

Archives
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The Pioneer

ROCKNE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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by
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This newsletter contains articles previously reported on the RHA Website sites.rootsweb.com/~txrha/. If you are on line, please take advantage of keeping up with RHA and community events by checking the Website frequently.
Included is the final list of [Memorials and Donors](#) to be honored at the Rockne Museum.

"Rockne½s Living History," a project by **Barbara Manson**, Music teacher at Red Rock Elementary School, began in the fall of the 2003. **"Elders" Minnie Bartsch, Murray Callahan, Erlene Goertz, Rev. Bernard Goertz, Thomas Goertz, and I** were chosen to come to the school and tell about our family histories in the Rockne community. The stories were taped and students distilled the stories into texts that were used to create songs.

April 23, 2004 - Nearly 100 second and fourth graders who were involved in "Rockne½s Living History" project and their teachers had lunch at Hilbig Park. Afterwards they were guided on an educational tour of the museum, Phillip Goertz log cabin and an old machinery display by **John and Ann Adams**.

Thomas Goertz was an expert guide in relating the early history of the pioneer settlers. **Millie Moore and Margie Tucker** served lemonade to the students during lunch and helped Thomas in the Philip Goertz log cabin. **Daniel and Connie Lehman** guided tours in the museum while **Rev. Bernard Goertz** talked to the groups about the church history and altar display. **John and Ann Adams** entertained everyone with their old washing machines and butter churns. **I** was successful in

keeping the groups moving. The students had many questions and all seemed genuinely interested in all phases of the tours. They were orderly, polite and inquisitive. It was a wonderful learning experience for all involved.

May 11, 2004 - Elders were invited back to school for a "Celebration of Place: Rockne's Living History." The program was a huge success and we hope that **Barbara Manson** will continue with this special educational project.

Dedication of the Wolf Cemetery located on the property of **Barbara Seidel**, near Rockne, Texas, took place on Sunday, May 16th. This cemetery contains the graves of **John Wolf, Sr.** (1811-1868) and his wife, **Catherine** (1809-1869) and several family members.

Rev. Kris Bugno and Deacon Roger Muehr of Sacred Heart Church, Rockne, conducted a beautiful ceremony and blessed the graves.

It was a very hot day, without benefit of cloud cover or shade, so I tried to make my welcoming remarks and introductions brief. **Mitch Wolf** talked about his ancestors and family. He thanked the **grandchildren of Henry Martin Wolf** for funding the improvement project. He also thanked **Minnie Bartsch, Barbara Seidel and Claude Wilhelm** for their contributions. **Mitch**, himself, researched the entire project.

I took the opportunity to praise RHA and the community for the preservation work they accomplish. This combined effort is an example of the community working together to preserve family history.

Minnie Bartsch repeated **Barbara Seidel's** story that epitomizes the spirit of the Rockne community. "When **Barbara** and her brother **Claude** were young, their mother took them to the grave site to pray the Rosary every year on All Souls Day. Barbara's mother, **Margaret Wilhelm**, did not want the people buried there to be forgotten."

After the dedication, everyone was invited to the Rockne Museum at Hilbig Park for refreshments. About 50 people enjoyed visiting the Museum and log cabin.

Flag Day

Gerri Martinez, Representative for Catholic Life Insurance, Branch #12, conducted a Flag Day Ceremony at Hilbig Park on Saturday, June 12, 2004.

In 1996, **Hochheim Prairie Insurance, Branch 51** donated a Flag Pole that was erected beside the Phillip Goertz log cabin. Since that time, **Gerri Martinez**, Representative of Catholic Life Insurance, has been donating flags to RHA and planning programs. She stated that Catholic Life takes great pride in honoring our nation's flag and keeping up the awareness of how important the Pledge of Allegiance is to our Country.

The flag was raised and then lowered to half staff in honor of **President Ronald Reagan** by **Charles Nelson and Bryan Goertz**. Gerri Martinez let The Pledge of Allegiance and the Star Spangled Banner.

Community Service Representative for Blue Bonnet Electric, **Beau White**, talked about the history of the flag. His presentation included some little known but interesting facts about the flag and how Flag Day came to be celebrated.

Bryan Goertz, board member of RHA and Bastrop County District Attorney spoke passionately of his feelings for the unity of the Rockne community, remembering what our ancestors endured in order to come to this county for freedom. He said, "When I look around, standing here at Hilbig Park, and see the Church, the Phillip Goertz log cabin, the Rockne Museum and particularly my Grandpa's store, (**Fred Hilbig & Wm. Hilbig and Sons General Store**) well . . . I can't tell you what it all means to me."

Lloyd Probst, his son and grandson, visiting from Alabama, were among the fifty people who adjourned to the museum, after the ceremony, for refreshments and to spend time viewing the displays.

Stained Glass Windows

Four window panes, each 24" x 24", for the window at the north end of the museum above the old Church altar, were ordered last August and hopefully they will be in place soon. RHA has tentatively planned a Blessing Ceremony on October 2, 2004, at 11:00 a.m.

Everyone is invited to see this outstanding work of art and also to enjoy other new additions to our fantastic museum. Refreshments will be served.

Books

Rockne Region Germans, IMMIGRANTS, FROM WÜRGES, 1846 - 1883 & THEIR DESTINY IN TEXAS by Anni Balthaus, TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY Donald C. Goertz, Ph.D. was introduced at the Rockne Parish Festival on May 30, 2004. Donald autographed books at the Festival and again at reunions. He will also sign his book at the Homecoming Bazaar on September 5th. See below for order form and other books available through RHA.

