise we have sweetened with beet syrup.

The beet syrup or "honey beet", as we said, we ourselves have made. This was a very complicated work. At harvest, the sugar beets were poured in late autumn on a big pile. Once it was really cold, the syrup cooking began. The beets were cleaned and trimmed, cut into pieces and boiled in the kettle in the back house. Once the beets were cooked, they were done in linen cloths were pressed and the juice in a special press from the cooked beets. The residues are used as animal feed. The squeezed juice came again into the kettle and had to be cooked for many hours, day and night, until finally it finished the syrup was long. The neighbors have helped here and alternated in stirring the juice.

It was also made "Latwerie". To pumpkin was used. The pumpkin pieces were placed in the beet and honey both once cooked. There was a porridge, a honey pumpkin mash. We have eaten as jam and also taken for baking. There was nothing else sweet. The Latwerie we have also lubricated for breakfast on bread and eaten with coffee.

For lunch usually included meat, which was then kept still warm for the evening. There were potatoes, bean or pea soup with meat. The meat was of their own animals or those of neighbors. Especially in summer, when the meat is not long remained fresh, the neighbors who in turn slaughtered and supplied each other with meat, meat of sheep and pigs.

Grandfather and father have themselves made ham and sausages, including sausage and black pudding. For this was slaughtered in winter. Was smoked in a special oven. Rotwurst but was also produced in summer. Placing them in brine, came to pepper, bay leaf and cloves. The barrel with the black pudding was in the bakehouse. Even ham and bacon were therein. What was needed, took out one and put it in a bucket of water so that the salt could pull out before eating the meat or sausage.

Sundays mother always cooked a special dish. First, bread was baked, then the lunch dish came in the oven. Previously, the meat had been cooked a little and then it was given with potatoes, onions and spices in a large skillet. The oven then everything was nicely browned and crispy. Very like I have not eaten meat with sauerkraut. Mother made to mashed potatoes, which were stirred with milk and sweet cream. It was a wonderful Sunday lunch!

In summer, when it was particularly hot, was also with us "Schnitzsupp" prepared. Schnitz - these were dried apples. Also dried plums and cherries could use it. The dried fruit has been cooked and then given pure thick cream. Added to this was beet honey. These mother made dumplings made from flour and eggs. The sweet soup was sidelined and in the afternoon when it was out on the hottest, eaten. And there were "Kreppel" baked a kind of pretzels. The dough was baked in hot oil and lard. It was always interesting, zuzugucken here. First, the Kreppel are gone, and when they reappeared, they were already beautiful brown. Yes, Schnitzsupp and Kreppel, which were also true Sunday dinner.

But now on to our homestead; I would like to tell a little more about it. If you came from the road to the farm was located just to the right, as I said, our house with the summer kitchen. Across from the farm gate stood a large building divided into cattle shed and barn. In it, the barn, we kept on hay and straw. On the left side of the yard was bounded by a mud wall. Behind it were the vegetable garden and the fountain. Outside the garden fence something toward the yard gate, grandfather had built a cellar.

The collective farmers were allowed to keep only time a cow and a calf in the individual utility. And it was not allowed to bring the calf over the winter. It had to be sold or slaughtered in the autumn. Goats, however, we were allowed to keep as many. We always had so four to six of them. They were milked. I remember when we had black and colorful spotted, one white and one light brown. We kids wanted to drink only from the white goat's milk. My brothers, who were born in 1928 and 1930, brought the evening the animals from the pasture home. The white goat always wanted to be milked first. Woe if the mother cow milking times first, then came the white zoom and shoved mother and complains loudly with her shrill, long-drawn "Baa, Baa, Määh". So mother had to leave the cow standing and yet only milk the goat. This happened often. That is why I have these pictures today so clearly in my memory. I drank the fresh milk from a cup equal. This tasted very good to me. And this habit, I then passed on to my children and grandchildren later.

The goats have given way, not only milk, but also "Most" fine goat hair that has been combed with a special brush made from the skin. This mother then knitted shirts and caps.

