

TO: Krasna Researchers
From: Ted J. Becker and Rosemary (Ternes) Mack
Village Research Coordinators
Krasna, Bessarabia, Russia
Emmental, Bessarabia, Russia
Karamurat, Dobrudscha, Romania
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Krasna Web Site: <http://14ushop.com/krasna>

The last Krasna Newsletter was sent to you this past winter. A lot of snow has blown over the prairies of Saskatchewan and North Dakota and a lot of water has flowed under the bridge since then! Several Krasna-related projects have been completed and Ted took a memorial trip back to "Heimat".

In the last Krasna Newsletter, mention was made of translated newspaper articles. Faustina (Dirk) Chandler has completed her work of indexing them and of placing the indexes and articles onto a CD. That CD is now available to researchers. It contains translated (into English) items, articles and letters to the editor, which are all associated with Krasna, Emmental, Karamurat as well as the areas in South America, the USA, and Canada in which former Krasna, Emmental and Karamurat residents settled and lived. These items were extracted from the *Dakota Rundschau* newspaper for the years 1917-1932 and the *Der Staats Anzeiger* newspaper for the years 1909-1932. There around 1,000 such items. The indexes, which Faustina developed, make it easy to find specific people, if that is your wish. The items are a mini-history of these villages, and should be a must read if you have an interest in expanding your knowledge of these villages and the lives and times of their people, our ancestors and relatives. There is no doubt that items written by your ancestors and/or relatives may be found among them. As previously mentioned, Ted found several letters to the editor written by his maternal grandfather, as well as his maternal great-grandfather. Some of the writers were very prolific writers and knew what was happening in their surroundings as well as in the world. Some of them had very definite opinions about issues, both controversial and non-controversial. (But then, we are opinionated people, aren't we?) Oftentimes letters to the editor were the only way some families kept track of each other. Quite a number of letters to the editor contain pleas for help in trying to find a long-lost relative. Others vividly describe the hard life, during the hard times in the "old country", of residents of Krasna, Emmental, Karamurat, as well as life on the prairies of North and South Dakota as well as Saskatchewan. You can acquire a copy of the CD from Ted at P.O. Box 1524, Williston, ND 58802-1524 USA. To cover costs and time to prepare the CD, send him \$25.00 U.S. funds, if you would like to have a copy of the CD. It will contain items from the following:

Dakota Rundschau Index, 1917-1932
Dakota Rundschau Letters, 1917-1932
Staats Anzeiger Index, 1909-1932
Staats Anzeiger Letters, 1909-1932

Please make checks or money orders payable to Ted J. Becker. All of us owe Faustina a debt of gratitude for her hard work in organizing the newspaper items and her extraordinarily hard work in developing the valuable indexes of the items. An interesting comment she made to Ted recently is that she often finds herself reading through the hundreds of items to better give her a picture of what life was like in the village in which her ancestors lived. She feels, as Ted does, that they provide a picture into a period of history of the village to which all of us have ties, and our roots. Thank you, Faustina, for your hard work. Also, we offer our thank you once again to Ambrose and Sybille Leinz for their hours of work in translating them into English. Such dedicated and unselfish work on their parts is what makes their parents and grandparents so proud of them.

For those researchers who are trying to find their Braun and Matery/Materi roots in Germany, may we direct you to the following web site:

[http://216.239.37.104/translate_c?hl=en&u=http://pierre.bertrand.free.fr/outre-](http://216.239.37.104/translate_c?hl=en&u=http://pierre.bertrand.free.fr/outre-foret/neewiller.htm&prev=/search%3Fq%2BDraymond%2BSchwengler%26hl%26ir%3D%26ris%3DGGLD,GGLD:2004-41,GGLD:en)

[foret/neewiller.htm&prev=/search%3Fq%2BDraymond%2BSchwengler](http://216.239.37.104/translate_c?hl=en&u=http://pierre.bertrand.free.fr/outre-foret/neewiller.htm&prev=/search%3Fq%2BDraymond%2BSchwengler%26hl%26ir%3D%26ris%3DGGLD,GGLD:2004-41,GGLD:en)

[%26hl%26ir%3D%26ris%3DGGLD,GGLD:2004-41,GGLD:en](http://216.239.37.104/translate_c?hl=en&u=http://pierre.bertrand.free.fr/outre-foret/neewiller.htm&prev=/search%3Fq%2BDraymond%2BSchwengler%26hl%26ir%3D%26ris%3DGGLD,GGLD:2004-41,GGLD:en)

