

# Palatine Heritage

PALATINES TO AMERICA GERMAN GENEALOGY SOCIETY

OHIO CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

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## Mission Statement "Advance Knowledge"

1. To further interest and study of German speaking immigration in Ohio.
2. Encourage members to further research family histories in Ohio
3. Promote information about life, times, and social life of German speaking emigrants and descendents.

## Christmas in Northampton County, Pennsylvania, circa 1770

By Marcia Falconer, PhD.

Originally printed in the Pennsylvania Chapter's *Penn Pal*, August 2013.

With no known records, we can only make an educated guess at how the Lutheran and Reformed Pennsylvania German families, living in Northampton County and in southeastern Pennsylvania in general, celebrated Christmas in the final quarter of the 1700's. The "plain folk", the Amish and Mennonites, Brethren and others, had their own traditions -the ones below would be found in the more secular homes of the "gay Dutch".

**Butchering time:** In the weeks before Christmas, hogs were slaughtered and the meat turned into sausages, hams, bacon and pickled souse. Perishable bits were shared with the neighbors and some was given to the poor – but the best was reserved for the Christmas table. The women baked holiday foods including lebkuchen (a kind of gingerbread), pies made with dried fruits, and pretzels and simple cookies. Finally, just before Christmas the houses and stables were thoroughly cleaned in preparation for the holy day to come.

**Preparation Day:** December 24th was the day to get ready -the turkey was killed and readied for roasting, and last minute baking was done. Baskets of food were made up for distribution to those less fortunate and delivered by the boys in the family. Finally, when the stars of Christmas Eve were in the sky, everyone sat by the fire to hear the Christmas story read from the Bible. The children also heard stories about "Christ-kindel", the Christ-Child who brought gifts to good little children.

Before going to bed, the youngest children put a bread basket filled with hay beside the front door. The hay was for the grey mule that the Christ-kindel rode as he went from farm to farm delivering his gifts. In the morning, the children rushed to see what Christ-kindel had left. They found nuts, schnitz (dried fruit), cookies, pretzels and perhaps a small, homemade, toy. Their parents also had Christmas Eve traditions. On Christmas Eve, extra food was given to all the animals in the barn. The frost of Christmas morning was thought to bestow blessings and health on those who ate it. So the men threw a pile of hay out into the barnyard where it would be covered with frost. In the morning the animals were given a bit of moistened hay in hopes of

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- **SPRING SEMINAR —SEE PAGE 59**
- **FALL SEMINAR RECAP—SEE PAGE 52**
- **"HOORAY" CONTINUES—SEE PAGE 60**

# Vom Schreibtisch des Präsidenten

**A**s I write this the colorful autumn leaves are falling and the national day of Thanksgiving is fast approaching. We have much upon which to reflect and be thankful. I am thankful for the many talented, committed volunteers who make the Ohio Chapter great.

At the 2015 Fall Seminar Dr. Marianne Wokeck shared her extensive knowledge regarding 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Century immigration. Her book "Trade in Strangers" is highly recommended. At the Fall Seminar at Der Dutchman, all three banquet rooms were in use, providing more space for displays and comfortable classroom seating. Also, available for the first time, was volume one of the newly updated research resources from Ohio Chapter Pal Am. A big thank-you to Linda Dietrich for her leadership on this project.

On April 16, the 2016 Spring Seminar at Der Dutchman will present Teresa Steinkamp-McMillin, C.G., a highly regarded speaker on German genealogy. She will share her research expertise, strategies, and experiences. I hope all of you will be there.

We are following with great interest the involvement of Palatines to America with the newly created German-American Genealogical

Partnership. We anticipate increased access to research resources.

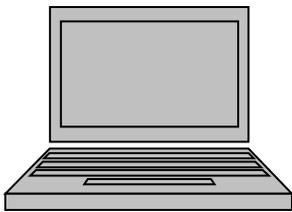
The Palatines to America collection will remain at the old Whitehall library until April 2016, at which time the library staff will begin moving the collection back to the Columbus Metropolitan Library downtown branch. The newly renovated downtown branch is on track to reopen in June of 2016.

The Ohio Chapter of Pal Am will observe its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2016. We should all thank Chairman Mary Hess and the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary committee for their leadership in observing this milestone. We look forward to the yearlong festivities.

Please offer a personal invitation to the Spring Seminar to your fellow German genealogy enthusiasts. Happy Thanksgiving!

*Thomas Gerke*

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OH 43085**

If you need directions for accessing the "Members Only" section on the website, contact Vern Erickson  
[vehouse@aol.com](mailto:vehouse@aol.com)

## PALATINES TO AMERICA LOSES INFLUENTIAL MEMBERS



REV. JOHN R. GRAY died September 22, 2015. Rev. Gray was a long time member of the Ohio Chapter. He donated his Family Tree to the Resource Center and was a board member for a short time until his illness. Our sympathy goes out to his wife, Patricia (Smith) Gray and his children. John was an avid genealogist and also a member of the Franklin County Genealogy Society. His presence will be missed.

