

Bus trip to Peters Hill

A bus load of members enjoyed an interesting day trip on 5th May, topped off with beautiful weather. Our first stop was the Carlsruhe Lutheran Church near Waterloo. This congregation was formed by German settlers from Mecklenburg just 150 years ago. We enjoyed seeing through the historic church with Kelvin Schwartz's direction. After a walk through the cemetery it was off to the Manoora Institute for a lovely lunch provided by the locals.



Carlsruhe Lutheran Church

The Saddleworth Historical Museum was the next stop, providing many items from years ago, including telephone exchange switchboards, agricultural machinery, household goods etc. There was something of interest for everyone.



Doris Kupke



Rona McDonnell

Finally we reached Peters Hill, the Wendish settlement for many families from Lower Lusatia. Here we inspected the Lutheran Church, which has been lovingly restored and maintained by the *Friends of Peters Hill Church*. Its special feature is the pulpit above the altar. This was common in the design of 19th century Lutheran churches in Australia, but was changed in most churches in the 20th century – but not at Peters Hill.



Pastor James Winderlich preaching at Peters Hill's 150th anniversary service in October 2006

A couple of kilometres down the road we went to the Pioneer Cemetery, which is also cared for by the *Friends of Peters Hill Church*. They have drawn up a useful plan of the gravesites and marked the graves. Nearby we visited the private Huppatz Cemetery, which also has some of the early settlers buried there.



At the Huppatz Cemetery

We were privileged to see the old kitchen that has been preserved inside James Huppatz's home. This remains from the first house built by the Huppatz family over 140 years ago.



Joan Hochwald at the old Huppatz fireplace

Thanks go to Dennis and June Jenke for their excellent organisation once again.

President's Report

It has been a pleasure to work with the committee this year. We have had a close look at our constitution, which was written over 15 years ago. As time has passed the range of activities of our Society has broadened. We believe it is important to restate the objectives to reflect our wider goals. At the same time we have taken the opportunity to tidy up some of the wording in the clauses. Please read through the enclosed changes to the constitution, so that we can vote on them at the Annual General Meeting.

As you read the account of our bus trip to Peters Hill you will see how enjoyable a day it was. Dennis and June do a marvellous job organising these trips, and we sit back and enjoy them. Thanks again, Dennis and June.

A small but interested group attended the afternoon at the Lutheran Archives. I had some of the older Wendish books at the Archives on display. People had the opportunity to look at Wendish Bibles, hymn books, and devotion books that were brought out by the first Wendish settlers in the 1850s. But they had to wear white gloves to handle them. Other books, maps and pictures that are owned by the Wend Sorb Society were on display. These are always kept at the Lutheran Archives and can be inspected there whenever it is open.

Last month I had an article that I wrote about the Wends in Australia published in *The Lutheran*. I have been pleased at the response, as many people who discovered their Wendish heritage on reading it have contacted me. They have ordered copies of the books by Burger and Nielsen in order to find out more. We have now sold out of Nielsen's book, but I have ordered more from America.

I wish to thank those of you who have given donations to the Society when you renewed your membership this year. Your generosity is much appreciated. We try to keep the membership fee as low as possible, so your donations assist that aim.

Our AGM is fast approaching and will be held in the same venue as last year: the St Andrew's Lutheran Church hall at the Glynde Retirement Homes. It is very spacious and we have the use of modern audio-visual equipment to show some interesting videos about the Wends/Sorbs of Lusatia. I look forward to seeing you there.

Lyall Kupke

Coming Events

Sunday 9th September , 2pm

Annual General Meeting, and **videos** of Lusatia.

At St Andrew's Lutheran Church Hall, (22 Avenue Rd, Glynde).

***** NOTE: the venue is in the Glynde Lutheran Retirement Homes complex. (Enter Avenue Road from Payneham Road – look out for the big gum tree at the junction!)

Friends of Peters Hill Church AGM

At the time of printing, the date of this event had not been confirmed. The committee wants to hold it on Sunday 28th October, in the afternoon, following a church service in the morning. Friends of Peters Hill Church will be notified soon by newsletter of the final date.

Some Wendish Aspects of an Immigrant Family: — The Huppatz story

Johann and Maria Huppatz (nee Sonke) with their four sons emigrated from Prussia to South Australia in 1850. The family eventually settled at Peters Hill near Riverton. They were Wends, born in the Wendish villages of Turnow and Preilack, near the town of Peitz, which is situated approximately 20 km north of Cottbus, Lower Lusatia, in Germany.

What's in a name? 'HUPAC': a Wendish word of Slavic origin.

Meaning = name of a ground dwelling crested bird and its call 'hup-hup-hup'.

Translation: German = Wiedehopf; English = Hoopoe.



The surname of the HUPPATZ family evolved from the name 'Hupac'. Variations of the name included Hupas, Hupaz, Hupatz, Huppatz, and also Happatz. Also connected to the Huppatz family were the names of Sonke and Huschka/Huschgens.

The Prussian Heritage

Around 1554-1559 some inhabitants and farmers from the town of Peitz were resettled into a new area to make way for the building of the fortifications of the Peitz fortress. The resettlement, known as Neue Peitz, was to become the village of Turnow.