The above URL takes you to an English translation (of sorts) of some chapters in the book *Les Familles de Neewiller* by Raymond Schwengler. It was published in 1982 in Heiligenberg, Germany. This book is cited on the web site of AGAWE, the Alsatian web site, which was mentioned in a previous Krasna Newsletter. Ancestors of the Krasna Braun's and Matery's immigrated via Franzfeld, Kutschurgan, Russia, to Krasna from Neewiller circa 1843. Our database, "Krasna Master Census, 1814-1940", contains much background information about the Braun's and Matery's of Krasna. Note that Neewiller is identified as

Neewiller, Weissenburg, Alsace, France.

For those of you who do not know, "Elsass" is the German equivalent of "Alsace".

On a related subject, Ted wishes to let you Krasna researchers know that progress is being made on the question "From where in Poland did my ancestors come?" He is collaborating with several Krasna researchers who are finding answers to this question. Of course, answers to this question help lead to answers to the following question: "From where in Germany did my ancestors come?" These are indeed exciting times for those Krasna researchers who are trying to determine from where in Germany and Poland their pre-1814 ancestors originated. No doubt, there will be much more to report on this most important subject in the future.

In the last Krasna Newsletter mention was made of a film, which one of Ted's relatives shared with him. A very special thank you to Josef Tuchscherer for sharing the film on DVD with us. Josef acquired the film indirectly from the resettlement camp's director. The film (an 8 mm film) has been placed onto a

DVD for preservation purposes. The twenty-minute film is of former residents of Colelia, Dobrudscha, Romania, as they spent their first days in Camp VIIIb at Missionary Seminary, St. Ludwig, Schweinfurt, Germany. It was made in the camp by the Nazi government on and about 27 December 1940, at the height of the Resettlement. It is obvious that the film was made for propaganda purposes. The former residents had just arrived at this resettlement camp and were still wearing the clothing they had worn in Colelia. What a glimpse we have into how our ancestors dressed! The way babies were bundled up and carried shows us a custom that was already decades old in the 1930's. The film, among other things, shows the former Colelia residents doing some of the dances they did in Colelia. If you would like a copy of the film on DVD, let Ted know and he will have one made for you. Send him \$20.00 U.S. funds, at his address given above to cover costs and time to prepare the DVD, for a copy of the DVD. As a side note, the trip that Ted was on this past summer took him, among other places, to the site of the town of Colelia. The trip there was a very emotional one for Ted. The town is gone; no buildings are left, that is, except the ruins of the magnificent church. Ted took many, many photos of the ruins of the church. Words cannot describe the scene! One would have to personally see the ruins of the church, or at least photos of it, to fully appreciate what Colelia must have been. The town site today is totally overgrown with shoulder-high thistles. A local resident warned of snakes among the thistles. He also said that the cemetery has no grave markers left. Thistles are taking it over, too. Mother Earth is slowly reclaiming the cemetery and town site. A local sheepherder used to keep his sheep inside the church. Manure built up to about 4 feet high before local residents had him remove them. They then went into the building and cleaned out the manure. However, by then the damage to the plaster on the walls, at least four feet up, was already done. Some of the original tiles still remain on the floors and there are visible remnants of the paintings, which were on the walls and arches. The roof is gone, however. We hope that the work we do to gather and preserve our common ancestry will not let Colelia be forgotten. Ted felt honored to have traveled there and to have walked the soil where the former Colelians lived. By pure luck, he had the good fortune of being shown the town site by a former teacher, who once taught in the school there. He is now director/principal of the grade school in Ramnicul de Jos, a neighboring town. He shared with Ted two teacher grade books for the Colelia grade school for the years 1921-1922 and 1926-1927. Ted was allowed to photograph each page of these books. The names of the students and the grades they received are given. Although Ted was once a schoolteacher, he does not understand the grading system used by the teachers of Colelia. These two books are extremely valuable. The director/principal felt that if Ted photographed them, they would be preserved, for he could not guarantee that when he retires that the books would survive. Ted has placed the photographs of these books onto a CD for preservation purposes.