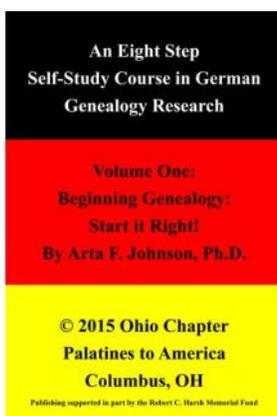


PATRICK J. MOONEY died in Columbus, Ohio on September 15, 2015. Pat served the Chapter Board as Vice President and Program Chair from 1993-1994. He was president of the Ohio Chapter from 1994 thru 1995. After his term in office he continued as past president 1995 -1996 and lectured to various organizations representing the Chapter. Our sympathy goes out to his wife, Margaret, and the family.



ROBERT A. MCDOUGAL, M.D., 87, passed away on Saturday, October 10, 2015 in Indianapolis. He developed an interest in genealogy before retirement, and had published several books about his ancestral lines, as well as other genealogical information, articles and book reviews in local and national genealogical journals and on the web. He had been president of the Indiana Chapter and a national officer of the Palatines to America (German genealogy), and had been a member of SAR.—Excerpted from *The Indianapolis Star* 10/25/2015

## Book Review: Beginning Genealogy: Start It Right © 2015 by Arta F. Johnson, PhD



**V**olume 1 of an 8 Volume Self-Study Course in German Genealogy Research. Sold exclusively at <https://oh-palam.org> Arta F. Johnson was a master of genealogical research. This volume is a reflection of her selfless help to beginners. Whether you are a beginner or restarting your research, this volume will allow you to get yourself on the right path or review what you have already completed and fill in the missing blanks.

This 78-page volume has a full bibliography as well as a resource section added by our editor, Linda Dietrich, with suggestions and links for 21st century technology, suggestions for the best software to use to record your family history, and the best sites to visit for genealogical information online.

The new updates and original text of this 2015 version of *Beginning Genealogy: Start It Right* combine to make this a must have volume. It is well worth the \$10.00 purchase price (handling and taxes will be applied). Get your copy today at the <https://oh-palam.org> website. Look for the black, red and yellow button to purchase now on the front page.

## Fall Seminar Highlights the Significance of Networks, Ethnic Identity, and Ministers' Households in Transatlantic Relocation of German Emigrants

By John Cross

The Ohio Chapter of Palatines to America held its Fall Seminar, "Follow the Pioneers: Leaving Germany and Adjusting in the New World" on October 24, 2015 at the Der Dutchman Restaurant in Plain City, Ohio.



Photo courtesy of  
Stuart R. Herlan

The conference featured guest speaker, Marianne S. Wokeck Ph.D., Chancellor's Professor of History at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, where she teaches early American history and directs the Institute for American Thought. She was educated in Germany at Hamburg University, where she completed her Staatsexamen (State Certification) and later received her PhD from Temple University, Philadelphia, PA.

Her major research interests include American Colonial and Revolutionary history; the history of the Atlantic world 1500-1800 with a focus on immigration and ethnicity, including the role of religion in defining identity; women's history; and also on scholarly editing. She is the author and/or editor of several works, including *Trade in Strangers: The Beginnings of Mass Migration to North America*, *Lawmaking and Legislators in Pennsylvania*, volume 1, and *The Papers of William Penn* volumes 3-4, as well as numerous articles in scholarly journals.

Dr. Wokeck presented her seminar in four parts:

- To Move or Not to Move: Transatlantic Relocation in the Age of Sail;
- Follow the Pioneers: The Importance of Transatlantic Networks for Settlement Patterns;
- Branding of "Other": Defining and Re-Defining Ethnic Identity in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century;
- Preaching and Walking the Walk: The Role of Ministers' Households in the Shaping of Local Customs and Traditions.

The introductory section of her presentation, *Transatlantic Relocation in the Age of Sail (1700-1850)*, provided significant insights into the nature of transatlantic travel from both the perspective of the

shipping companies providing the vessels and crews, and from that of the emigrant passengers who experienced the extraordinary perils and hardships of travel by sail across the Atlantic. Wokeck also offered several potential information sources for those researching ancestors who made the transatlantic passage in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, including contracts between ships and shipping companies, contemporary newspaper articles and advertising on ships and their captains, and passenger lists and other ship records that might include maiden names for female passengers.

In the second part of her lecture, entitled *The Importance of Transatlantic Networks for Settlement Patterns*, Dr. Wokeck discussed the nature, diversity, and significance of the networks developed by emigrants to assist them in three critical stages for emigration to America: the decision to emigrate, the actual journey, and acclimatization to their new community. She identified the experiences and acquaintances in the life of a Palatine native that might influence their decision to emigrate. These included:

- The typical work experience of young girls and boys in locations outside the Palatinate that made the idea of emigration more comfortable;
- The strong bond between coreligionists; particularly those of non-mainstream religions, that made emigration for religious freedom desirable;
- The role of "newlander," those within the emigrant community who had been to the new world and returned with stories of success and promise.

