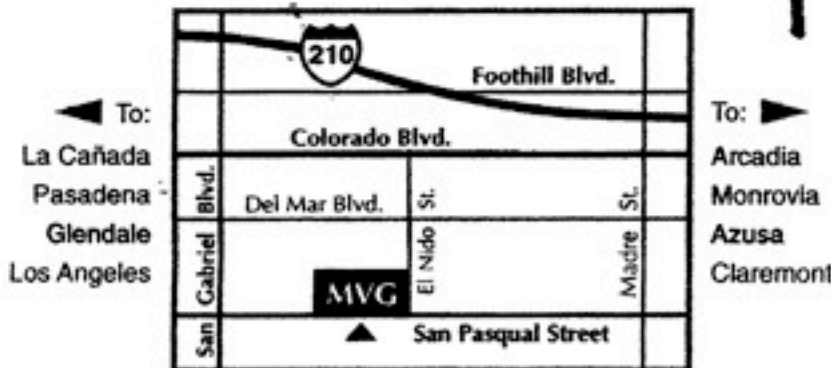




# Finding your way to Monte Vista Grove

2889 San Pasqual Street  
Pasadena, CA 91107  
(818) 796-6135



## ◀ From 210 Freeway WESTbound:

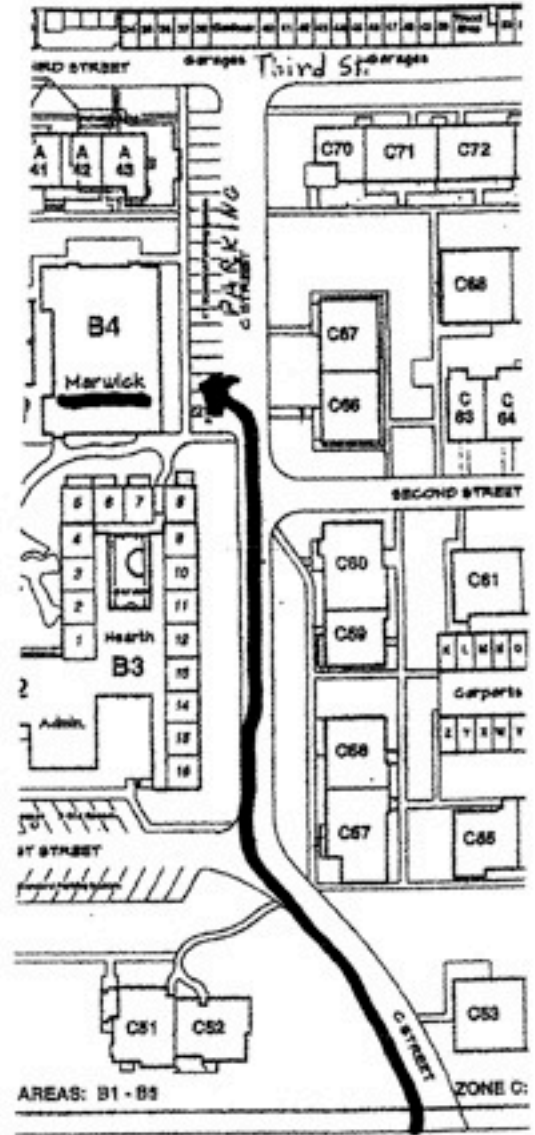
*Exit at Madre Street, turn left; cross Colorado Blvd. and Del Mar Blvd., then turn right on San Pasqual.*

*Monte Vista Grove is just past El Nido St. on your right.*

## ▶ From 210 Freeway EASTbound:

*Exit at San Gabriel Blvd., go straight across Sierra Madre Blvd. and turn right on San Gabriel; cross Colorado Blvd. and Del Mar Blvd., then turn left on San Pasqual.*

*Monte Vista Grove is about one block on your left.*



2889  
San Pasqual Street  
*Parking at any curbs not painted RED*

AREAS: B1 - B3      ZONE C:  
ENTRANCE C  
Randolph Ave.

