



Westphalia Historical Society Newsletter

September 2012

Volume 3

Our German Visitors

On August 20th the Historical Society held a picnic for the people of Westphalia and three German guests: Günter Pung, Stefan Müller, and Arno Juchemich. It truly was a fun community event. Besides getting to meet our friends from Germany, everyone had an opportunity to sing some German songs with Dan Pung and friends: Paul Bearss, Ben Bierstetel, Tim Fedewa, Fred Hengesbach, John Nurenberg, Mike Pung, Dave Roderick, Ed Schneider, & Marti Thelen. Our guests were so delighted that they got up and sang right along with the group. Dean Kohagen, our Bürgermeister (Mayor), gave a terrific welcoming speech and later presented them with one of the street banners from the 175th anniversary of Westphalia. They were so pleased with the gift that they said they'd throw out some clothes if they had to find room in their suitcases in order to get it home! At the picnic they presented the community with a pictorial history book of Virneburg titled, "Virneburg Bilder aus vergangenen Tagen." If anyone would like to see the book, Evelyn Weiland has it at her home.

A big THANK YOU to those who helped put together the Droste Park event for our German visitors. The food was great and the entertainment enjoyable. Also, they were delighted to receive gifts from some of the local businesses, i.e. Westphalia Milling, hats; Pung Foundation, t-shirts, hats and beer coolers; and of course, some delicious wine and cider.

After they left Westphalia, the three visited Grand Rapids, Sleeping Bear Dunes, Petoskey, Mackinac Island, Pictured Rocks, Marquette, Green Bay, Milwaukee, Chicago, and then back to Detroit. While in Marquette and Negaunee they attended Mass and found some tombstones with the Juchemich name. They met one Juchemich in Marquette.

While in Green Bay they were able to go inside the mausoleum where Günter's relative, Bishop John Joseph Fox, was buried in 1915. Günter also forwarded additional information on Johann Peter

Thelen from the John Klein "Thelen" book. It lists his ancestors back to the 1600s. He is also going to send us additional information on the Pung family name from records in Germany.

After they arrived back home in Germany they sent an email that said, "The finest and most emotional days were in Westphalia. The event at Droste Park was great!"

We hope, and they hope, too, that they will make a return trip to our community.

Donations Appreciated

The Westphalia Historical Society, a nonprofit organization, welcomes all donations. Our goal is to someday have a Museum/Archive for the community. Many of us have lots of historical information in our homes, for example: family tree information, old pictures, things that were made or used in the Westphalia days of old. Wouldn't it be nice to have a place where these items could be shared and viewed, especially for younger generations and generations to come? It would be a shame if some of these historical items were thrown out or lost forever. *If you would like to help with a donation, please send it to Rose Schafer, Treasurer, Westphalia Historical Society, 5131 S. Grange Rd., Westphalia, MI 48894.*

Donations received:

\$25.00 from Jean & Leon Esch, Davenport, Florida

\$25.00 from Jerry & Karen Spitzley in memory of John & Catherine Fink, in appreciation for the many years he was director of the Westphalia Band.

\$25.00 from Evelyn Weiland in memory of Joseph & Julia Freund, in appreciation of their love of history.

Oops!! Since we are the "Historical Society" we strive to get our facts right, & with the help of an alert community member, let's just say, "We goofed on the order of owners of the current Credit Union building." Correction: order was: Belen, Pline, Schaar, Platte, and the Credit Union.

Cider Making Time



As we awaken to the cool & colorful days of fall, some of us wander back to our earlier memories where the words cider and fall were almost synonymous.

Joe Rademacher shared his memories of the cider barrels: "There was always one in the basement. They were always 50 gallon barrels. Usually one person, typically Clarence Freund, would take a load of empty barrels with his big truck up towards Grand Rapids and then bring back the load of barrels full of cider for those who had placed their orders. I don't know how they got them off the truck, but common sense tells me they rolled them on several planks. This is how we got them down the cellar steps. Planks were laid over the concrete steps and the barrels were gradually rolled down the steps to the basement. Then somehow they were raised up on the ledge and properly placed. The top of the barrel had a plug in it. A small hole was drilled in it and a tube was put through it. The other end of the tube was placed in a quart jar with water in it. This was to allow the gases from the fermentation process to pass through and thus keep the fruit flies from getting into the barrel.

"You could see the water bubble in the jar as the gasses came through. Some of the farmers added brown sugar or oranges and or raisins to give it more kick which really came from a higher alcohol content. When Dad thought the time was getting close to where you wanted the taste to be, he would pull the plug and put a small hose in there and siphon out a glass or two to see how it tasted. When the time was right, an acid was added to stop the fermentation. It was not uncommon for some to go through 2-3 barrels of hard cider.

"There was a year or two when we had a barrel down in the barn. Typically I would have one or two glasses of cider before starting chores. It never affected me because I immediately went to work doing the chores. Simply put, it was a good drink. If the cider was not all consumed it would turn very hard and become vinegar. Mom would use this in putting up her garden vegetables, canning them and adding the vinegar as the recipes called for."

And in earlier years, cider was made right here in Westphalia...

Robert Pline, Sr. owned and operated a cider mill for 38 years, first on Spaulding Rd. and later on Maple Rd. Cider was produced here from September through December. The line of customers, many

with their own apples, would sometimes begin at 6 a.m. and continue on into the evening hours. It is said that in the early years it cost the customer 2 or 3 cents per gallon to have his apples pressed into cider, or 10 cents if Plines supplied the apples. The cider was put into charred whiskey barrels from Kentucky that cost \$7.50 each. Later the price rose to 75 cents per gallon and the empty barrels cost \$18.00.

Years ago, Tony Pohl, Sr. also had a cider mill south of town on Grange Rd. Elvan, son of Tony, says they were always busy from September into the winter months & they always had a storeroom of apples for those who didn't have their own.

Looking for a gift? Maybe a book or DVD of Westphalia's history is what you're in need of!

"Of Pilgrimage, Prayer, and Promise...The Story of St.Mary's, Westphalia 1836-1986", \$23.00 each/ 2 or more \$20.00 each. Available at the Credit Union, Plannedscapes, or Westphalia Milling.

"Quiet Heroism". This book remembers the 87 young Westphalia area women who entered the convent. \$6.00 each. Available at Ox's Smoke Meats and Groceries.

"Historical Film Footage 1936-1961," as shown during last year's 175th celebration, contains footage taken by Fr. Gutha of the 1936 Centennial & footage of the 125th taken in 1961. \$15 each. See Teresa Quartermus.

"Westphalia High School Reunion 1938-1950", \$3.00 each at Plannedscapes & Westphalia Milling.

"Sisters of Christian Charity", \$1.00 each. Available from Evelyn Weiland.

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Alte Sprichwörter Old German Sayings

Der Winter kann nicht kommen,
Bis der Herbst vorbei ist
Winter cannot come, until fall is done.

Lügen haben kúrtze Beine
Lies have short legs.

Alte Füchen gehen schwer in die Falle
Old foxes are difficult to trap.

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Memories of Westphalia...

Do you have a story to tell? We would appreciate your writings of earlier Westphalia years, in school, at home or your memories of Christmas. Call Evelyn 587-6839, Leo 587-3843, or email Charlotte, jerchar@4wbi.net.