They also formed networks to make the journey to America as comfortable and confident as possible. This network consisted of those en route who could be trusted and provide information and assistance to emigrants, including boatmen, innkeepers, charitable organizations, diplomats and shippers, captains and agents with established reputations. The final network discussed was that established in the places of immigration to help new arrivals acclimate to their new communities. This network included kin and former neighbors who were already established in the new community, churches and inns and taverns where information on German immigrants could be found, and in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, German societies that were created to guide new arrivals, and to avoid cultural "embarrassment" to the established German

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community. Dr. Wokeck suggested several sources for research within these networks, specifically the Rotterdam Municipal Archives, The Amsterdam Archives (particularly for emigrants of the Mennonite faith), and European Emigration Societies that solicited settlers for newly colonized areas.

After a very enjoyable lunch buffet provided by Der Dutchman Restaurant, Dr. Wokeck delivered the third part of her lecture, Ethnic Identity in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. She identified how an individual's ethnic identity formed in their native community and how emigration to America transformed that identity. The family and especially the father heavily influenced one's self-identification. His station in life often determined the lifetime opportunities for his children, both sons and daughters. Religious affiliation also contributed to one's identity as a member within a group. Other influences in the development of ethnic identity included the specific locale of that individual. Local language dialects, native dress, and regional customs all played a role in establishing how one viewed his ethnic identity. All of these elements formed a sense of unity within a group, a sense of oneness greatly challenged by emigration to the new world and exposure to "outsiders" within a new community. Dr. Wokeck then discussed the unavoidable process of integration within the new world community by German immigrants, who identified successful integration as assimilation with a remembrance of the past. Wokeck also identified the role of both the French and Indian War and the American Revolution as significant integrating experiences for German communities by forcing them to consider the larger American community and their role within it.

The final segment of her presentation was entitled The Role of the Ministers' Households in Shaping Local Customs and Traditions. Dr. Wokeck discussed the influence of religion and particularly of the local minister and his wife in shaping the household values and culture within the German community. Local ministers were members of the elite class in German society due to the high level of education required to become a minister. Moreover, ministers usually worked in other occupations, such as farming, when not ministering to the flock. The wife of the local minister, likely the daughter of a minister, was also educated and often served the community as a school teacher, as a midwife, and surprisingly, as a brewer of beer! That high degree of professionalism in

the minister's household benefitted the community and served as a model of how a "proper household" should function. Like all German immigrants, ministers' households faced challenges in the new world. Dissenting groups and increasing populations formed new congregations. Nevertheless, most ministers' households met those challenges successfully and continued to serve as a model to their communities in the new world.

Many thanks to Marianne Wokeck Ph.D. for a very informative and stimulating presentation.



*Dr. Wokeck chats with attendee during a break.*

## Looking ahead to Spring!



Ohio Chapter is delighted to present Teresa Steinkamp McMillin, a Board Certified Genealogist, as our featured speaker for the 2016 Spring Seminar on Saturday, April 16, 2016. In addition to core experience in genealogical research, Ms. McMillin specializes in German genealogy (German-speaking ancestors who lived in any area of the United States or Europe). She has over eleven years of genealogical research experience focused primarily on German immigrants in Illinois and the Midwest. Her special focus is translating German church records written in the old German script. Mark your 2016 calendar NOW! Find more information and the registration form on page 58.

# FALL SEMINAR 2016



*Both members of OHPALAM and future members attend the seminar*



*Vice-President, Roberta Newcomer, announces Mary Hess' Retirement.*



*President Tom Gerke and Treasurer Linda Dietrich announce the vendors available to attendees of the seminar.*



*Anne Bradford makes a presentation.*



*Attendees examine the choice of books and other publications available from vendors participating in the seminar.*



*Donna Boyce*

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good health for their stock. The women put slices of bread outside in places where the mice and squirrels couldn't reach. On Christmas morning the first bite of food for each member of the family was a bit of frost-dampened bread to ensure a good year to come.

Christmas Day was a Holy Day and everyone, except the smallest children and the women preparing Christmas dinner, went to church. There must have been cheerful greetings of "Freelicher Grischtlaag!" (Merry Christmas) as people approached the church riding in carts or sleighs or walking on foot. The churches were small, made of logs, and unheated. It would be cold inside but with candles and enough people, perhaps the temperature rose above freezing. The frontier congregations were extremely lucky if a traveling minister was present. Otherwise an elder of the congregation led the service. The seats were narrow wooden benches and no doubt people stood up and stamped their feet from time to time to warm up. Most of all it was a special day, a day to rejoice and give thanks. Christmas hymns were sung, the same ones that had been sung back in Germany and after church, Christmas dinner was enjoyed by all.

