

## July 2024 German Schrift



Welcome to the newest edition of the German Genealogy Quarterly eNewsletter—the German Schrift! This newsletter will highlight the German Special Interest Group (SIG), featured German resources, research tips, and interesting places to visit.

### German Research Discussion Group

#### Review of the April 2024 Meeting:

The April meeting on Saturday, April 20, 2024, was dedicated to the topic of "Germans from Russia." Success! This is the only word that could describe the meeting. The room was comfortably full as attendees spread out, absorbing a presentation by Sharon H., the Program Coordinator of the local American Historical Society of Germans from Russia (AHSGR) Chapter. In addition to our constantly revolving display collection, the local AHSGR created an educational exhibit in the room.

Later in the meeting, Nathan, the MGC Collection Librarian, visited our meeting and provided an insightful review of the MGC collection. He highlighted must-read books and shared his own extensive knowledge, which was a great bonus! The active participation from the audience was greatly appreciated.

The Sunday meeting had a different but equally enjoyable focus. Although not centered on Germans from Russia, we discussed a variety of subjects. One attendee joined us from Germany, and his active presence was highly valued by many. Thank you for your enthusiastic input!

Join us for one of our upcoming German Special Interest Group events:

**German Special Interest Group (In-person)**  
Saturday, July 20 | 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

**German Special Interest Group (Zoom)**  
Sunday, July 21 | 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

[LEARN MORE](#)

## What's Happening?

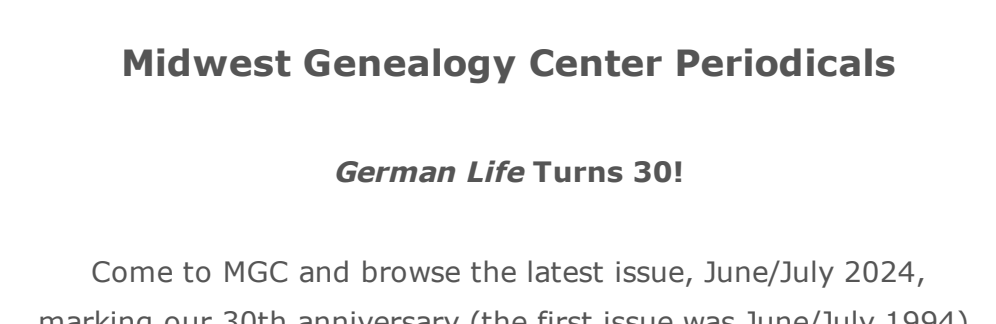
Did you attend the virtual presentation on Jewish roots in May? It was presented by Jane Neff Rollins at Sherlock Combs Genealogy®.

If so, we would love to hear your thoughts and any ideas you might have for future Schrifts. Please add the label "German Schrift" or "German e-newsletter" to your message.

Looking ahead, stay tuned for more details about the upcoming MGC Fall Lock-In.

[EMAIL US](#)

## Featured Resources



### Midwest Genealogy Center Periodicals

#### German Life Turns 30!

Come to MGC and browse the latest issue, June/July 2024, marking our 30th anniversary (the first issue was June/July 1994). This magazine brings you the culture, history, genealogy, and cuisine of Germany, Austria, and Switzerland.

Do you know who indentured servants were? Or what redemptioners were? Dive into the detailed article "Indentured Servitude," written by Robert A. Selig. An indentured servant was an immigrant who agreed to work off the debt of their passage. By contract, they were bound to serve the holder of the indenture (including their family) for a specific period, usually seven years. (p. 24-31)

In this issue, you'll also learn about Sturgis Pretzels. The Sturgis family descends from Moravian German immigrants (Moravia is now part of the Czech Republic). Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf in Saxony purchased land in Lancaster County, PA, for the Moravians. Julius F. Sturgis began marketing pretzels there, and his bakery is considered the oldest commercial pretzel bakery in the US. The Sturgis family home and attached bakery are on the National Register of Historic Places. The operation is now open to the public in Shillington, with the original oven still in use (p. 62). Be sure to check out the travel tips in the "Places to Visit" section of this issue.