The cellar was dug deep into the ground. Its floor was festgestampftem clay. He had a vaulted ceiling, which was equipped with a double trapdoor. Above the basement there was a small "wooden house". This had the task to define the basement up and to protect the entrance. If you opened the double door case, you could climb up a staircase to the basement. He was so high that an adult could stand upright in it. The stored in the basement things are never tainted. Close to the walls were large barrels. One contained the "Arbusen", the watermelons. Between the melons are layers of straw, licorice and salt were. Water was added and everything covered with burlap before complaining with stones lid closed the barrels. Similarly, cabbage, cucumbers, tomatoes and other vegetables and fruits were preserved. To the right of the stairs, the potatoes and the carrots under the stairs were always stored. On the left side of the basement was a large shelf where many smaller pots stood with pickles. In the winter we had always plenty to eat. When I lived with my own family in Siberia later, I did it the same way. And also there tasted so Pickled almost as good as in my childhood at home.

Back to our farm. Just past the entrance to the garden stood the fountain. The had even dug my grandfather as the other farmers. On the left side of the property at the back next to the garden stood the forge. Grandfather was a blacksmith and father was a blacksmith. Actually, my dad wanted to learn something else. But grandfather had said to him: "I can not do the work alone and bring the

family I need you to lend a hand.." Since father could not say no. When it was noon, my grandmother has always sent in the forge and said: "Go and call them to dinner!" And I'm through the gate, the garden and shed union, walked behind the forge. "Grandfather, quickly comes to food!" You have always washed before the meal. Then they have very respected.

Hardly grandfather had then sat at the table, I climbed on his lap. It was my dearest grandfather. I was the only girl. Otherwise you have only had boys; two have died. Grandfather would always say the same sentence: "Come on, you're my girl." He had a full beard, so completely from one ear to the other. During service in the cavalry they had met him in the face. The beard should cover the scar. On the head grandfather had only a few hairs. With particular zeal I have always combed his hair a little. And he liked it. He took me on one leg and singing it: "Hopp, hopp, hopp, jumping horse gallop, over hill and over stone, but you do not break the leg, always jumping gallop, hop, hop, hop!" That was a lot of fun. Sometimes I was so funny and had organized a big mess. Grandmother had to call them to order me then. "Oh, child, what are you doing? Open your mind a little zusammenraunen (collect)!" After these words, I once quietly sat down on the chair and remained silent. After a while I asked only the grandmother, then mother: "What is the matter with you You're not as sick?" But I remained silent. Only when my grandfather with the question "What about you?" turned to me, I spoke again. "I'm not sick, I just together quantitative whispers my mind." Grandfather then picked me up and kissed me. "When you see what I have for a great girl yet." It seems to me as if I still hear his deep voice. Grandfather was very good to me.

During the day I was when the other adults were at work and my brothers in school, mostly with the grandmother at home alone. She told me a lot from the past, from the great-grandparents and their parents. They were generations ago from Southern Germany, from Bavaria or Baden-Württemberg, Russia and came to the Volga region. And grandmother often spoke of the great famine in the early 30s. The peasants had to give much grain to fulfill the state plan prescribed for them. They provided so much from, until they had almost nothing for themselves. A large part of the grain delivered, so said grandmother, remained lying on the transport in the cities and other areas and spoiled. As the famine broke out, strangers have come into the village with police, with "gun cleaners" and have also tracked down and taken the last grain. With sharp, long rods that were hollow inside, they pierced in the earth and searched for hidden grain. Even my father, the blacksmith, they have hired and said to him: "You know the people here Tell them they have to give everything, and beware that they really come out with anything also.."

Father was in a quandary. What should he do? He advised the people to provide additional grain and speak to safely hide the rest only to survive, the iron ration. "Make it so, otherwise they do not leave us in peace and take us to the last grains to survive away." But the authorities were most adamant. From a man told father, who had bought a normal Pud millet for his family. Also they took away everything. Nothing remained to them more. Many people have died in the famine years, especially people in the city, but also with us in the country. My grandparents and parents had seen it with their own eyes.