**Barley Sugar Candy:** Perhaps if the children were lucky, somebody had made a trip to town (maybe even all the way to Germantown), to buy a special treat for Christmas morning – beautiful, colored and translucent candy in the shape of animals and other things. Made with barley sugar, this candy can be traced back to 1772 in Pennsylvania and was brought by German immigrants sometime before this. It is still made by a few confectioners and can be ordered at: <http://www.clearcandy.com/>

**Second Day Christmas!** The day following Christmas was a day to relax, party, play games, and no doubt share a few – or more than a few – drinks with friends. There was a church service in the morning, where the minister cautioned against such frivolities, more because it was expected than because anyone would follow this advice. No business was transacted and young people traveled in groups to various parties.

Tavern keepers welcomed many of the men to their establishments. At the tavern and at home, games, sports and gambling were the order of the day. There were shooting matches with valuable prizes, spelling bees for children, and a very popular game played with pennies and a hat. A number of pennies were placed in a tri-corner hat. The player shook the hat up and down to flip the pennies while reciting a short rhyme. After the last word, everyone peered into the hat and counted the number of pennies that showed "heads". Each person had 3 tries, and the person with the highest total of heads was the winner – getting some pre-agreed upon prize. The person with the most "tails" got the second prize. Back home, leftovers from the Christmas Day feast plus newly made dishes once more filled the table as revelers came home for dinner. Brandy, beer, cider and whiskey flowed and no doubt good stories and some songs did as well.

**Christmas trees:** Christmas trees were known in Pennsylvania as early as 1770, but they seem to have been found only in Lutheran families. Many Reformed families, who often shared a common church with the Lutheran congregation, knew about this custom, and perhaps a few followed it. However almost everyone decorated the insides of their log cabins with evergreen boughs and wild red berries.

**Der Belsnickel** was an integral part of Pennsylvania Dutch Christmas customs right up until about 1920. He was, and still is, known in Germany as "Pelznickel" (St. Nicholas in furs). His origin is in the distant, pagan past where midwinter festivals featured forces of darkness, portrayed by the Belsnickel, in opposition to forces of light. In Christian times, der Belsnickel continued to be part of the Christmas celebration. His once great power over the darkness of midwinter was downgraded to that of a semi-benevolent clown used to frighten children in the hopes of improving their behavior. Arriving with the German immigrants, der Belsnickel was an integral part of Pennsylvania Dutch Christmas traditions until the advent of friendly, rotund, Santa Claus in the early to mid 20th century.

Not many of us have seen a Belsnickel but my mother told stories of the Belsnickel's visit during the holidays of her youth. A short time before Christmas there was a heavy pounding at the front door, the door burst open and in strode a scary figure, his face blackened by burnt cork, wearing ragged old clothing, a fur hat and a fox skin over his shoulders. In his hands he carried a burlap sack and a bundle of birch twigs.

My mother and her two younger brothers knew exactly who this fearsome creature was der Belsnickel -and he was there to determine if they'd been good or bad. He chased them around the living room, brandishing his birch twigs and asking in a gruff voice, "Warscht du gut?" (Were you good?)

The children were herded into the middle of the room where the boys received a swat with the twigs while my mother was spared because she'd been helping with the house work. Then der Belsnickel opened his sack and filled my mother's hands with candies, nuts and a few coins, but he gave nothing to her two brothers, saying they had been bad. The boys were heartbroken, but as Der Belsnickel headed for the front door, he dropped a trail of candies, nuts and pennies and they scrambled to pick them up. Laughing, he exited to their promises of being good!

Der Belsnickel was my mother's uncle. She said that when she was young, he was a terrifying figure but as she got older, she recognized him, although her younger brothers still stood in terror of this unknown apparition.

There is much more that can be said about early Pennsylvania Dutch Christmas customs and I highly recommend the book *Christmas in Pennsylvania* by Alfred L. Shoemaker, originally published in 1959 and re-published in 1999 by Stackpole Books. It makes a great Christmas present for anyone interested in their Pennsylvania Dutch past. However these few paragraphs may be enough to give the flavor of holiday celebrations past.

# Deutsches Gemeinschaft-Forum

GERMAN COMMUNITY FORUM SERIES  
IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE COLUMBUS METROPOLITAN LIBRARY.

- JANUARY 23 FLESHING IN YOUR FAMILY HISTORY** Carol Swinehart  
Local History & Genealogy Branch, 4371 E. Broad Street, Whitehall, Ohio
- FEBRUARY 27 GERMAN RESOURCES ON THE INTERNET** Russ Pollitt  
Local History & Genealogy Branch, 4371 E. Broad Street, Whitehall, Ohio
- MARCH 28 WORLDCAT** Barbara Bauer  
Local History & Genealogy Branch, 4371 E. Broad Street, Whitehall, Ohio
- APRIL 23 NEWSPAPER RESEARCH: GERMAN PAPERS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM** Jayne Davis  
Local History & Genealogy Branch, 4371 E. Broad Street, Whitehall, Ohio

FORUM SESSIONS ARE HELD FROM 10:00 AM —12:00 PM.

