

# Our Family News Letter

Issue 115

Greendale, Wisconsin

December 2021

## CGSI Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International

Three years ago I was asked to submit proposed presentations to the CGSI for presentation at their international conference which was being held in Milwaukee in October 2020. I put together two possible presentations and much to my surprise both were accepted for the conference.

Unfortunately the Covid-19 virus came around and the CGSI conference for 2020 had to be canceled and moved to October 2021. The hopes were that the virus would be under control by then. Unfortunately that didn't happen either.

Since most of the speakers were coming here from the Czech Republic and Slovakia, and international travel was being discouraged or shut down completely, CGSI was faced with canceling the 2021 conference. As a result CGSI made a bold decision and decided to hold the conference "Virtually" rather than delay it another year.

The topics that I submitted were "Finding your Ancestor's Trail back to Europe" and "House Research in Europe".

The first presentation concentrated on finding where our ancestors lived before immigrating to the United States. Knowing that they were from Germany or Czechoslovakia or Austria was not a lot of help in finding the name of the village where they were born.

The second presentation concentrated on finding the house where your ancestor was born in or lived in. House numbers began in 1780 and are still in use today throughout most of Europe. The beauty of knowing the house number can let you see the house today using Google Maps and Google Street View. The second presentation includes images from Alendorf, Germany and images of the house where Johann Heck and Anna Barbara Schaefer lived. They lived in House #10 before immigrating from Alendorf in 1853 to Kenosha County, Wisconsin.

My presentations were attended by over 160 people from all over the world. While I had many questions from those attending, two of them stuck out.

One was from a PhD Professor at the University of Bruno in the Moravian District of the Czech Republic. He had the same last name as my mother (Mikel) and he had researched the Mikel family back into the 1600's. He and I are related and our families came from the same Czech village. We have been communicating ever since.

The second was from a man in Australia who connected with my DNA to the McNulty family from Northern Ireland. His great-great grandmother, Anna McNulty, emigrated from Ireland directly to Australia. He believes that she may have been a sister of our Peter McNulty. We are working together on this research.

I placed a video copy of the presentations on YouTube and I invite you to watch them. If the video starts in the middle just click on the Pause icon and manually move the red line all the way to the left. Then click on the Play icon to view the entire presentation. In the lower right side you can click on an icon to view in full screen.

Click ESC (Escape) to return to the regular screen.

The address is case sensitive. There is a period between **youtu** and **be** in the first address. Also the character between **A** and **d** is the number **1**. Note that there are no spaces in the addresses. In the second address there is an underscore **\_** between the **G** and **Y**.

Video Link

<https://youtu.be/zA1dAXvsWsA>

## House Research in Europe

Video Link

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VRZutCG\\_YJc&t=124s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VRZutCG_YJc&t=124s)

## Finding your Ancestor's Trail back to Europe

The presentations are each about 45 minutes in length.

## Honor Flight Volunteers



SUBMITTED PHOTO

### VETS HONORING VETS

Three members of Vietnam Veterans of America Racine/Kenosha Chapter 767 have been volunteering for four as ambassadors of the Stars and Stripes Honor Flight out of Milwaukee's Mitchell International Airport. They are, from left, Don Heck, Stewart Nagao and Jon Rybar, and all have been on the Honor Flight. Ambassadors, which average approximately 20 southeastern Wisconsin veterans, assist the families in welcoming their veteran family member and guardians back to Milwaukee by interacting with the families along the parade route through the airport terminal. In addition, approximately one-half of the ambassadors receive security clearance to participate in the Silent Salute ceremony at the airport gate as the veterans and their guardians disembark from their arriving plane. They are then greeted with cheers, applause, band music and hand shaking by their families and friends along the parade.

Most of you are aware that my younger brother, Don Heck, served in Vietnam for a year in 1966-1967. Some of you may know that Don is a very active volunteer in the Vietnam Veterans of America Racine/Kenosha Chapter 767.

The Honor Flight requirements are open to any man or women who served honorably, in any branch, anywhere, and in any capacity during the official department of Veteran's Affairs dates listed below for WWII, Korea, or Vietnam conflicts and are qualified to receive benefits, per their service discharge:

**WWII** : December 7, 1941 – December 31, 1946

**Korean War**: June 27, 1950 – January 31, 1955

**Vietnam War**: February 28, 1961 – May 7, 1975

The photos at lower left and right appeared in the Racine Journal-Times (RJT) recently to pay tribute to the volunteers.