But in my time, fortunately, these heavy years had already passed. My first few years I spent in the security of the family and the village community. It is important for me to remember that the people in the village and especially the neighbors always stuck together and formed a large community. If someone has done something, perhaps built a barn or something, then others have helped. . To my mother, when she was not ready yet, eg in the fall harvest in the garden, the neighbor came and asked: "Amalie, can I help you?" And then she has helped, as if it were their own harvest. And conversely, my mother helped out when others needed help. Very important was the merger, if one

had the kolkhoz borrowed a horse and cart, to reap the harvest from individual field. The field was often far from the village. As many hands were needed at any given time. It had to happen quickly. The people helped one another as best they could. So they mastered life together.

Grandfather and father worked in the factory for the kolkhoz. They got this so-called work units as a reward. For these units, they then received by the Collective Farm in the fall after the grain harvest, mostly wheat and barley. There was little or no money. To get money, they have cattle, a calf or sometimes poultry sold in the market. Even with the grain they did not need them, they are driven on the market.

Quite early, so told grandmother, the school was in the church. This was built of wood and the belfry stood alone, away from the church, on the street. The church had two stories, probably because the bell has not fit. Later, the church burned down. I knew only the bell. It was used at that time to ring in the fire alarm. A school was built. In it there were seven classes. I was too young to attend school. But often I am when I was with the sick grandmother home alone, bushed and went to school. There I opened the door a crack and looked into it wide. When I saw the teacher, she said: "Ah, there's the Frieda Come in." You gave me paper and pencil and I tried to write. My big brother was my presence not right. I was able to see if he could not answer questions of the teacher. When I was back home, I told mother about it. This was of course my brother embarrassing. My brothers had often learn poems by heart at home for school. I have always also taught and then recited grandfather. Poems I always liked all my life until today.

My childhood in Neu Messer ended all of a sudden from one day to the other. In September 1941, we had to leave our home. Our whole family was deported to Siberia, the territory of Tyumen, the village Misonowa. At that time was leaving - I was six years old - I really could not imagine that I should never again see our house, the yard and the village where I had spent happy years in my life.

Only later, when I was an adult, I realized what I had then taken leave in September 1941. Maybe that's one reason that I then kept my childhood days as a very precious treasure in my memory.

In Misonowa we are only a short time all stayed together. End of October 1941 is already dead grandfather. In the evening he came from the local Kolchosschmiede home and said: ". I do not know your heart hurts, it stings and stings" Grandmother said, "You've probably caught a cold you." She went to the landlady, where we were billeted, and has even bought a gallon of milk, the milk made hot, put into it a little sugar and butter."Drink this, so you sweat out the cold!" And he's been drinking. I sat next to him. "Drink thou also, so that you stay healthy!" he said to me and gave me a little from the milk. And he stroked me. The next morning grandfather had died. This was very bad for me.

In February 1942, they have all the men who were still brought to the labor service in the Trud Army, also my father. He came to Krasnotorinsk. In April 1948 he is - thank God! - Returned from there. Many others have been killed there. In July 1942, they have my mother brought directly from work in the kolkhoz to Trudarmee. You do not even gave us a chance to take leave of each other. It was not until many weeks later we got from mother post. The labor camp was located in Chelyabinsk. Mother had to work there on a construction site until 1946.

We children stayed with the sick grandmother in Misonowa back alone. My brothers, 12 and 14 years old, had to cut turf after Ishim, to a place that was a good 20 miles away.

But they have to get food three times a day and some food for grandmother and me. They set out once a week on the way from Ishim after Misonowa to bring us the things - a loaf of bread, potatoes and sometimes a piece of meat. I still remember the Finns, who sometimes put in the meat. Grandmother she has herausgepult. She has long cooked the meat, cut into small pieces and put into the soup.