## 2009 Officers and Directors

<u>Officers</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>St.</u>	<u>Zip</u>	<u>Telephone</u>	<u>E-mail Address</u>
President	Ray Heer	2889 San Pasqual St.A37	Pasadena	CA	91107-5365	(626) 356-0166	rcheer@charter.net
Vice President	Dave Horn	P.O. box 2601	Big Bear City	CA	92314-2601	(909) 866-9655	bdhorn@netzero.com
Secretary	Ruth de Nault	4030 Calle Ariana	San Clemente	CA	92672-4505	(949)492-3984	rdenault@denaults.com
Treasurer	Richard Sinner	5176 Long Cove Rd.	Banning	CA	92220-5158	(951) 769-9826	jadik@verizon.net

### Directors

Attendance	Barbara Materi	5301 Hallison Street	Torrance	CA	90503-1211	(310) 371-2181	materi_pj@Yahoo.com
Genealogy	Harold Ehrman	1267 Palisades Drive	Pacific Palisades	CA	90272-2152	(310) 454-5749	harold@ehrman.net
History	Barbara Horn	P.O. Box 2601	Big Bear City	CA	92314-2601	(909) 866-9655	bdhorn@netzero.com
Library	Bob & Margaret Freeman	611 Esplanade Ave.	Redondo Beach	CA	90277-4130	(310) 540-1872	gca31@aol.com
Newsletter	Herb Epp	27427 Sunnyridge Road	Palos Verdes Pen.	CA	90274-4038	(310) 377-7042	prient@cox.net
Membership	Carol Epp	27427 Sunnyridge Road	Palos Verdes Pen.	CA	90274-4038	(310) 377-7042	ceppinpv@cox.net
Parliamentarian	Barbara Horn	P.O. Box 2601	Big Bear City	CA	92314-2601	(909) 866-9655	bdhorn@hotmail.com
Public Relations	Elizabeth Weber	3827 Legion Lane	Los Angeles	CA	90039-1422	(323) 661-3024 (818) 502-2363 (work)	
Ways & Means	Larry Stumph	21128 Vandenberg Ave.	Riverside	CA	92518-2811	(951) 567-5388	is10336325@aol.com
Welcoming	Al Hart	16371 Silver Lane	Huntington Beach	CA	92647-4130	(714) 847-6481	ahhart@verizon.net



**Library Web Sites ===== <http://www.ehrman.net/ahsgr/library/libTitle.html>**

**[http://www.ahsgr.org/library\\_loan.htm](http://www.ahsgr.org/library_loan.htm)**



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<u>Date</u> .....	<u>Location</u> .....	<u>Newsletter inputs due</u>
Dec 12, 2009.....	Winter Mtg / Christmas Party, Monte Vista Grove, Pasadena.....	Oct 30, 2009

After a review of options, the So. Cal. Chapter Board voted a schedule for 2010.

**THE THIRD SATURDAY OF EVERY OTHER MONTH EXCEPT CHRISTMAS.!!**

The Board blended a combination of the options that were used in a survey that had been taken of the membership. A large majority were in favor of six meetings a year. The vote was favorable to meeting in the same place at the same time, and not meet in Riverside one meeting a year. Two locations were considered: 1. A Presbyterian church in the Anaheim area that would only charge \$50 a meeting. The Society would be responsible for set-up and clean-up and the meetings would be potluck 2. The Phoenix Club. After consultation with the Phoenix Club, they offered variations of a simple lunch menu in the \$14-\$16 range in the exclusive use of the Lorely Room, and providing all the logistics. . The room fee is being negotiated.

The final action of the Board:

To meet at the Phoenix Club in Anaheim, except for the Summer Picnic at the Beach and the Christmas Party at Monte Vista Grove Homes in Pasadena. The following dates miss all holidays and Conventions

Jan. 16.....Mar. 20.....May 15.....July 17 Summer picnic.....Sept. 18.....Dec, 4 (Christmas)

Now you can plan your calendars, weddings, vacations, etc.!!!!!! Put the dates in your date books now!!

**Mark your calendar now for the entire year !**



## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

I was so incredibly impressed with a statement in the Lincoln Chapter newsletter that I have revised it for my President's Message to fit our Southern California situation.

### **WHY SHOULD I BELONG TO THE GERMANS FROM RUSSIA?**

(Either AHSGR, GRHS, or both.) I think the two Mission Statements answer this question. (Found elsewhere in this issue.)

If we, the descendants don't preserve this remarkable history, who then? Even if you don't do any genealogy and research it's worth belonging. The membership dues you would pay are used to help defray expenses for the day to day operation of the organizations and their headquarters. Plus you would get the richly informative, high quality journals during the year. In the Journals you will find stories of the travails of families leaving Russia for a journey of thousands of miles to a new land they knew nothing about. Oh, if only they could see the great nation they helped build!

Not everything was misery and hardship. There were many humorous stories as well as stories about our customs, how and why they were started.

You will also receive the news of what's going on at the national level, the actions of the national boards, and plans for the future.