Lehman Cabin Restoration

Melvin Driskill, Daniel and Connie Lehman, Tim Tucker of Tucker Homes, **Charlie Nelson** and I met at Hilbig Park on March 10th to discuss the restoration of the Lehman cabin. Subsequent meetings have taken place and **Tim Tucker** has volunteered to reconstruct the cabin at cost. Many of the cedar logs will have to be replaced and the good news is that the **Meuth Family** has donated part of **Richard Meuth's** 1½ old house for the back room. The first step is to have the fence on the south side of Hilbig Park moved to include the property donated by **George and Cindy Goertz**. RHA has set aside some funds for this project but a matching fund is still needed. Timmy has donated his time but the outstanding cost will still be for labor. The cabin will be located next to FM 535 in Hilbig Park.

The Phillip Goertz Log Cabin

Wayne Meuth of Design Drywall Inc. has volunteered to look into a method of preserving and protecting the logs with Perma Chink. He will give us a bid so that we can budget this project. Wayne said he has no expertise with log cabins but is willing to investigate and help us out. We are grateful for his interest and support.

Second Sunday in February

It's not too early for you to think about the Annual RHA Fundraiser. **Joy Goertz, Clara White and Letitia Wilhelm** are thinking about the raffle prizes and sure would like to have some contributions. Of course, **Mike Hilbig** can't do the live auction without your help either. So far we have a collector's item - a small Bedri three piece nativity set from India donated by **Robbi Francovich**. These are made with inlaid silver by the gypsies. **Marcia Driskill** donated a lovely quilt made with intricate blocks and hand quilted in a beautiful design. It may be used as a stunning wall hanging.

Hilbig Park, Rockne, Texas

Have you wondered who keeps the park neatly trimmed all the time? Recently I had the opportunity to visit with our delightful yard man. He was happy to be invited into the museum and said, "I always wanted to see inside this place. I am happy to see it and the many things. I want to come back." **LCRA** employs someone to do the mowing and **RHA** gratefully acknowledges this community work. I also witnessed our good neighbor, **Alfred Wilhelm**, coming across the yard to help get the **LCRA** tractor started. We really have a lot of wonderful people looking out for us and wish I could always be there to thank them. Also one can't help but notice the flowers, shrubs, vines and trees. **Gerri Martinez** reports that "the plants and trees are thriving in the Texas summer heat with low maintenance and what beauty they add to our fine buildings and area." **Gerri** also has a lot of generous folks helping her.

New Sign

Have you noticed the new sign at Hilbig Park by **Butch and Connie McDaniel**?

OPEN

Saturdays 10:00 to 2:00

Or call

Minnie Bartsch

Margie Tucker

Olivia Bartsch

Thanks **Butch and Connie** for sharing your talents.

Our three gracious volunteers will make it possible for people passing through to visit the museum. Following is an example of serendipity and we hope many people will take advantage of phoning and arranging to stop by.

Minnie Bartsch wrote: "Last week young **Richard Goertz** and four others came to visit the museum and **Vernon (Bartsch)** let them in and went on back to the **VFW**." They left money for two "Vester" (Hilbig) books, one "Nine Years with the Indians", one "Rockne Region Germans" and a \$10.00 donation.

What's New in the Museum

Minnie Bartsch has been working with **Dale McCormick, Bernard Probst and Kathy Bartsch** to get the Service Men's Flag and the Historical Quilt hung before

the bazaar. She has donated plexi-glass to be placed in front of each for protection. Come see numerous new photos and artifacts. We especially need help in identifying many of the old pictures.

Memorials and Donors

Joy Goertz and I have spent many hours meticulously cross checking all the correspondence received from donors for the Rockne Museum to make sure the lists are correct and complete. The committee, **Joy Goertz, Clara White, Gerri Martinez, Ovon Goertz, Minnie Bartsch and I**, have worked since early in the year to expedite this project. We realize that our faithful supporters deserve to be recognized promptly but this accomplishment requires that we do it right the first time. **We ask that you [check the lists](#) that are included in this newsletter.** Please contact us if you have any questions. The committee will continue to work on making your names visible in a pleasing way at the Rockne Museum.

Homecoming Bazaar

I'll be selling meal tickets and my friend, confidant and oh yes, partner for 54 years, **Charlie Nelson** will be keeping the museum and log cabin open beginning at **10:30 a.m.** All Parishioners will be working but this is a good time for your relatives and friends who are in Rockne for the day to take advantage of visiting the Museum.

Christmas

Saturday, December 4, 2004

Open House

10:00 to 2:00 p.m.

Treat yourself

To

Taste, visuals and sounds

Reminiscent

Of an

Old Fashioned Christmas

At

The Pioneer Log Cabin

Lyndell Marie Meuth

August 2, 1940 to 1½ August 3, 2004

*God saw she was getting tired
And a cure was not to be,
So He put His arms around her
And whispered, "Come with me."*

*With tearful eyes we watched
And saw her fade away,
Although we loved her dearly
We could not make her stay.*

*A golden heart stopped beating
Hard working hands are at rest,
Her desire to be with our Lord
Has finally come to pass.*

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Minnie L. Bartsch, Treasurer
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Gloria Hoffman, Docent
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Mission Statement

The purpose of the Rockne Historical Association (RHA), a **non profit organization**, is to gather, document, develop, encourage, preserve, promote, publish and protect the history of Rockne and the surrounding communities in Bastrop County, Texas.