



The Victorians are coming!

For many years our society has worked alongside our fellow Wendish society in Victoria, known now as the Wendish Heritage Society, Australia.

We have shared information and resources. Over the years some of our members have travelled interstate to take part in their events, and some of them have travelled to SA to join our events. It has been an enjoyable experience for all who have done this.

One of the regular events that the Victorians have held each year has been their Wendish tour on the long weekend in March. They visit a country district and explore the historical sites there. In past years they have been to these districts: Warracknabeal, Tarrington-Tabor, Dimboola, Murtoa, Geelong, Warrnambool, Portland.

My wife and I have joined them in the past 10 years and thoroughly enjoyed the trips. And we have come to know many of the Victorians personally.

Last year they crossed the border and visited the Mt Gambier district. Some of our members joined them and had a great time with them.

This year they have decided that they would like to visit the Wendish historical sites in South Australia. I will be taking them on four day-tours to important sites in Adelaide, the Barossa Valley, Peters Hill and the Adelaide Hills. You are also welcome to join any of these tours, but you will need to notify me (Lyll Kupke) beforehand.

However, they won't be coming in March. They will come in May during History Month and so take the opportunity to include some other historical events while they are here.

We have included in the program a dinner one evening to enable them to meet some South Australian Wends. We encourage you to attend and to get to know these Wendish 'relatives' of yours.

Here is the program:

Mon 18th May - Tour of Migration sites in Adelaide (Port Misery landing place, Port Adelaide wharf, Piltawodli Mission to the Kaurna Aborigines, Klemzig Pioneer Cemetery and Hope Valley Cemetery).

Tues 19th May - Barossa Valley tour (Rosedale, Hoffnangsthal, Langmeil, Bethany, Light Pass, Ebenezer, Neukirch and St Kitts).

Wed 20th May - Peters Hill tour (Peters Hill, Riverton).

Thurs 21st May, 10 am - Lutheran Archives visit (to see the collection of Wendish books)

Thurs 21st May, 2 pm Talk: Migration – for better or worse? by historian Dr Lois Zweck (At City of Burnside Library)
An event in the SA History Festival. See the 2020 program for bookings.

Thurs 21st May, 6 pm - Dinner with the Victorians (at the Payneham Tavern)
Bookings are essential with Lyall Kupke.

Fri 22nd May - Adelaide Hills tour (Hahndorf, Lobethal and Birdwood).

Sat 23rd May - Seminar: German craftsmen in SA All day seminar (In the Ira Raymond Room of the Barr Smith Library, University of Adelaide)
An event in the SA History Festival. See the 2020 program for bookings.

We invite you all to attend any of these events, but see the Coming Events on page 3 for more information.

You will need to contact Lyall Kupke beforehand to get more details. Email: kupkell@yahoo.com
Mobile: 0431 991 385

We will travel on the tours by car. Opportunity will be given to share rides. Please let me know if you need a ride, or are willing to take others.

President's AGM Report (given on 25 Aug 2019)

I am pleased to report on a wide range of events over the last 12 months. At our last AGM our guest speaker, Kieran Modra, gave us a fascinating talk about his life. Despite being vision-impaired he has risen to the many challenges confronting him to become a most successful athlete at eight Paralympic Games (5 gold & 5 bronze medals), plus two silver medals at the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

The highlight of the year was the visit by Trudla Malinkowa to Australia in Oct-Nov 2018. As the author of *Shores of Hope*, she was known to us for her story of the Wendish migration to Australia. A large gathering delighted to hear this story from her own mouth. We were privileged to have this authority on Wendish history speak to us. I was personally thrilled to be able to show her the local historical sites that she had only read about before. We again have copies of her book for sale. If you don't have a copy, get one now before they are sold out.

We had another successful bus trip in April and visited Callington, Wellington, Strathalbyn and Prospect Hill. Thanks go to the careful preparations of Ruth Walter and Pauline Burger.

Our presentation at Burnside Library for History SA month in May was very popular. A large audience enjoyed the personal story from Don Ross on Working with Draught Horses. He worked his farm with horses for over 65 years and so was very experienced.

At our meeting in June Brian Hennig told us about his Fladrich family, while Rona McDonnell told us about her Huppertz family. It is always interesting to hear the stories of various Wendish ancestors in Australia.

A small group enjoyed lunch at the German Club on 3 November. With the sale of this building we have been forced to stop these gatherings there. We will see what the future brings.

Our newsletters continue to advertise our meetings and provide information about Wendish history and culture. We welcome any contributions.