Prussian Census records in 1652 revealed that people with the surnames Hupaz, Soncke and Huschka lived in the Prussian villages of Turnow and Preilack. At that time there were approximately 242 villagers in Turnow.

Adam Hupaz was listed as a small farmer, aged 36 years. He had worked his property for 12 years. In 1652 he had sown three scheffel (measure) of grain and had seven head of cattle. He had one son and one daughter.

In the nearby village of Preilack lived George Huschka, who may have been an ancestor of Johann's wife Maria. George had one hufe of land

and was deemed a large farmer [a hufe = a measure of land]. He was 60 years of age in 1652 and had worked the property for 15 years. He sowed six scheffel of grain and had two horses and eight head of cattle. His son served as a soldier during the war. The property was burnt down, as also were many others, during the time of the Thirty Years War (1618-1648), which devastated the region and almost annihilated the Wends.

A classification of landholders for 1719 revealed that Turnow had 44 landholders. One was named Juro Hupatz. Similarly in 1751 in Turnow, a Hupatz was listed as a hufner or large farmer. He shared 2 hufen with other villagers named Francke and Pahn. Listed also was a small farmer with the surname of Huppatz.

However, as church records prior to 1806 were destroyed by fire it is not possible to establish a link between the above named inhabitants of Turnow and the Huppatz ancestors who lived there in the 19th century.

In the village of Turnow, in the early 1800s, lived Hans and Hanna Huppas (nee Beley). Married in 1809, their children were Hannes; **Johann Huppatz**, born December 3rd 1815 (he emigrated to SA); Martin, who remained in Turnow; and Matthes, who became a farmer in Preilack. In 1853 Matthes had completed emigration papers to take his family to South Australia, but he died later that same year.

Johann and his brothers possibly had some education as schooling was compulsory from the 1700s. Among the subjects taught were Religion, Reading and Writing. As the villagers of Turnow were mostly Wends the Wendish school was required by Prussian law to teach the German language. Johann became a shoemaker. He may have learnt his skills from his father or perhaps was apprenticed to someone known to the family or in another village.

Johann's mother, Hanna Beley, came from the Wendish village of Dissen and was the third daughter of Martin and Maria Beley (nee Malchwitz). Hanna's parents (Johann's grandparents) were married in 1775 and their other children were Maria, Hanna (died as a child) and Catherina.

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In Preilack lived George Sonk(e) and his wife Hanna (nee Huschka/Huschgen), who were married in 1815. Their daughters were Hanna; **Maria Sonke**, born in 1816, (who married Johann Huppatz); and Luise, who married Johann's brother Matthes. Hanna's father (Maria's grandfather), George Huschgen, was described as a large farmer and court official in Preilack.

Johann Huppatz and Maria Sonke were married in Peitz on October 7th 1837. Peitz church records reveal Johann was a shoemaker and a small farmer and that their children, born in Turnow, were Friedrich, Martin, Wilhelm, and August. At a later time it was noted in the church books that the family were in Australia.



Johann Huppatz

The Australian Story

On October 16th 1850 the Huppatz family arrived in South Australia on the ship *San Francisco*. Also on board were some Wends who had come from the neighbouring village of Tauer. Included was a Killian family and Noack families. In 1851 Johann paid a subscription fee of one pound as a member of the Lutheran congregation at Hope Valley. Johann's naturalisation papers in 1858 confirmed that he was a native of Turnow, Province of Brandenburg, Prussia.

By 1857, 150 years ago, the Huppatz family had arrived in the Peters Hill area. About 40 families, mostly Wends, some of whom were known to Johann, had settled in the area. The Huppatz family were able to maintain their Wendish links. Contact with their neighbours and church was a means of friendship and support for the family.

Johann purchased his own farming land in 1860 and the Huppatz house was built by his neighbour Christian Marschall, a Wend who had come from Babow, near Cottbus in 1857. The old Marschall family home is now known as the Marschall Hut. On Huppatz property, it was restored in modern

times to become a stop-over point on the Heysen Trail.

One room of the original Huppatz three room house was retained within the existing farm house. Named 'The Old Room' it has been kept as it was lived in by the early Wendish pioneer generations of the Huppatz family. The old kitchen hearth remains (see photo on page 1), as does old furniture of the period. Family photographs of succeeding five generations from Johann through second son Martin's line hang on the walls. Curios include Johann's old pipe and a sickle brought from Germany.

By the 1880s Johann and Maria's many sons and daughter had moved to other areas of the state to establish their own families, farms and livelihoods. Their eight children were: Fred, Martin, Bill, August, Henry, Charles, Caroline, and Adolph.

Johann's wife Maria died on July 15th 1875, aged 59 years. She was buried at Peters Hill in the Huppatz Cemetery. Included on the Huppatz headstone was Maria's maiden name of Sonke. In his latter years Johann lived at Norwood. He died at the age of 87 years on February 27th in 1903 and was also buried in the Huppatz Cemetery at Peters Hill.