We are tax exempt, meaning your donations are tax deductible. By keeping up to date you will know where your gift is going. If this strikes a cord with you, share it with your GR friends. A gentle nudge from you may open the door to a rich and fruitful experience.

Your President,

**Dr. Ray Heer**



## **AHSGR MISSION STATEMENT:**

The American Historical Society of Germans from Russia is an international organization dedicated to the discovery, collection, preservation, and dissemination of information related to the history, cultural heritage, and genealogy of Germanic settlers in the Russian Empire and their descendants.

(from the most recent Lincoln Chapter newsletter-Oct. 2009)



## **THE GERMANS FROM RUSSIA HERITAGE SOCIETY STATEMENT:**

Our Mission is to collect, document, preserve, exhibit, translate, publish, promote, and make accessible resources on the culture, history, folklore, textiles and clothing, and foodways of the Germans from Russia. Our focus is on Bessarabian, Black Sea, Crimean, Dobruduscha and Volhynian Germans and their descendants in North Dakota and the Northern Plains.

The Purposes of the Germans from Russia Heritage Society are much more extensive and embrace as found in the Articles of Incorporation.



## **CONVENTION NOTES BY MARGARET FREEMAN**

We were in Rapid City for the convention in September, a lovely time to be in the Back Hills. Starting on Thursday, the Opening Ceremony began with prayers, the national anthems of the US and Canada sung by a choir who knew the words, an impressive presentation of the colors from the local military station, the welcome of the dignitaries, a presentation of chapter banners, and a brief address by a young person

employed by Mt Rushmore National Park, a US citizen who has Indian ancestry from India. He was great!

As in Casper, and that tradition was also continued in Medicine Hat, we had a Heritage Hall that drew great interest. This was organized by village coordinator groups and there were even computers running pictures and showing other information. Some really beautiful and valuable things were displayed.

The workshops were numerous and informative. Our own Harold Ehrman had a presentation about the Terror in Odessa Province when many were arrested and executed or sent to prison and on to the gulags. Very well done. Of course each of the village groups had their annual meetings and told of successes and future plans. My own Glückstal group was well represented on the speaker side by Harold, Homer Rudolf, Connie Dahlke, Sally Backman, Duane Stabler, Charles Weisser, Ken Vogeles, Ron Vossler, Carolyn Schott, Gary Schorzman, and Tom Stangl. Kahlile Mehr of the Family History Library in Salt Lake City made two very important presentations telling where the records are and whether the FHL is purchasing them.

The food was good, served buffet style except for the final Saturday night banquet. Winners of the Youth Contest had their prizes announced and some of the young people read their essays. Each meal came with entertainment that ran the gamut from vocalists to unicyclists, and included a homegrown humorist.

The Black Hills people did an incredible job. It was a good convention.

The Memorial Service on Sunday did not include Dorothy Kerr, as I had not sent in the information and a picture. That I will do shortly so that it is ready for the Memorial Service next year. The 2010 convention will be in Bismarck and plans are already underway. USA Today founder, Al Neuharth, has agreed to attend and speak. The dates will be in our newsletter but the convention is in July, 2010.

I did represent our chapter at the board meetings. Nicely run, a lot accomplished in a short time. Elected as new president is Dave Kilwein of WA, VP is Vince Humann of NM, Carolyn Schott is secretary, the treasurer remains the professional finance person from Bismarck, and Val Wangler, a former president is liason from the board to the Bismarck office.



## **A GERMAN INVENTED THE ADVENT WREATH**

Margaret Freeman found the following in the Society for German American Studies Newsletter, Vol. 36 No. 1, March 2009. It was written by Gary Grassl, and is found in [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advent\\_wreath](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advent_wreath)

Advent means the coming of Christ at Christmas. It consists of four Sundays beginning with the one closest to November 30. The Advent Wreath plays an important role in the observance of this season. It was conceived in 1839 by the Hamburg pedagogue and Lutheran theologian Johann Hinrich Wichern (1808-81). A pioneer in social work among the urban poor, Wichern founded a home for neglected youth in Hamburg. The children under his care kept asking him, when will Christmas come? So he hung a cartwheel from the ceiling of the prayer hall. He attached four large white candles to this wheel; they stood for the four Sundays of Advent. Between each of these he set six smaller ones for the weekdays. Each day a new candle was lit. On the last day before Christmas the entire wheel glowed white from the light of 28 candles. In the 1860's people began to weave pine wreaths around the wooden wheel. This then was the ancestor of our Advent Wreath.