Everyone is welcome to attend... no advance registration is necessary. Watch the chapter website for latest information at [www.oh-palam.org](http://www.oh-palam.org)

## OHIO CHAPTER BOARD

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*Palatines to America* is a non-profit organization dedicated to finding the origins of German-speaking ancestors in Europe. Membership dues per year (October 1 through September 30): USA residents • \$35 individual • \$40 family

Make checks payable to Membership Registrar, Palatines to America. Payment includes both National and Chapter dues.

The OH Chapter of Pal Am publishes *Palatine Heritage Newsletter* with quarterly issues in February, May, August, and November.

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Queries are welcome and will be printed in two (2) successive newsletters. Please use genealogically accepted format and abbreviations.

Contributions to *Heritage* are encouraged. Articles should not exceed 600 words. If materials submitted are copyrighted, proof of authorization to publish must be provided; sources from other magazines must be cited so appropriate credit can be given.

# Palatines to America 2016 Membership Application

Membership Year: 01 October 2015 to 30 September 2016

(Your member number can be found on the mailing label of any publication)

Name (1) \_\_\_\_\_ Member # \_\_\_\_\_

Name (2) \_\_\_\_\_ Member # \_\_\_\_\_

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Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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Chapters: Membership Optional (Circle one) CO IL IN NC NY **OH** PA None

U.S. Annual Dues (includes membership in one chapter):

Individual + Chapter \$35

Family + Chapter \$40

Life + Chapter \$875

Canada/Mexico Annual Dues:

Individual + Chapter \$43

Family + Chapter \$48

Life + Chapter \$875

Other Countries Annual Dues:

Individual \$50

Family \$55

Annual Dues: \_\_\_\_\_



Additional Chapter Memberships (Do not select chapter named above):

CO IL IN NC NY **OH** PA None

# of Chapters \_\_\_\_ x \$8.00 (U.S.) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Canada/Mexico - \$9.00, Other Countries - \$15.00

Additional Chapters: \_\_\_\_\_

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Canada/Mexico - \$8, Other Countries - \$15

International Postage: \_\_\_\_\_

Support the Ohio Chapter with your tax-deductible donation:

Become a Friend of the Ohio Chapter - \$15

Become a Supporter of the Ohio Chapter - \$50

Become a Patron of the Ohio Chapter - \$100

Ohio Chapter Donation: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Mail Order Price List for Publications & Other Sale Items

Rev. 11/2015

<b><i>Beginning Genealogy</i></b>		
Beginning Genealogy: Start It Right! - Dr. Arta F. Johnson ... copyright 1993	\$	6
The Very Basics of German Genealogy - Kenneth L. Smith ... copyright 1993	\$	7
<b><i>German Research</i></b>		
A Guide to the Spelling & Pronunciation of German Names - Dr. Arta F. Johnson ... c 1981	\$	10
Eighteenth Century Emigrants from Langensbold in Hesse to America - Annette Kunselman Burgert, FGSP, FASG ... copyright 1997	\$	24
Eighteenth Century Emigrants from Northern Alsace to America - Annette Kunselman Burgert,	\$	40
How to Read German Church Records Without Knowing Much German - Dr. Arta F. Johnson	\$	7
Nineteenth Century Emigrants from Baden-Wuerttemberg, vol. 1 - Bridgitte Burkett ... c 1997	\$	27
People of the Palatinate (revised edition) - Dr. Arta F. Johnson ... copyright 1981, rev.1989	\$	7
The Origins, Development & Meanings of German Names - Dr. Arta F. Johnson ... copyright 1984	\$	10
<b><i>U.S. German Research</i></b>		
Genealogical Research for GA, IN, MA, MO, NC, TN (separate book for each state) - George K. Schweitzer, PhD ... copyrights 1993-2005	\$	15
Germans Into and Out of Ohio Before 1850 - Ernest Thode... copyright 1993	\$	6
Handbook of Genealogical Sources - George K. Schweitzer, PhD ... copyright 1996	\$	15
Migrations West & Backtracking East - Dr. Arta F. Johnson With Merlin C. & Eva M. Finnell ... copyright 1984	\$	7
<b><i>Other Items:</i></b>		
“Boat tote” style canvas bag with PalAm logo - 17”X16”X4”	\$	18
PalAm National logo clipper ship pin	\$	7
Clipper ship logo ball cap	\$	5
T-shirts – golden yellow with black outline of Germany on front, major cities indicated – S--XL	\$	17
-	\$	20