While Ted was in Romania, he spent several days at the Arhivele Nationale ale Romaniei (a branch of the Romanian National Archive) in Constanta, Dobrogea

(Dobrudscha). With the very gracious help of a film producer for Romanian Public Television, who acted as intermediary, he was informed that church books for some of the former German Dobrudscha villages are held at this archive. Ted traveled to Constanta for the express purpose of making copies of church books for Karamurat and Gross Mandshapunar. Prior to his trip to Constanta, he had been assured by the director of the archive in Constanta that he could photograph them. However, when he met with him, he was informed that no photographing or copying is allowed of any materials, which are 100 years old and younger as stipulated by federal law. Interestingly, when Ted was at the archive, he was told that the archive's photocopier was not working. Thus any copying he was planning to do had to be done by hand. The following church books associated with Germans from the period 1870-1940 are at this archive:

Births/Baptisms, 1896-1906 – Constanta

Kirchenbuch der Evangelischen Gemeinde Constanta – Anadolkieu, 1883-1897 (This book contains entries of births, marriages and deaths.)

Kirchenbuch, 1934-1940, Costinesti and Gross Mandshapunar

Marriages, 1934-1940, Gross Mandshapunar

Deaths, 1931-1940, Karamurat

Marriages, 1905-1922, Karamurat

Marriages, 1922-1940, Karamurat

Taufregister des Pfarrbesiks Der Deutsch Evangelischen Kirche zu Constanta, 1895-1936. (This book contains only birth/baptism entries

for 2,912 infants. Villages represented include Constanta, Coschali,

Cobadin, Sarighiol, Mamusli, Fachria, Cogealac, Osmanfac, Anatolkoi, Tariverde, Horoslar, Ebenoi, Mandshapunar, Osmanschi, Palas, Tuzlar, and Sofilar.)

Ted was told that these are the only church books the archive holds for any of the former German villages in the Dobrudscha region. Ted was able to hand copy two of these books and also extractions from a third. The data and information he copied will become part of our database, the "Krasna Master Census, 1814-1940".

While at Constanta, Ted took a side trip to Mihail Kolgniceanu (formerly Karamurat). The Catholic church there, St. Anthony's, is being restored and refurbished. The exterior has been completely restored and looks beautiful. Work continues on the interior. He had the good fortune of meeting and visiting with the young man, Mr. Hartwig Thomas Laschon, who is doing the restorations. His work is superb. The former grandeur of the church is once again showing forth in all its splendor. The gold-leaf work he is replacing adds so much to the restoration. The original painting of St. Anthony, painted in 1888, is scheduled to be professionally cleaned. Ted took photographs of the grave stones in the German section of the cemetery in Mihail Kolgniceanu.

Many of the grave stones have names and dates obliterated. He took photographs of all of the grave stones in the German section. Those, which have legible names and dates, provide us with an added verification of data for those who are buried there. It is unfortunate that so many of the grave stones are overturned and the names and dates obliterated. It is apparent that this damage was deliberate.

While in Constanta, Dobrogea, Romania, Ted visited the Casa de Cultura Germana (House of German Culture). This building, formerly the "Erhardt Luther" School, is now a center for the study of German culture in the Dobrogea region. While there he met Mr. Erhardt Fraymayer, who volunteers his time to help tourists and researchers. The "center" has a small, but growing library. Mr. Fraymayer has taken many photos of the various (former) German villages in the Dobrudscha/Dobrogea. He made copies of photos of 15 churches in these villages and gave them to Ted. They have been included in the Krasna Photo Collection. His photographic talents border on the professional, and the photos are a most valuable addition to the Collection.

Ted's trip took him to Ukraine, also. Aside from the time he, Ambrose Leinz and Joann (Erker) Baroh spent in Krasnoe (Krasna), a visit to the Odessa State Archive in Odessa proved to be most informative. For those of you who are familiar with the genealogical data for the former residents of Krasna, mention must be made of the original church books for Krasna for the years 1918-1940. These church books, which had been in the archive in Ismail, Ukraine, until recently, have been transferred to the Odessa State Archive. He was shown two of the 22 books. For him it was an honor to hold and read original books, which contain the most valuable of information, the data of the former German residents of Krasna. Those of you who are genealogical researchers will know by now that Ted did acquire copies of all of these church books a number of years ago, when they were held at the archive in Ismail. As you may also know, all of the information from these most valuable church books has been entered into our database. Of course, the data and information from these, and all other church and civil books, is available to researchers. The previous Krasna Newsletter spoke at length about this. We stand ready and willing to help you with your research as it relates to Krasna and its daughter colonies, Emmmental and Karamurat. Feel free to contact Ted for help at his e-mail address: tbecker@nemontel.net or his snail mail address: P.O. Box 1524, Williston, ND 58802-1524 USA or his telephone number 701-572-5715.