In winter, when the peat-cutting was not possible, my brothers were at home. You have woven baskets. This was needed because there were no sacks. For weaving the baskets we got some flour.

We stayed in a room with a Russian woman. She had a young son and two daughters. They had set up in the kitchen, the four of us in the room.

There was a Russian stove. The was built differently than our German furnace in Neu Messer. In the Russian stove was not cooked and you could sleep on it. And laterally connected to the furnace by transverse defined strains, there were just under the ceiling - you could sit there not - a "Palla Che", a sort of loft. On the day I'm usually stopped me in the winter on the warm stove. The older ones slept at night in the Palla Paget. Most of the homework I was doing. It was good that I had so much Copied to me by my mother. I have cooked. The Russian landlady also taught me how to work Hanfstengel, spun into threads and how you could weave it bags. Later, I even learned to weave carpets. My responsibilities also included, to get fuel. Although the forest was not far, but alone I could not beat and transport the wood. I had to gather dry manure clods. We have heated it. After the harvest I am gone onto the pitch and have ears and fallen out individual grains collected. We had to have something to eat - because I was allowed to go the extra mile.

In July 1945, grandmother died. I, the ten-year-old, was now with my brothers for a year, until the return of the mother, all alone. From Grandmother's death we have the same inform the parents. But their request to be allowed to return to the children home, was, although the war was already over, not granted.

At the beginning of being alone is very hard for me. In the old house, there were strange noises, it crackled and rustled in many corners and ends. Were the only mice? Or something else? I was very afraid, especially if it was already very dark time.

In the fall of 1945 I went to school. Russian I could have a bit of the landlady and of the village children. But they spoke a dialect. The teacher was surprised. "My God, how can you say. That's not a real Russian!" The teacher and the other children helped me, so that I soon mastered the language properly. Only with the spelling I had for a long time my trouble. I forgot sometimes letters or mistook it.

My classmates harbored no hatred towards me. We knew each other from the village. Anders was at my brothers. The were insulted and beaten up right after the deportation. They could not continue the school. For me, once something happened in the 7th grade. My classmate Mary, I did not want to let write one day, suddenly became very angry and shouted. "You're a fascist, you forgot to kill" I was very upset. My teacher has reported this incident to the same director. This is then immediately come into the class and said to Mary and all the others: "I ask you, children, that never makes such a thing must not happen." He explained that my family wegmusste during the war from the Volga region and had nothing to do with German fascists and their crimes. Maria had to beg my pardon before the whole class. That was the only incident, otherwise I had no problems in school.

Of course, the joy was immense, as the mother then came back in 1946 from the Trud Army. Life was still very difficult. It took a lot of force and work to procure the necessities of life every day. Only as a father in 1948 was again with us, life was getting a little easier and better.

After school Frieda Reinhardt has learned nee Laufer, Seller and worked in this profession until her retirement in 1990.

In 1955 she married Waldemar Reinhardt. He worked as a truck driver in a transport company. Them three children were born, Olga 1956 (with one year and eight months deceased), Lydia in 1958 and Waldemar 1960th

Besides the three years when she lived in Kazakhstan from 1957 to 1959, the Reinhardt have lived up to the 90s in Siberia, in Misonowa.

1996 moved with his family to Germany Waldemar son.

1997 followed them Frieda and Waldemar Reinhardt. A major reason she moved was the severe bronchitis of the husband. In Germany they saw better treatment options for this disease.

Since 1999 is also daughter Lydia and her family in the Federal Republic."

A Second Neu Messer Story: This description of Neu Messer was written by Molly Bakel Betz and published as part of "The Bakel Family, History of the Volga Germans", by Bill Seibel in the 1980s.

"Seventy five percent of all the houses were made of mud or clay mixed with straw and also had straw roofs. The floors were scrubbed white as snow and then sprinkled with white damp sand to keep them clean [i.e., they were hard-packed earth floors]. If you happened to drop something it got full of sand. ... The winters were terribly cold and the summers very hot. I can recall the last two winters we were in Russia [those of 1910/11 and 1911/12]. Children were never allowed to go outdoors because of the cold. We would thaw small holes in the thickly frosted windows to see out to the street. When the first snow fell, we called it 'wintered in'. It stayed below zero until the thaws started in March. The summers were intensely hot.