The custom gained ground among Protestant families and churches in Germany around 1910, and it evolved into the smaller wreath with the four candles we know today. In 1925 an Advent Wreath appeared for the first time in a Catholic Church, the Cathedral of Cologne. In Catholic southern Germany and Austria, the wreath was adopted around 1930, spreading the hanging Advent Wreaths from Germany to countries around the world. German immigrants brought it to the United States.

Germany honored Wichern with a special postage stamp bearing his portrait on April 20, 2008 - his birth date. There are Wichern churches and Wichern schools in his native land, which honor his pioneer social work, called die Innere Mission.



## **FROM RUSSIA WITH WHEAT ..... By Tom Isern**

Somewhere around home there's a photograph of my grandfather nearly overtopped in a field of his wheat. Grandpa was not a tall man, but still, to modern folk accustomed to stubby, semi-dwarf varieties, it appears that either Grandpa was really short or the wheat was really tall. The latter was the case. Wheats of those days were tall enough to hide in.

Perhaps you've read accounts of Civil War battles in which infantry advanced across a wheat field, and in your mind's eye, you saw the soldiers terribly exposed. In fact, they may have been pretty well hidden.

Both the western European wheats of Civil War days and the Russian wheats of my grandfather's time were tall, but they were otherwise quite different, because the Russian wheats were much better adapted for raising on the Great Plains. This makes sense, given the environmental similarities between the Russian steppes and the American plains.

Now an English scholar, David Moon of Durham University, has taken an interest in the connections between these two historic wheat-growing regions and published his research in the Journal of Global History. It turns out that some of our old stories about the importation of Russian wheats to North America are questionable, but in fact the links between the two lands are more extensive than we have known.

What Moon documents is that Russian and American scientists were in contact and sought to learn from one another. Generally the Russians knew more about us than we knew about them, likely because so few American researchers could read the Russian literature. A century ago our two countries were the leading exporters of wheat, a situation that would change with the Bolshevik Revolution. Communist control of agriculture, to put it mildly, did not make for the most efficient production.

People on the central plains are much attached to the story of Turkey Red wheat, the hard red winter wheat said to have been brought to the plains by Mennonite Germans from Russia. Likely it was, but there is no sound documentation of its importation by the earliest Mennonite immigrants. Bernhard Warketin, the miller, imported fairly large quantities, and Mark Carlton, of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, brought Turkey wheat seed in huge lots at the turn of the twentieth century.

Moon sorts through the mythology of Turkey Red pretty well, and also touches on the importation of Kubanka durum wheat by Carlton. Kubanka was raised as a winter wheat in Russia. Moon explains that Russian farmers had taken to raising durum to supply the southern European pasta market. Here in America Kubanka was raised as a spring wheat, on the northern plains.

There is no good story about the standard bread wheat of a century ago on the northern plains-Marquis (say it MAR-quis, not Mar-KEE)-but it also came from the Ukraine, via Canada, in 1842. I could make up a story about Marquis wheat, or instead I could suggest this: we really don't know that much about how our farmers on the Great Plains came to raise this or that variety of wheat. We have the scientific literature, and the scholar James Malin made good use of newspaper reports, but what is needed is close study of farmers' writings and the proceedings of their agricultural societies up and down the plains.

Our country produces about as many stories as it does bushels of wheat, and this one, about how we got our Russian wheats, we can tell a little better now than we did before.

This text permission of Tom Isern and Plains Folk [www.plainsfolk.com]



## **Prairie Homes from Prairie Earth ..... By Tom Isern**

A few weeks ago I spent an afternoon with a young fellow named Johnny Howling Wolf, who showed me around the complex of earthlodges constructed on the reservation of the Three Affiliated Tribes (Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara) west of Fort Berthold, North Dakota. His pride and satisfaction were evident as we entered the massive meeting hall built in the style of an earth lodge and then looked around the collection of traditional, clan-size earth lodges grouped nearby.

A day or so later I was talking with a rancher from Billings County, and he said, come look at a building I have in a pasture I've bought, maybe you can tell me what it is. I met him there, and it tickled me that I knew exactly what sort of building it was: a Ukrainian homestead house built with earth-fill walls.

Growing up as I did in western Kansas, and teaching and writing for years there, I acquired the central-plains view of pioneer dwellings made of earth. A sod house, as we saw it, was a temporary expedient. It was something pioneers built in order to prove up a claim, that is, satisfy the requirements of the Homestead Act. A house built of earth wasn't a proper house for the long term.

