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Access Your History

Welcome to the new edition of the German Genealogy Quarterly eNewsletter—the German Schrift! This newsletter will highlight the German Research Discussion Group, featured German resources, research tips, and interesting places to visit.

Midwest Genealogy Center: German SCHRIFT — eNewsletter



German Research Discussion Group

January 2019 Meeting Notes:

- The **International German Genealogy Conference** in Sacramento, California, will be held on June 15 – 17, 2019. General registration closes on April 15, 2019. Learn more [on their website](#).
- The town of Bötzingen, Germany, is still looking for **Bötzingen descendants for their 1250th anniversary!** To inquire about the trip, [visit this website](#). Even if you are not planning to go, you should still visit the website because under the article about the tour to Bötzingen is a list of emigrants from the town to various states in the U.S. (in PDF form)—a worthwhile resource for genealogists!
- MGC was contacted by the German professional genealogist Dr. Thomas F. Heldt who lives in Kassel, Germany, which is in the state of Hesse. Heldt primarily does military research in the Hesse Archives, but he also does research in other archives and former German territories. [Find his website here](#).
- German Research Discussion Group member Vicki shared her ancestry findings, which trace back to the Cologne area of Germany. Photos and documents from her family archive accompanied her presentation,

including a fascinating school report from early 1870s.

- Attendees of the January session left with smiles on their faces and humming after enjoying the melodies of The Beatles and Johnny Cash singing in German. Thank you, Bob, for the tip! Enjoy those musical clips again by visiting [the STL Stammtisch website](#).

The next German Research Discussion Group meeting will be on **Saturday, April 20, at 2:00 p.m.** The featured presenter will share knowledge about the Germans who lived in Russia with a discussion to follow. If you are planning to attend the next discussion group meeting, you can register [here](#).

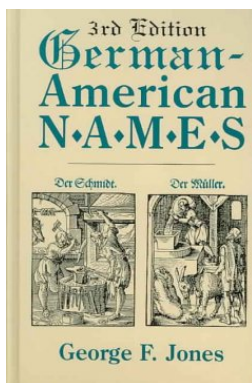
Featured Resources



[German Life](#)

In the February/March 2019 issue of *German Life* magazine, there is a spotlight on the city of Homberg in Hesse. This is a town of about 300 half-timbered houses. The Inn Krone, which was built in 1480, is the oldest 'Gasthaus' in Hesse. The town itself dates 1,231 years back. This area also has a connection to the American Revolution, as it supplied soldiers for the British cause. The noble of Hesse-Kassel signed a treaty with King George III of England to help restore order in the colonies. Some Hessian soldiers stayed in America and perhaps some of your ancestry goes back to this charming historic town, which is a 45-minute drive from Kassel.

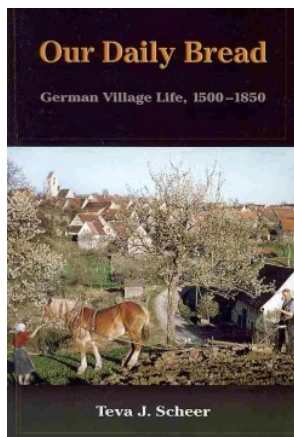
Book Recommendations



[German-American Names](#)

by George Fenwick Jones

In the introductory chapters of this book, the author explains the history of names and sound shifting and gives a deeper explanation of various names, the Americanization of German names, and Christian names. The index gives the meaning behind every name indexed in the book.



[Our Daily Bread: Village Life in Early Modern Germany](#)

by Teva J. Scheer

The title of this book says it all. It is a great resource that gives background about life in German villages in past centuries, primarily the Baden-Württemberg area. This is a reference book, which means it is not available for checkout, but it can be accessed in the Midwest Genealogy Center. This book was a previous recommendation by MGC volunteer and German lecturer, Bob.

Research Tips



Research the neighbors

Be sure to research the neighbors of your German ancestors! Examine the census thoroughly—who lived next door or appears close by as your ancestor moved from place to place. The neighbor on the census record might also be your ancestor's neighbor from the old country and could lead to clues about your direct ancestor. They could have signed your ancestor's document as a witness or could even be blood related or related by marriage!

If you already know your ancestor's village or hometown in the old country, one of the best finding aids is the [Map Guide to German Parish Registers by Kevan M. Hansen](#). Do you have ancestors who came from Switzerland? Or ancestors who originally came to Germany from Switzerland and then eventually came to the U.S.? Currently, MGC has 10 of these books on Swiss research ([Map Guide to Swiss Parish Registers, Vol. 1 – Vol. 10](#)). These guides will give you a visual by providing the radius of neighboring villages, the closest Catholic and Protestant reformed church parishes, microfilm numbers (if the records are already in FHL on microfilm), the scope of records in the area, websites, and even email contacts.

Don't forget—the maps are a visual identification of the area in which you should look for your family. Usually, our ancestors stayed for generations in one area, so researching in the radius and knowing the neighboring parishes and towns may provide successful results.

Online Resource Tip

For more current obituaries in present Germany, check the [Trauer.de](#) website. Have your dictionary or online translating tool ready!

Genealogy Guidance: A Special Message for MaryAnn

MaryAnn, check records for the Bielefeld area through the FamilySearch.org website. Most of these records can only be seen in Salt Lake City, Utah, because they're not available online at this point, but visit the FamilySearch.org website, hover the mouse over the Search tab, and click the Catalog link. Type Bielefeld, choose the right link or explore them all, and check for yourself. You can always come to MGC—we provide guidance with these links and how to access them or similar websites

Places to Visit



St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Kansas City, Kansas

Although this church is an ethnic Croatian parish, it also hides nice works from German-speaking countries. Did you know that the altar and pulpit were made in Austria? Also, did you know that the stained glass windows were made in a factory in Bern, Switzerland? Make a trip and admire it for yourself! [Learn more.](#)

Reutlingen, Germany

If Kansas is too close to home, consider visiting the beautiful city of Reutlingen, Germany. Reutlingen lies in Baden-Württemberg and is

known for having the world's narrowest street. There are many places in Europe with similar narrow aisles, but this one is the only one officially registered as a street! [Check it out online.](#)

Fun and Learn



What is this German word? Dust off that German dictionary from your shelf.

1. G _sch _ch _e (History)
2. G _m ___ d e (Community, municipality, parish)
3. G ___ r _n (Born)
4. G _t ___ f t (Baptized)
5. V _r _t ___ e _e (Deceased)
6. A _s ___ d _r ___ g (Emigration)

Freut Euch des Lebens! Enjoy Life!
Danke schön. Thank you.

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