Every family raised their own food in huge gardens [and] raised sheep to make coats, stockings, felt boots, blankets and covers and quilts of all kinds. Cows for milk, cream, cottage cheese and meat [were raised as well as] pigs for pork, and geese and ducks for feathers and also meat. The only thing the people bought was lump sugar, tea and sweet wood or licorice wood, no coffee. I remember going to a small shop called "Lovka" [this is the Russian word for shop], and getting these items. The only sugar we used was lump sugar. Still in this country [America] we had quite a time getting used to "sand sugar" we called it. We did not have candy. Our only sweet was syrups made from watermelon juice and sugar beet juice. The only fruit and vegetables we had were raised in our own gardens. I never saw or knew what chocolate was. We had never seen a banana until we came to America. The only candy I saw or tasted was a couple sticks of peppermint. We raised a lot of sunflower seeds. What a mess to sweep up the next morning.

Our own village had one church, one minister, who also served as school master and most problems were referred to him which he settled. If someone got so bad and repeated crimes like murder, and he couldn't be constrained or punished by the relatives of the murdered man, a letter was sent to Saratov

for the police. It happened rarely that people did that, because the Russians were very cruel to the prisoners. They wouldn't even get a trial. I remember one case where a man had killed more than once, and the police came from Saratov on horseback. There were about six of them. The man was driven out of town on foot. About five miles out of town he was found beaten to death with their black snakes.

Our winter fuel was made from manure mixed with straw. It was then dried and cut in blocks. To start a fire we used straw. We also used straw to make mattresses to sleep on. The people who didn't have livestock enough to have manure had to go outside of the village and pick up cow chips for their winter's fuel. We had no stoves. There was an open fireplace in the kitchen with an iron kettle hanging on a tripod. The oven part extended into the living room about 5 or 6 feet long and 3 feet high. This was built with clay bricks and then white washed. It had two big iron kettles set into the top. This oven kept the living room warm in winter. The fuel had to be fed into it from the kitchen side. On bake days grandma would heat up the oven and then take out all the ashes and put in her loaves of bread. It stayed hot for a long time. The oven I mean. Mamma being the oldest daughter-in-law helped grandma with the baking and cooking.

The single people in the family had to weave cloth to make a little money. Every fall papa would go to Saratov and get bolts of thread, shaped like a large pumpkin, all colors of the rainbow. He had two weaving looms in our living room. Those looms were large, like a four poster bed. They called them "weibstools" [Weibstuhl -- woman chair]. We had to put the thread on spools with a spinning wheel. I had to do that the last two winters part time when Marybelle got tired.

Fifteen people worked and slept in one large room all winter. The kitchen was a smaller room where Grandma and mamma cooked the meals and we ate at a long table. Papa made the tables and chairs, benches and also the beds. The beds were all four poster reaching to the ceiling with a curtain around each one. That was all the privacy each married couple had, and as the children were born papa made a bed to push out of the way under the big bed. This way it was out of the way during the day. Papa also made cradles for the babies, all this in one big room.

I want to say a little about our way of life. The Bakels were not considered rich people but we were not poor either. Papa started building a high board solid fence around our place [i.e., a house he later built] with a big gate at the front, [and] a small gate at the side near the house. The large gate was all of wood with a fancy round top. It was large enough so a load of hay or grain could get thru it. With the help of his brother Karl he built a summer kitchen on the other side of the gate. He also built a machine shed down one side to the barns. The pigs, cows and horses had to have a warm barn in winter. ... The only thing that could get in these yards were the cats. Each family had a well; we drew water for house use and the stock.