For those of you who have not had the opportunity to visit Krasnoe (Krasna), let me just say that, to use June (Steinkey) McDonald's word, a visit there is indeed a "pilgrimage". The depth of feelings of kinship experienced by Ted (and Ambrose) cannot be fully described as each stood in the middle of the cemetery late at night, in the dark. In addition to the spirits of Ambrose's ancestors, those of his two brothers buried there touched his heart. Tears of joy came to his eyes in the knowledge that he was back "home"! The "spirits" were truly out and

about! Those feelings will never leave anyone who goes to Krasnoe (Krasna) and “meets the spirits of his/her ancestors.” Ambrose Leinz was particularly moved, for he was born there, and stood on the exact spot where the house in which he was born stood. The time he and Ted spent with current residents of Krasnoe (Krasna), with the “Burgermeister”/mayor of Krasnoe (Krasna), and the experience of being treated to the fantastic hospitality of the Ukrainian people there, all lend themselves to many fond and lasting memories. Joann (Erker) Baroh expressed her feelings with deep emotions and joyful tears, for her Erker ancestors’ spirits were also alive and well in Krasnoe (Krasna)! Just the simple fact that our feet trod the same soil on which our grandparents and our ancestors walked on their way to and from work, church, social activities, etc., filled the three of us with feelings of “belonging”. Just the simple fact that our eyes were seeing the same Kogalnik Creek and Valley, the same “Baschtan” (watermelon patch), the same hillsides on which used to be acres and acres of vineyards, the same threshing stone that a former German resident of Krasna used, all deeply touched our hearts.

This past June Ted had the honor and privilege of addressing the “Kulturkreis der Bessarabiendeutschen” at Wernerseck-Halle in Ochtendung, Germany. This group, once headed by Maximilian Riehl, meets regularly to make *Maistub*, to renew old acquaintances, to eat a little kuchen, to sing the old songs, to dance the “old” dances, and to just enjoy each others company. This group consists primarily of former Krasna residents. If you would like to learn more about this group, and have Internet access, you can find information about them at <http://www.bessarabien.info>. A special thank you to Eduard Volk who interpreted for Ted at the gathering, and who showed him where in Herxheim am Berg to buy great wine and to get great food at the “Becker Woistub”. Eduard’s personal touch brought great meaning to Ted’s trip to this region in Germany from where a branch of his paternal ancestors originated. Also a special thank you to Max and his wife Franziska, Alois Speicher and his wife Hannelore, and Paul Wingenbach and his wife Margarete, for each couple shared a day and meals in their homes with Ted and Joann. The times spent together were memorable times and will remain with Ted always. Their friendship has a special place in Ted’s heart. The singing of Paul and Margarete took Ted back to another time and another place. Their singing reflects the singing our ancestors did in Krasna! What fantastic singing voices they have. Even though Ted did not understand the words of the “Krasna songs”, which they sang, he totally understood the spirit they evoked. Thank you to Margaret (Ternes) Cremer for her hard work in making certain that Ted and Joann would not be left stranded at the train station in the middle of the night. This “young lady” still dances up a storm and sings like a bird! Her passion for and dedication to the preservation of the Krasna heritage is so strong. Joann (Erker) Baroh, Ted’s traveling companion, felt reassured that she would be taken care of and watched over. The hospitality of Adolf and Gertrud (Seifert) Wagner for letting Ted and Joann stay at their home will never be forgotten. German, which Ted knew as a five-year old child, started coming

back to him as the hours passed in trying to communicate with his friends in Germany. Ted knows little or not German. Adolf and Gertrud know little English. Yet the fun they had in trying to understand each other is a memory, which remain with him throughout his life. Ted also enjoyed the time spent at Adolf's home with his sons and his sister Maria (Wagner) Budean. Even though Adolf and Maria are related to Ted, a deep, abiding friendship also bloomed between them. God is good!

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