**Free shipping. Sales tax 7.5% for OHIO RESIDENTS ONLY**

To place an order, make checks payable to Ohio Chapter PalAm and mail to:

Ohio Chapter PalAm/Bookstore

PO Box 302, Worthington, OH 43085



## The Ohio Chapter Palatines to America German Genealogy 2016 Spring Seminar

**“WHERE, OH WHERE, ARE MY ANCESTORS FROM?”**

Presented by Teresa Steinkamp McMillin, CG

Sessions include:

**Where, oh Where, are My Ancestors From?  
So You've Found Your Ancestors Town of Origin – Now What?  
Finding Henry: A Case Study Using Collaterals  
Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Hanover Military Records**

**2016 Annual Meeting including Election of Officers and Directors**

**SEMINAR WILL BE HELD AT DER DUTCHMAN RESTAURANT, 445 JEFFERSON AVE, U.S.  
RTE. 42, PLAIN CITY, OHIO 43064, ON SATURDAY, APRIL 16, 2016.**

**9:00am til 4:00pm**

**Fees include syllabus, seminar sessions, vendor showcase, Der Dutchman pastries, coffee and juice for  
breakfast and full Buffet lunch including Broasted Chicken and Roast Beef,  
Mashed Potatoes, Noodles, Stuffing, Vegetables, Salad, Rolls, and Dessert**

Register today! Use Pay Pal online at the website: <https://oh-palam.org/registernow.php>  
or: make check payable to Ohio Chapter – Palam and mail with registration form to:  
Linda Dietrich, Treasurer, 5422 Cindy Lane, Cincinnati, OH 45239 questions? [lindabelle@lcs.net](mailto:lindabelle@lcs.net)

### **ADVANCED REGISTRATION DEADLINE – MARCH 30, 2016**

**MEMBER: \$45.00 EACH**

**NON-MEMBER: \$55.00 EACH**

**After March 30, 2016, cost is \$55.00 for Members and \$65.00 for Non-Members**

NAME #1 \_\_\_\_\_ MEMBER? \_\_\_\_\_

NAME #2 \_\_\_\_\_ MEMBER? \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

SURNAMES I AM RESEARCHING: PLEASE LIST FOUR SURNAMES FOR NAME #1:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

SURNAMES I AM RESEARCHING: PLEASE LIST FOUR SURNAMES FOR NAME #2:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## HOORAY, WE'RE GOING TO AMERICA: The Story of the Migration of the H. H. Bohning family from Barkhausen, Germany, to Cleveland, Ohio

*Written in German by Ernst Bohning. The original was in Plattdeutsch, a dialect spoken in Northern Germany. This account is taken from a typescript in German prepared by Henry H. Bohning for the Bohning Reunion, August 4, 1918, in South Newburgh, Ohio (now called Garfield Heights). Translated into English and published in 1987, by Jill Carter Knuth with help from Heidi and Walter Gander. Notes by Jill Knuth are included in [square brackets].*

### HOORAY (Part Two)

Then we children shouted, "Hooray, we are going to America!" We had no idea what lay before us on the long journey. In the spring of 1843, we found a buyer who paid us 1600 Thaler for our house and land in Barkhausen, but left us the crop. So we began our trip to America in August, 1843. The last things we sold were the family dog and cat. The kitty brought 24 Groschen, or 48 cents.

[One "Morgen" corresponds to approximately three quarters of an acre. The Bohning farm was probably located on the Hunte River, a mile or so north of Barkhausen. The baptismal records for the Bohning children give the father's occupation and address. From this information it seems that the family had bought their farm sometime around 1834. The address is listed as Linne 41, and some of the old farm buildings were still standing on the property in 1974. Linne is the next village north of Barkhausen and is part of the parish of Barkhausen.]

One "Thaler" was equal in value to 17.5 grams of silver. By comparison, a U.S. silver dollar at that time was equal to 24.06 grams of silver. So a "Thaler" was worth about 75 cents. If Ernst Bohning was talking about U.S. cents when he mentioned the selling price of their cat, then a "Thaler" may have been worth only about 50 cents. Our word "dollar" comes from the word "Thaler". One "Groschen" was one-thirtieth of a Thaler.]

Then we said, "Good-bye to you, old house, as I, sad fellow, move out." In fact, tears flowed freely. The farewell from the church made the family especially heavy-hearted.

By the way, we didn't go alone, since two other families from Barkhausen left with us, namely the Blases and the Langenkamps. So good friends were together.

Our family consisted of ten people; the head of the family, Herman Heinrich Bohning, the mother Maria Eleonora, born Blase, the daughter, Elisabeth, who was older than the oldest son Heinrich who had already migrated. Then Friedrich, almost 17 years old, followed by Elsabein and Eleonora. After these, myself, Ernst, who is making these notes, and who was at that time ten years old. Wilhelm was two years younger, then Johann, and finally the fledgling Maria. [Today, in 1918, she is the widow Maria Walker from Dover, Ohio, the only one still living from the family.]