Life was very hard for these people, especially the women. In the summer they done most of the family washing at a lake or dam located at the end of town. Very little washing was done in the winter time. Most people had never heard of electricity. In the larger towns life wasn't quite so primitive but Neu Messer was a daughter colony of Ault [i.e., Alt -- old] Messer, so the village was not as up to date as some of the mother towns.

The pastor was also the schoolmaster. I went to school one winter, and school was held in the church. The children sat on benches. We had a slate and a "Griffle" [Griffel -- slate pencil] to write on the slate. We also had [an] ABC book. The master stood in front of the children and started counting. That's how we learned to count, all in a group repeating after him. We also learned the times tables and the alphabet. As the children got older they learned to read the Bible and Catechism. Everything was learned orally that first winter. A slow child just didn't learn too much. The older boys learned to figure on the "Schote" [peas in a pod] which was a square wooden frame with wires in the center and wooden beads strung on them. Some of the older men were real good with them.

The social life during the summer months was nil, as everybody had to work. The only get-together centered around the church meetings. Everybody went to church Sunday morning. The older people had afternoon and evening prayer meetings. That was the only time the young folks had to themselves. All winter long the single people had to weave cloth day and night. At half past seven every night the boys would throw their coats over their head and look thru the windows at the girls. I never did find out what the signals were but in a few minutes Aunt Mary would put on her coat and shawl and go outside. They all had to be back at their weaving at 8 o'clock sharp. Those fur lined coats with a face or just a nose sticking out against the window panes used to scare some of the children into hysterics. I thought it a wonderful way of courting.

“After a few weeks of this courting a couple of old men would come one evening. Everyone acted as if they didn't know these men, as they were called courting men or “Fryer-mon”. Grandpa gave them each a drink of schnapps. I saw this whole proceeding when Aunt Mary was courted. Grandpa told Mary to leave the room, so she went into the kitchen. I'm sure she sneaked out to her boyfriend, whom I had seen staring thru the window earlier in the evening. The two young people were discussed pro and con, and after a few more drinks grandpa gave his consent to the marriage. If the young man couldn't find a suitable girl in the village he had to go to another village and the grandpa and his father had to do the courting with a girl's parents.

The weddings were something to behold. Three days of hard drinking and dancing. The bridegroom had to stand for everything. It took a lot of food to feed all the guests for three days. The first dance the bride had with her new husband was called the “Broutriehe” or the bride walk. After that everybody danced with her and pinned money on her dress, after awhile she looked like a pincushion. At the end of three days of dancing she looked terrible. The walk to the church by the bride and groom from her house was heralded by the ringing of the church bell all the way. All the invited guests following behind and of course most of the villagers looking on. Seemed to me that was about the last function that anybody ever noticed or acknowledged the poor girl. After the wedding she was so overshadowed by her husband -- her function was to cook, have children, work very hard in her garden and also the fields, and keep her mouth shut. A thin girl had a hard time getting a husband. The big fat girls were admired very much and were picked first in marriage. If a thin girl did finally get a husband and she didn't gain weight after marriage there was a lot of clucking of tongues in sympathy for the poor husband.

If anyone had a musical instrument they had to learn every note by ear. No one could teach it as there was no notes in the song books. The accordion was the most popular instrument. Most people learned all their songs by heart. I have yet to hear a group sing more beautiful anywhere as these people in our village. We had some real voices. We also had some wonderful dancers. That was about the only recreation they had in these small towns, singing and dancing, and of course going to Sunday Worship. They were a very religious people.”

A Third Neu Messer Story, “The Fate of My Village and My Family”: This very interesting article about Neu Messer was published in the Summer of 1995 in the AHSGR Journal, (Vol. 18, No 2). It was written by Alvina Dietrich and translated by Jo Ann Kuhr. All of the Journals through 1998 are now available online through the AHSGR website. This article can be viewed at the URL below. The article about Neu Messer begins on page 17 of this Journal.

http://ahsgr.org/Products/Journal_Files/Journal,%20Vol.%2018,%20No.%202%20%20_Summer%201995_.pdf