Our Honour Roll of Australian Wends in the Great War has now listed 74 servicemen. This was a significant contribution to the war effort by a very small community.

A big step was taken when we set up a website for our Society. Our thanks go to Andrew Kollosche, from Armidale NSW, for building and managing this website for us. It contains information about our Society and its events, and also articles on Wendish history and culture. There are valuable links to other related websites. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

I am embarrassed to say that there has been little progress on the booklet about the Wends in South Australia this year. We do need to complete this.

Finally, my thanks go to the hard-working committee for the time and effort you give to our society. With my health problems this year I am reminded of the need to find replacement members for our committee. If we want our Wendish story to be remembered, we must pass it on to the next generation and get them involved. Please look out for young people who will want to follow us.

Lyall Kupke

ELECTIONS:

The following office-bearers were elected at the AGM (25 Aug 2019):

President: Lyall Kupke

Vice-President: Brian Hennig

Secretary: Pauline Burger

Assistant Secretary: Ruth Walter

Treasurer: Leona Coleman

Extra members: Marie Brazier, Barbara Day, Matt Dutschke, Eric Fiebig, Ruth Fiebig, Lorraine Kempf.

Coming Events

Mon 18th May Tour of Migration sites in Adelaide

This is the first of the 4 tours organised for our Victorian Wendish visitors. We will visit the Port Misery landing place, Port Adelaide wharf, Piltawodli Mission to the Kaurna Aborigines, Klemzig Pioneer Cemetery and Hope Valley Cemetery. Contact Lyall Kupke if you wish to join the tour.

Tues 19th May Barossa Valley tour

This is the second of the tours for our Victorian Wendish visitors. We will visit Rosedale, Hoffnungsthal, Langmeil, Bethany, Light Pass, Ebenezer, Neukirch and St Kitts. Contact Lyall Kupke if you wish to join in.

Wed 20th May Peters Hill tour

This is the third of the tours for our Victorian Wendish friends. Contact Lyall Kupke if you wish to join the tour.

Thurs 21st May, 10 am Visit the Lutheran Archives

The collection of Wendish books at the Lutheran Archives (27 Fourth St Bowden) will be on display.

Thurs 21st May, 2 pm Talk: Migration – for better or worse?

Historian Dr Lois Zweck examines the experiences of German and Wendish migrants to SA in the mid-1800s and discusses how much their lives were changed.

At City of Burnside Library in the Burnside Civic Centre, 401 Greenhill Rd, Tusmore. Parking at the back.

This is one of the events of the *SA History Festival* in May.

See the 2020 program (www.historyfestival.sa.gov.au) for booking details. Bookings (in April) are essential.

Thurs 21st May, 6 pm Dinner with the Victorians

Another opportunity to meet the Victorian visitors over a pleasant meal.

At the Payneham Tavern, Payneham Rd, 319 Payneham Rd, Payneham.

Bookings are essential with Lyall Kupke.

Fri 22nd May Adelaide Hills tour

This is the fourth of the tours for our Victorian Wendish friends. We will visit Hahndorf, Lobethal and Birdwood. Contact Lyall Kupke if you wish to join the tour.

Sat 23rd May Seminar: German craftsmen in SA

This seminar is organised by the German Heritage Research Group. It will be held in the Ira Raymond Room of the Barr Smith Library, University of Adelaide. The cost includes lunch and morning and afternoon teas.

This is one of the events of the *SA History Festival* in May.

See the 2020 program (www.historyfestival.sa.gov.au) for booking details. Bookings (in April) are essential.

Sun 28th June, 2 pm Talk: Stories of our Wendish Ancestors

Dennis Jenke will tell the story of his Wendish ancestor (Jenke).

At the Glynde Lutheran Homes hall (22 Avenue Rd, Glynde). All welcome.

Sun 16th August, 2 pm Annual General Meeting

Followed by a presentation by Debra Burke of her trip to Lusatia.

At the Glynde Lutheran Homes hall (22 Avenue Rd, Glynde). All welcome.

Kieran Modra

The Australian people were shocked to hear of the death of Kieran Modra on 13 November 2019. He was riding his bike near Gawler early one morning when he was hit by a car.

Kieran was well-known to us as the son of our long-standing members, Theo and Sylvia Modra of Port Lincoln.

He had spoken to our Society at our 2018 AGM about his successful sporting life. Despite his vision impairment he became a world-class athlete, winning 5 gold & 5 bronze medals at eight Paralympic Games, plus two silver medals at the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

In 1997 he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) and in 2014 he was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) "for significant service to sport as an athlete representing Australia at Paralympic Games, and to people who are blind or have low vision".