The trip to Bremerhaven was begun with chests and boxes in a big hay wagon. Other farm families joined us, including some young fellows who kept the group lively. However, the children had to spend very uncomfortable days on the chests and among the baggage, and we wished we were in Bremen where the beautiful ship waited for us. So they had told us children.

The ordeal on the hay wagon lasted three days, and then we came to Bremen. I had to sit on the edge of a chest with one leg stretched out, and

*(Continued on page 61)*

*(Continued from page 60)*

the other bent under me. Furthermore, we suffered from terrible heat in the linen-covered wagon, and from burning thirst.

The trip to America began to look a little less bright to me. But just have patience until we get to Bremen. There we will get on the beautiful ship that will take us quickly over the ocean. There all of our troubles will come to an end. Finally on the evening of the third day, we were there. Hungry, tired, and with aching limbs, we stood at the corner of the restaurant where we were unhitched. Whimpering, we waited for dinner and bed.

Early the next morning when we had had a really good breakfast, our belongings were loaded on a barge, which would go that afternoon to Bremerhaven. Meanwhile, we had time to see the town. We boldly roamed around until we came to a beautiful, big church. Of all the sights we saw, we liked this best. We stayed here for a long time, for it was a Lutheran church, and we prayed humbly for a good crossing. We also saw the big giant Roland at the town hall. "Roland the Giant" is a statue, standing steadfast and firm at the town hall in Bremen. Somebody told us this saying, and it stuck firmly in our minds.

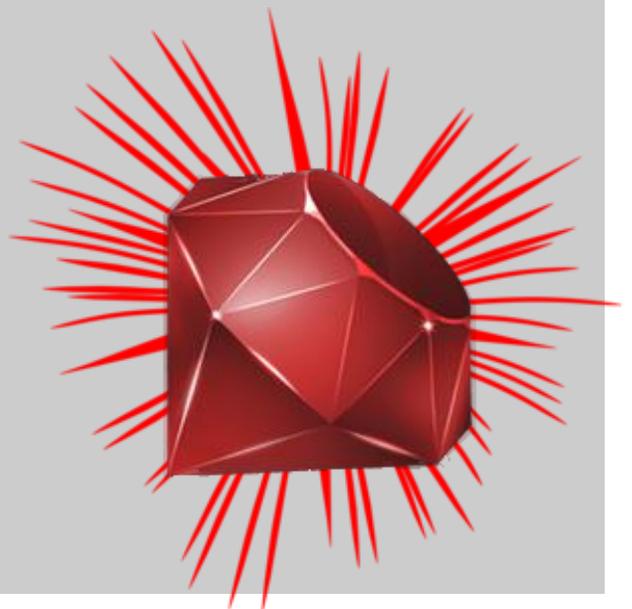
After we had lunch at our lodgings, we continued on the fourth day of our journey. We went on a barge that floated down the Weser River. Oh, this was a lot better than being under the boxes and chests in the wagon. For awhile we were happy-go-lucky, then suddenly we were stuck, and it seemed like the water was draining away. This frightened us children very much. But the sailors calmed us down and said, "In two hours there will be enough water, then we can go on." We had not yet heard about high and low tide. Right enough, in two hours, more water came into the Weser from the ocean, and we sailed happily on. It seemed wonderful to me that water could really flow uphill.

The next afternoon we reached Bremerhaven, and our barge was brought to the side of a large three-master. Now this was the nice big ship that would bring us to the land of Canaan. We children were delighted and pleased

with the big monster, upon which life was lively. But right then, only our things was loaded. We had to go back temporarily into town. We went to the Emigrant House, where for some, the high life went on. But those of us who preferred to see something, walked around the harbor, and looked at the many ships that lay there. Most interesting to us, of course, was our own ship, and we happily watched the way the sailors stowed our things. They were also friendly to us children and could even speak Plattdeutsch, which pleased me very much. One said, "You guys step aside if you like your legs." I wouldn't have said anything even if he had spoken to me in a different way and said, "Rascal, why are you standing here gaping?" Or even if he had, in addition, given me a little kick in the backside.

Finally on the morning of the seventh day, with 182 passengers, we boarded the ship, and immediately afterward lifted anchor.

**“HOORAY” WILL  
CONCLUDE IN 2016  
AS WE CELEBRATE  
OUR RUBY  
ANNIVERSARY YEAR.**



## THE OHIO CHAPTER HISTORY: THE LAST 18 YEARS

*This is the Fourth in a series of articles on the history of the Ohio Chapter.*

*Excerpts taken from Ohio Chapter History 1976-1996 by Robert S. Rudy, published by OH Chapter May 1996*

**E**nthusiastic and committed people are what make a vibrant organization. Unfortunately, the last 18 years of Palatines to America have seen the deaths of several longtime and/or charter members. Memorial funds have been set up in memory. Jack Quinn, a past president of PalAm, who had always been prominent and forceful in obtaining speakers, was remembered with the establishment of the Jack Quinn Speakers' Fund. This fund would sponsor the *Jack Quinn Series Workshops*. The first of these workshops, conducted by Barbara Howison and Jim Amaral, was held at the Grandview Public Library on February 13, 1999, and was called "Palatines Along the Rhine." The chapter also hosted a tour to the Mennonite Information Center in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania that same year as a kickoff for the Quinn Series.