Rona McDonnell at Maria's grave

Johann's second son **Martin** had carried on the original Huppatz farm at Peters Hill. An obituary for Martin, who died in 1914, had noted that he and his wife were closely identified with the Lutheran Church at Peters Hill and over time had filled many offices of the church. Martin had also been a long time councillor in the District of Gilbert.

Martin's wife **Maria** (nee Kschenke) was the last surviving speaker of the Wendish language in the area. Eventually she had no one to converse with in her native language. She lived to be 101 years of age when she died in 1936.

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The Huppatz story (concluded)



Maria & Martin Huppatz

Johann's original property, settled in 1860, has passed down several generations through Martin, Fred, and Con Huppatz. Con's son James, fifth generation and great-great grandson of Johann, currently runs the Huppatz farm. Con, with his wife Ena, had preserved and recorded much of the Huppatz family history and organised large-scale family reunions. The property, known as 'Maroomba', has been the venue for local community fund-raising activities and also Huppatz reunions held in 1960, 1980, and 2001.

Footnote:

Dr George R Nielsen, in his book 'In Search of a Home', identified Johann Huppatz and Maria Sonke as Australian Wends. Dr Nielsen had visited the Peters Hill area in 1969 and interviewed Con Huppatz.

In 1976, Pastor Rupert Burger's article, 'The Coming of the Wends', included the name of Johann Huppatz as belonging to the group of Lower Lusatian Wends who settled at Peters Hill in South Australia.

In the 1990s, James Huppatz of Riverton wrote an article about the Wends of Peters Hill. This was in response to a visit by Alfons Frencl, who had come from the Bautzen area, Germany. Frencl retraced the 'footsteps' of the Australian Wends. He had the story translated into the Wendish (Sorbian) language, which was later published in a Lower Lusatian Sorbian magazine.

Rona McDonnell

Sources:

- James Huppatz, Riverton.
- Monika Sonke of Turnow and Berlin, author of 'Turnow - Geschichte eines Niederlausitzer Dorfes von 1567 - 1945'.
- Monika Moss, Huppatz descendant - Peitz Church Records.
- 'From Wends We Came - The Story of Johann and Maria Huppatz and their Descendants', compiled by Frank Huppatz, James Huppatz and Rona McDonnell.

News from the Wendish Heritage Society:

Our sister society in **Melbourne** has new office bearers.

President: John Noack

Secretary: Glenys Wollermann

Website Manager: Kevin Zwar.

New postal address: PO Box 307, Heidelberg V 3084

New email address: wendsonline@optusnet.com.au

Website: www.wendishheritage.org.au

Saturday 6th October, 7pm Dinner in Victoria

The *Wendish Heritage Society Australia* in Melbourne is holding a 150th Anniversary Dinner to celebrate the arrival in Melbourne of the Hamburg ships, *La Rochelle*, *Neumuhlen*, *Cesar Godeffroy*, *Carl*, *Dorothea*, *Gottingen*, *Manila*, *Hermann* and *Sverge*. If any of your ancestors came on these ships, they would be pleased to hear from you.

Venue: Ringwood Lutheran Church Hall, cnr Wantirna & City Roads, Ringwood, Vic. (Melway 49 G10)

Cost: \$25 per person. BYO drinks.

Bookings to Clay Kruger, 16-18 Gracedale Ave, Ringwood East, Vic, 3135 (before 21 September)

For more details contact Clay Kruger (tel. 03 9779 3599)

For Sale

Booklets from Germany - in English:

- *The Sorbs in Germany* - a 75 page colour booklet containing history, culture, language, addresses etc.
- \$3, plus postage
- *Customs and Traditions of the Sorbs in Lower Lusatia* - \$1, plus postage
- *The Winter Season among the Sorbs* - \$1, plus postage
- *Easter with the Sorbs* - \$1, plus postage
- **NEW!** *Sorbian Customs and Traditions in the course of the year* - \$1, plus postage

(Postage: \$1 for one book, \$3 for 2-6 books)

Also the best books about the Wends in Australia:

- Burger, *The Coming of the Wends* - \$12, plus \$3 postage
- Nielsen, *In Search of a Home* (second edition, hard cover) - \$40, plus \$8 postage

CDs:

- *From Wendish to German to English (A Journey into Wendish Culture, History & Language)*
This marvellous CD has been produced by the Texas Wendish Heritage Society. It contains English narration, German and Wendish singing by a German choir performing at Texas in 2002, talks by noted Wendish (Sorbian) historians Dr George Nielsen and Gertrud Mahling (Trudla Malinkowa). George Nielsen talks about Wendish migration to Australia. *A real treat!*
Cost = \$30, plus \$3 postage

Calendars:

I will take orders for Calendars for 2008 – with scenes from Lusatia

These are really beautiful, and they make great Christmas presents. You must order *straight away*, so that we can get them from Germany before the end of the year.

Cost = \$25, plus \$7 postage

Contact Lyall Kupke, 6 Emes Court, Athelstone 5076, (tel. 08 8365 2572),
e-mail: lyall.kupke@lca.org.au

Please make cheques or money orders to Wend Sorb Society of South Australia.

We welcome any contributions to this newsletter. Please send them to the Editor at the address below.

This newsletter was published by the **Wend Sorb Society of South Australia Inc.**

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