#### The Genealogist, Autumn 2024

Published in Victoria, Australia, the Autumn 2024 issue of *The Genealogist* features the article "Surnames and Their Meanings," written by James A. Baines (p. 12-13). This article explores the origins and meanings of last names, providing examples of occupational, topographical, and filial surnames. It also includes nicknames that have become surnames, such as Mahler (painter), Schönberg (beautiful mountain), Handel (little Hans), and Hahn (rooster).

[PERIODICALS](#)

## Featured Books

**Dannenfels: Chronik eines Dorfe**, 1981  
REF. 943 D232

The book was published to commemorate the 650th anniversary of the village of Dannenfels, located in the Rhineland-Pfalz state, Donnersbergkreis (Donnersberg district). Those who love to hike, like me, will notice that nearby is Donnersberg (Thunder Mountain), the highest peak in the Palatinate region. Many people emigrated from Palatinate (Pfalz) in the 18th century, and the book includes examples such as taxpayers' lists from 1734, 1750, and other years. The book is in German.

*This book is reserved exclusively for on-site use at the Midwest Genealogy Center.*

**Deutsches Ortsverzeichnis**  
1930 and 1959, REF. 943 D489

Midwest Genealogy Center has gazetteers available in book format, and this is one example. While we have a fantastic online version of the Meyers Gazetteer, it can be helpful to consult the printed gazetteer to see how states were organized into chapters, such as Prussia and its various parts, given that it was the largest state. Come upstairs and explore the *Deutsches Ortsverzeichnis* to learn more.

*This book is reserved exclusively for on-site use at the Midwest Genealogy Center.*

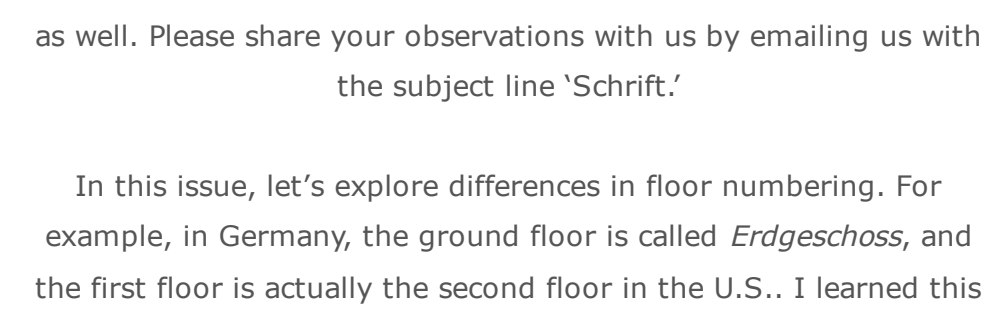
**Alte Burgen - schöne Schlösser**

1980, REF. 943 AL79

While you're at MGC and need a break from research, consider browsing one of our coffee table books. *Alte Burgen - schöne Schlösser: Eine Romantische Deutschlandreise* takes you on a visual journey through Germany's old and ancient history, featuring colorful photos of iconic German castles and palaces. Although the book is in German, the stunning images of powerful castles, ruins, chateaus, and palaces—some dating back to early medieval times, like Greifenstein Castle in Hesse, with its twin towers and shield wall—will transport you to another world. These captivating visuals might inspire your next trip to Germany. The book also includes a folded map and a glossary of castle terminology in the chapter titled "Was ist was bei Burg und Schloss?"

*This book is reserved exclusively for on-site use at the Midwest Genealogy Center.*

## Research Tips



The largest German genealogy website, [Genealogy.net](#) (CompGen), is worth highlighting regularly. Just like a Lego structure, it's beneficial to explore its many facets to uncover the genealogy treasures it holds. In this summer's issue, we focus on family announcements—*Familienanzeigen*—including birth, marriage, and death announcements, as featured in newspapers. If you're specifically interested in searching for death dates and data extracted from death certificates, [click here](#).

## Handy Tips for Traveling to Germany

You don't realize how deeply your own culture is ingrained until you travel to a different country, separated by many miles or an ocean. I experienced this firsthand when I moved to the US as an adult and encountered cultural differences Americans take for granted, such as the transportation system, currency differences, and measurement units. We occasionally discuss these differences, so when you travel to Europe and Germany, you might notice them as well. Please share your observations with us by emailing us with the subject line 'Schrift.'