His remarkable life is recorded in the book, *Kieran Modra – the way I see it*, as told to Andy Thurlow.

We send our sympathy to his parents Theo and Sylvia, and to his wife Kerry and their three daughters, Makala, Holly and Janae.



A Wendish wagon is built

Leon and Karen Doecke recently sent me this story:

Just recently we made a wagon/gypsy style caravan for our granddaughter and decided to give it a Wendish name. We've called it *Witać* which means 'welcome' in Upper Sorbian. I thought you might be interested and hence have attached some pictures of the *Witać konjacy wóz* (Wendish Wagon). My rough guess is that this would be pronounced 'Veetarch konlarku vooz'.



The *Witać konjacy wóz* was built from materials that would have otherwise been thrown away. The roof is part of our old rainwater tank that sprang a leak. All of the timber was salvaged from a nearby factory/shop that was throwing away pallets and other wooden packaging material. The axle for the wheels is from an old trampoline. The kitchen is made up of parts from kitchen equipment that was being thrown out. The only thing that we paid for were the paint and screws.

Our next door neighbour is a signwriter, Chooks Custom Grafix, and he very generously made up the sign, as well as stickers for the shutters and spokes for the wheels. See his Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/signsbychook/>

The chimney has a story too. It comes from one of the buildings at Lobethal Heritage Farm that was burnt to the ground in the recent bushfires. Our friends, the Braunacks, own the property and were happy to see it used for a good cause.

Spreewald scenes

- from old postcards

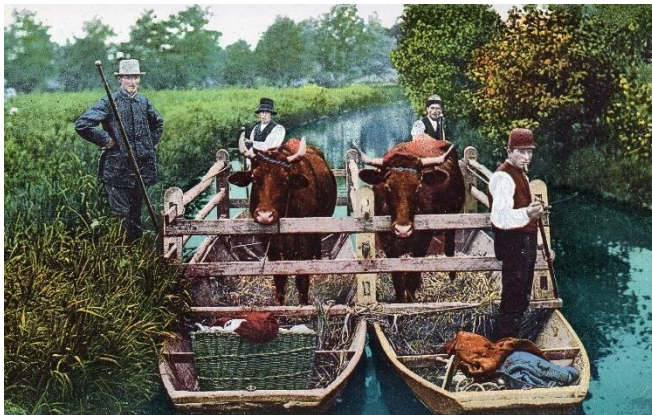
I recently purchased some old postcards which showed scenes from the Spreewald region of Lower Lusatia. It was interesting to see the dress from this region and the way they used the canals to transport their goods and animals. These postcards date from the early 1900s.

If you are interested in looking at or buying old postcards, here are 2 websites that I have found:

www.delcampe.net

www.ansichtskarten-center.de

Try searching for words like Spreewald, Bautzen, Hochkirch and other village names. You might be surprised at what turns up.



Learn the Wendish / Sorbian language

Have you ever considered learning the language of your ancestors?

Every two years the Sorb Institute in Bautzen conducts a language class over a two week period. This year it will be held on July 24 – August 8. I find, however, that this Summer School is fully booked out already.

However, in Cottbus the School for the Lower Sorbian Language and Culture (*Schule für Niedersorbische Sprache und Kultur*) will hold a short course for the Lower Sorbian language some time in 2020. Keep a watch on their website if you are interested.

Meanwhile here is another website which offers to teach the Sorbian language online.

<https://sprachkurs.sorbischlernen.de/#/welcome>

This is hosted by the Foundation for the Sorbian People (*Stiftung für das sorbische Volk*) at Bautzen. Both Lower and Upper Sorbian languages are taught.

Launch of Rentsch and Hundrack Family Books

3rd - 4th October 2020, Hamilton, Victoria.