At the time I was aware of another earth-building tradition, that of the German-Russian Mennonites. They built permanent residences of homemade clay bricks they called Erdziegeln or Batsa or Kohlsteine. Later I would learn that Mennonites in Manitoba and other parts of the plains did the same.

Still, fixed in my mind was the image of the sod house formed by the classic book, *The Sod House Frontier*, published by historian Everett Dick in 1937. The sod house was a temporary dwelling, and an uncomfortable one. It let in the rain and harbored bedbugs and vermin. People on the central plains sometimes got nostalgic about sod houses and folks in Nebraska even formed a sort of sod-house alumni group for people who wanted to share their sod-house memories but the memories were those of a frontier of hardship.

Moving eventually to the northern plains I became aware that there were all sorts of prairie houses built of prairie earth, and that people were still living in them. Some of these were cut-sod houses.

A master's thesis written by a South Dakota native, Molly Rozum, helped me learn a different way of thinking about the sod houses of the northern plains. It seems that on the northern prairies, those who built sod houses were regarded as sticklers, settlers here for the long term, making the effort to build a weather-tight home of sod. More transient people, on the other hand, just hauled milled lumber out from the railroad town and threw up an 8×10 shanty.

Besides the houses of cut sod, the northern plains boasted, and still boast, countless earth houses built according to ethnic tradition by Germans from Russia and by Ukrainians. The German-Russians built like their ethnic kin, the Mennonites, of clay brick or rammed earth. The Ukrainians build commodious houses with walls filled with earth packed between a post-and-lath frame.

These were all good houses for the northern plains-more comfortable, not less, than houses built of milled lumber.

This summer my Suzanne and I are hosting a celebration of historic earth buildings on the prairies. It's a field school. People can do it for college credit, or for a learning vacation. We'll

take people to see little-known earth houses of all traditional types, and we'll spend a few days restoring a German-Russian farmstead, the Hutmacher farmstead, in Dunn County, North Dakota.

For more about historic earth buildings, and our field school, go here - [www.ndsu.edu/instruct/isern/earth](http://www.ndsu.edu/instruct/isern/earth)

See Tom Isern's website at [www.plainsfolk.com](http://www.plainsfolk.com). He is director of the Center for Heritage Renewal at North Dakota State University - [www.ndsu.edu/heritage](http://www.ndsu.edu/heritage)



## DEDUCTIONS

When you contemplate your annual or lifetime charitable giving hopefully the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia is one that comes to mind. We are a recognized 501c3 non-profit organization. There are a number of ways that you can donate, i.e. you can give at the chapter level; to the Society for many uses and to the Foundation for the endowment fund. Your contributions are tax deductible and the IRS code numbers for your tax deduction are listed below.

The IRS codes for your tax preparer:

Donations to California chapters: 68-0473752

Donations to the Society : 23-7062269

Donations to the Foundation : 84-6116103

Call Al Hart with any questions 1(714) 847-6481

All of your contributions will be gratefully received and acknowledged.



## BOARD ACTIONS: Oct. 10, 2009

**MEMORIALS:** The National Office acknowledge the receipt of receiving Memorials from the chapter for Dot Kerr, Warren Richard "Dick" Schmidt, and Darlene Lewis who have passed away in 2009. A letter of appreciation was received from Anne Pietz for the memorial for her husband, Ervin.

### TREASURER'S REPORT – 10/10/09

Cash on hand 7/17/09	\$2254.42
Expenditures	241.26
Income	110.00
Cash on Hand	2023.16
Reserve	974.13

### NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE APPOINTED

By the President – Al Hart, Chp. 714.847.6481

By the Board – Kurt Heer, 562.928.4263 ..... Richard Rehrig, 858.756.3877

There are two vacancies to fill:

Treasurer -Computer skills, post budget, handle meal reservations, Name on bank account.

Library - About two filing cabinets of books or arrange for their storage. Bring books to the meetings and check them out and in.

**IF YOU HAVE SKILLS AND INTEREST ASSISTING THE CHAPTER IN THESE WAYS OR KNOW OF SOMEONE WHO DOES, GIVE A CALL TO THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE!!**

### SHUFFLING THE SCHEDULE:

The Board approved the new schedule listed elsewhere in this newsletter

### MEMBERSHIP DUES LETTER.

The Board approved sending a letter to all the members on Oct. 30 who have not renewed their membership and have not been listed on the roster.





AHSGR / GRHS

POB 3371

Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274-9371

Mailed at USPS, Lomita, CA on 2009/11/13

**AHSGR / GRHS**  
Southern California Chapter  
**NEWSLETTER**