In this issue, let's explore differences in floor numbering. For example, in Germany, the ground floor is called *Erdgeschoss*, and the first floor is actually the second floor in the U.S. I learned this when I started working at Midwest Genealogy Center, a two-story building, and directed a customer to the "first floor," only to be corrected by a colleague that it was actually the second floor. In Germany and former Czechoslovakia (where I'm from), the floor numbering starts at the ground floor, followed by the first floor, then the second floor (the third floor in the U.S. elevator system).

Check out the picture I took at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library in Abilene, KS, this June. How might Europeans perceive this?



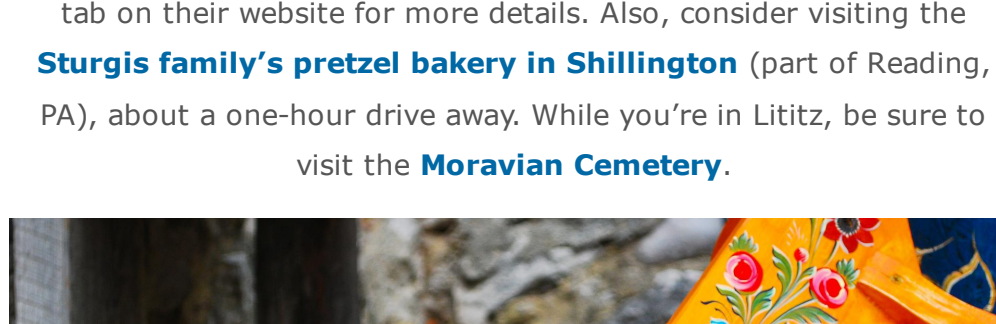
Do you have another travel tip to share before others embark on their journey to Germany? Let us know at [mgc@mymcpl.org](mailto:mgc@mymcpl.org) or call us at 816-252-7228 and leave a message for Iveta.

## Places to Visit



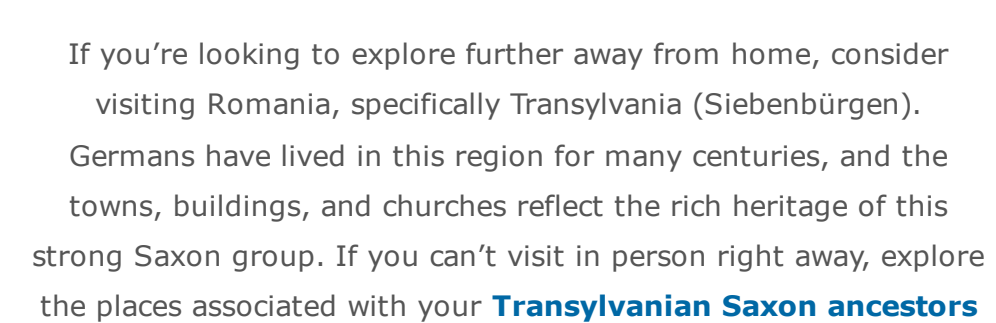
**Dutch Hill in Kansas City, Missouri**

Dutch Hill in Kansas City, MO, is now more commonly known as Longfellow. Originally, this area was called Deutsche Hill. Although the early German settlers who established this community might not recognize it today, you can still find some German elements and experience a touch of German ambience in the area. Admire how the current residents have transformed the neighborhood. Visit their [Longfellow Community Farm](#) (even if just online) to explore their offerings, including recipes and tips available on their website.



**Lititz, Pennsylvania and The Julius Sturgis Pretzel Bakery**

Check out the Periodical section of this Schrift. Visit Lititz, PA, and stop by the [Julius Sturgis Pretzel Bakery](#). The building was constructed using stones dug from the street—click on the "History" tab on their website for more details. Also, consider visiting the [Sturgis family's pretzel bakery in Shillington](#) (part of Reading, PA), about a one-hour drive away. While you're in Lititz, be sure to visit the [Moravian Cemetery](#).