For information and Registration Forms, contact:

Monica Rentsch, 0438 735 239

email: rentschdescendants2020@gmail.com

170 Sharrocks Lane, Croxton East, Victoria 3301

New email address for Victorian society

The Wendish Heritage Society Australia has a new email address:

wensociety1@optusnet.com.au

Czech & Sorbian folk music

I received this email last year:

I am the band leader of "Lidová muzika z Chrástu", a folk band from the Czech Republic. We are the only ensemble in the Czech Republic who plays Sorbian/Wendish folk music and presents the Sorbian heritage. I would like to inform you about our new CD, "Za českými horami" (Behind the Czech Mountains), with many special arrangements of the Wendish folk songs. The music you can hear at: <https://open.spotify.com/album/43eRRqvqOcxv1XMe8gHPJz>, texts from the booklet are available at: <https://chrlis.cz/zaceskimihorami>. I will be happy, if you listen to our music and enjoy it. If you like it, please write to us! Yours sincerely, Vojtěch Kouba

The CDs can be bought from the Domowina bookshop in Bautzen:

<https://www.domowina-verlag.de/cd-za-ceskimi-horami.html>

Sympathy

We express our sympathy to the family and friends of former member Gordon Jenke, who died recently.

Visiting Germany or Poland?

In recent years more and more Australians have been visiting Germany and Poland in search of their roots. Many of us have ancestors who came from the land formerly known as Prussia. That includes the former German states of Brandenburg, Silesia (Schlesien) and Posen. It is quite exciting to visit the village which your ancestor left to come to Australia in the 19th century.

But there can be difficulties to overcome. After the Second World War the borders of Germany changed. Much of what was Prussia in the 1800s is now part of Poland. After the war the German people were expelled from these eastern parts of Germany and the land was populated by Polish people from further east, who in turn also had to give up their land to the victorious Russians.

Consequently place-names have been changed. You need to find the present-day name for your ancestral village. For example, the village of Klemzig from which Pastor Kavel and his followers came in 1838 is now called Klepsk. The city of Grünberg is now known as Zielona Gora, the city of Liegnitz is now Legnica, and the city of Breslau is now Wrocław (pronounced Vrots-wuv).

Few Polish people today speak the German language, although more of the younger ones can speak English. But you won't find them in the villages. So you do need some words in Polish.

Some old German cemeteries have survived, but are in a dilapidated state. A few have been restored.

The Lutheran Archives in Adelaide (27 Fourth St, Bowden) sells a useful book titled *Finding Forebears in Poland: Researching German family history in present day Poland*, by Janette Lange and Lois Zweck. I thoroughly recommend this to anyone who is contemplating travelling to Poland to research their family. It contains a wealth of information about travel, accommodation and language, as well as giving you internet sites for research in archives etc.

Another useful resource you should look at is the website prepared by Dr Anitta Maksymowicz, the Polish historian who visited Australia a few years ago. The website is called *From Prussia to Australia* and is found at fromprussiatoaustralia.com. Anitta has assisted many Australians to walk in their ancestors' footsteps over the past few years and she is the person who knows more about our history than any person in Poland. And she speaks excellent English!



Anitta



Klepsk (Klemzig) church

She offers to assist in these ways for the region around Zielona Gora:

- ancestral tour arrangements
- touring at the local museum – history of the region
- searching for graveyards and graves
- assistance in research at the State and parish archives, online database etc.
- driving her car, with up to three passengers
- photographing for you the places connected with your ancestors – villages, graveyards, churches etc. (if you are not able to visit Poland)
- other services on request

Her assistance will give you the best value for your money. Check out the comments on her website.

For Sale

Books from Germany - in English:

- *The Sorbs of Germany* - \$10, plus \$3 postage
- *Upper Lusatia* - \$15, plus \$3 postage
- *Bautzen* - \$12, plus \$3 postage
- Korall & Schwikart, *Journey through the Spree Forest* (in English with lovely pictures) - \$35, plus \$10 postage
- *Five Centuries: The Wends and the Reformation* - \$40, plus \$10 postage

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 \$10 postage
- **Last copies!** Malinkowa, *Shores of Hope* - \$40, plus \$10 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

New CDs:

Cost \$10 each, plus \$3 postage

- Kocor, *Serbski kwas* (The Sorbian wedding). [Operatic in style, joyful, recurring folk themes.]
- Kocor, *Naleco* (Spring). [Majestic oratorio, with memorable, joyful and folk-like themes]
- Zahraj nam rejiku (*Sorbische Folklore mit Sprjewjan*) [Lively folk music, instrumental and vocal work]
- Krawc-Schneider, *Missa Solemnis* [Solemn impassioned classical work, organ and choir, sung in Latin]

NEW - Flags (small, on a stick) \$5, plus \$3 postage

Contact Ruth Walter, 43 Clifton St, Prospect SA 5082, (tel. 08 8269 7168, mobile 0435 211 606),
email: ruth.walter43@gmail.com

Please make cheques or money orders to Wend Sorb Society of South Australia,
or email Ruth for Direct Debit (EFT) details.

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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