Usually the workshops cost a modest fee, such as the \$10 for members; \$13 (non-members) charged for a workshop conducted by Ernie Thode at the Stark County District Library in Canton, Ohio in 2004. In 2010, however, the Ohio Chapter Board decided that the Speakers' Bureau would conduct two workshops a year outside the City of Columbus, free to participants at sponsoring genealogical societies and/or libraries. An example of these was a workshop facilitated by Ernie Thode at the Chillicothe-Ross County Library on August 17, 2013, and workshops led by Nancy Ottman on November 1, 2014 at the Historic Zoar Village and again on May 2, 2015 at the Akron-Summit County Public Library.

Other memorial Funds were set-up in memory of deceased members. The Florence Beck Fund covered books purchased for sale to the Chapter

members. The Dr. R. C. Harsh Fund would cover the purchase of new books for the National Pal Am library. In 2002 the Robert Rudy Family donated Rudy's entire collection of research papers to National Pal Am. They are now housed at the Resource Center on N. High Street in Columbus.

Besides the many workshops, the Ohio Chapter outreached to the community with several new projects. Pal Am offered a 3-week course in the Fall of 2006 on *Learning to Read German Script* at the Clintonville Ladies Club on Saturday mornings. The first meeting of the new *German Community Forum Series* began on August 23, 2008 from 10:00 a.m. to noon at the Columbus Metropolitan Library. The topic of discussion, facilitated by Pat Berens, was on "Websites and Surname Origins." The forum is now overseen by Diana Druback and held every 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month from August through April at the library. This series invites new and interested people to join in discussions and learn about researching their German ancestors.

The first *German Heritage Week* was celebrated at the Columbus Metropolitan Library during the week of October 12-16, 2009. Volunteers spoke on different topics pertaining to German research during both afternoon and evening sessions. This event continues every year in October in partnership with the Franklin County Genealogical Society and the Columbus Metropolitan Library. A very recent Ohio Pal Am project was a **Genealogy Research Trip to Washington D.C.**, which took place from August 17-21, 2015. Under the guidance of Carol Chafin, an Ohio Chapter member, who is also the Corresponding

*(Continued on page 63)*

(Continued from page 62)

Secretary for National Palatines to America, the chapter promoted the trip for our members and other genealogists, hosted by trip planner Cynthia Turk, dba as Geneal Pursuits, of Willoughby, Ohio. The 37 participants boarded a motor coach to Washington D.C., where they did sightseeing and guided research at the Library of Congress, the National Archives, and the Daughters of the American Revolution Library.

What will come in the next 20 years for our members and their goals? Many ideas are still in the planning stages, such as, the **40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year** and continuing with the programs already in progress. We are always in need of suggestions and topics to keep on giving the members what their needs might be. Watch the February 2016 issue of the *Palatine Heritage* newsletter for some highlights.



*Washington Trip Participants and the drivers*

## **illkommen**

The following new Chapter members joined in August and September, 2015:

DARSIE GETTINGER – COLUMBUS, OH  
 GAYLE & JOHN GLICK– BLACKLICK, OH  
 DANIEL & KATHLEEN HILL– COLUMBUS, OH  
 JEFFERY MYERS– GROVEPORT, OH  
 DAVID NAEHRING– FAIRVIEW, TX  
 RICHARD SPANGLER– SPRINGFIELD, OH  
 JESSICA TROTTER– LANSING, MI

The roster of the Ohio Chapter, Palatines to America is now 400





# Palatine Heritage

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**TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EARLY  
REGISTRATION FOR SPRING  
SEMINAR PAGE 59**

## COMING EVENTS



2016

- January 23 COMMUNITY FORUM—Whitehall Branch Columbus Metropolitan Library, OH PAGE 56
- February 27 COMMUNITY FORUM—Whitehall Branch Columbus Metropolitan Library, OH PAGE 56
- March 28 COMMUNITY FORUM—Whitehall Branch Columbus Metropolitan Library, OH PAGE 56
- April 16 **SPRING SEMINAR—Der Dutchman, Plain City, Ohio SEE PAGE 59**
- April 23 COMMUNITY FORUM—Whitehall Branch Columbus Metropolitan Library, OH PAGE 56

The new "members only area" is now available on the [oh-palam.org](http://oh-palam.org) web site. You can set up your password for the new [oh-palam.org](http://oh-palam.org) "members only area" using the same password for the "members only area" of the National web site.