**Romania, Transylvania**

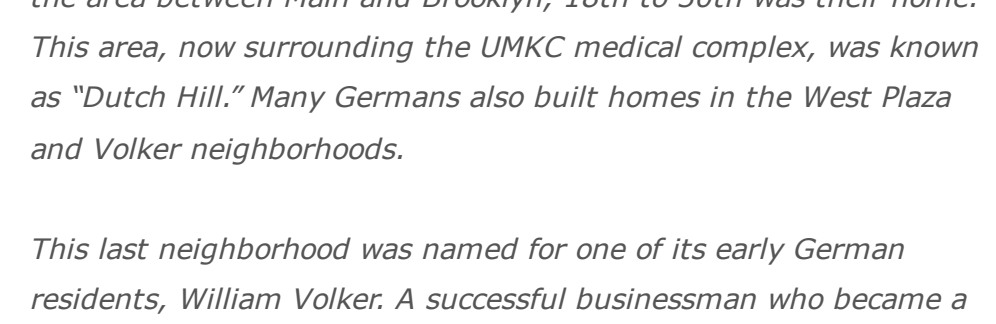
If you're looking to explore further away from home, consider visiting Romania, specifically Transylvania (Siebenbürgen). Germans have lived in this region for many centuries, and the towns, buildings, and churches reflect the rich heritage of this strong Saxon group. If you can't visit in person right away, explore the places associated with your [Transylvanian Saxon ancestors online](#).

Another option is to visit the [Transylvania Museum](#) in Gundelsheim, Baden-Württemberg, Germany, and see [Schloss Horneck](#), which overlooks the town.

The German Society in München, Bavaria, also has a [great website](#) for learning more about the region.

For genealogy records, check FamilySearch.org. In the Catalog, search by keyword "Transylvania Germans" or use a specific place name, such as Sibiu (formerly Hermannstadt). For detailed searches and guidance, contact us at [mgc@mymcpl.org](mailto:mgc@mymcpl.org).

You might also find a short video on the topic interesting.



**Fun and Learning**

**Little Pearls from the Books**

**Voices Across Time, Profiles of Kansas City's Early Residents**, by Dory DeAngelo, 1987 (p. 107). Call No. 977.8411 D346

"Germans settled in St. Louis as early as 1824. Because most of them were strongly anti-slavery, the pro-slavery sentiments of Kansas City and the Kansas Territory kept the Germans from arriving in any larger numbers until after the Civil War.

However, in 1859 there was a small settlement of Germans living along what would become Grand Avenue near the Public Square. After the Civil War, Catholic Germans arrived and a larger settlement was established in the vicinity of Ninth and McGee. They worked in the packing houses, factories and were merchants. Some worked in Kansas City's early breweries. At the turn of the century the area between Main and Brooklyn, 18th to 30th was their home. This area, now surrounding the UMKC medical complex, was known as "Dutch Hill." Many Germans also built homes in the West Plaza and Volker neighborhoods.

This last neighborhood was named for one of its early German residents, William Volker. A successful businessman who became a multi-millionaire, Volker was a pioneer philanthropist who believed in putting money and energy into the welfare of others in Kansas City. His former residence, commonly known as Roselawn, is at 37th and Bell."

What is this German word? Dust off that German dictionary from your shelf! Now, all the words start with 'E'.

**E i n w \_ \_ \_ n e e \_ \_ m e \_ \_ \_ e a \_ \_ t**  
(Hint: Civil Registry Office)

**E \_ \_ \_ e**  
(Heritage)

**E i \_ \_ \_ r n**  
(Parents)

**E r \_ \_ \_ c h a \_ \_ t**  
(Inheritance)

**E \_ n w \_ \_ \_ \_ g u n g**  
(Consent)

**E \_ n b ü \_ g e \_ n**  
(to Naturalize)

Proverb:

**"Alles hat ein Ende, nur die Wurst hat zwei."**

Everything has one end - only the sausage has two.

Freely expressed - Everything has an end. It can take a longer time, but still longer, everything has to come to an end.

This proverb also shows the Germans' likeness of sausages (wurst).

Thank you. Danke schön.

Iveta B.

[Facebook](#) [YouTube](#) [Instagram](#)

Mid-Continent Public Library

15616 E. 24 Highway

Independence, MO 64050

[mymcpl.org](http://mymcpl.org) | [Contact Us](#)

[Manage Subscriptions or Unsubscribe](#)