If you have ever been to the airport when an honor flight returns from Washington D.C. you know how appreciative the veterans must feel to see their community welcome them home.

Congratulations Don, your services to our veterans is greatly appreciated.

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SUBMITTED PHOTO

### FALL CLEANUP

Nine members of Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 767 performed the chapter's annual fall cleanup of the veteran memorials at Pritchard Park. They also replaced the American flags lining the walkways leading to the American and the Prisoners of War/Missing in Action flag poles and commemorative stone plazas. Participating members are, front row from left, Jon Rybar and Don Heck; back row from left, Tom Bercher, Dave Niesen, Dan Larsen, Tom Friedel, Tom Banner, Stew Nagao and Joe Lopez.

## From the Newspapers

Racine Journal-Times, 30 October 1944:

“After not having seen her sister for 31 years, Mrs. John Mikel, 1212 Hagerer Street, is entertaining Mrs. Mary Holosh and son of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, at her home. Mrs. Holosh is visiting two other sisters (in Racine), Mrs. Henry Vanek and Mrs. John Kriva for the first time in 21 years.”

Editor’s Note: Mrs. John Mikel, nee Anna Pastyrikova, was my maternal grandmother. She immigrated to the United States in 1914 from Uhersky Brod, Czechoslovakia. Mrs. Henry Vanek, nee Vincencia Pastyrikova, and her sister Mrs. John Kriva, nee Otilia Pastyrikova, immigrated to Racine in 1924.

Mrs. Mary Holosh, nee Mary Pastyrikova, immigrated to Noral, Alberta, Canada in 1932. Her husband had immigrated earlier and had established a homestead in Noral. The limited quota for Czech immigrants to the United States had been closed, but for Canada it was still open. Farm land in remote Noral, Alberta was available and inexpensive.

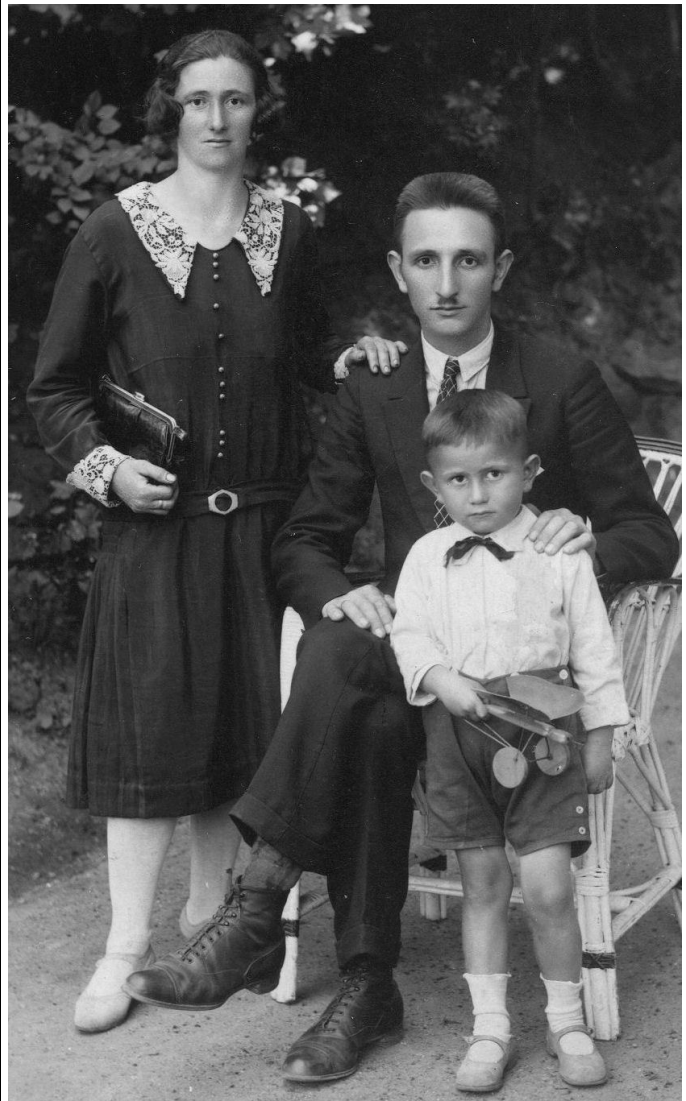


L-R: Anna Mikel, Mary Holosh, Otilia Kriva, and Vincencia Vanek, four Pastyrikova sisters in 1944 at Racine, Wisconsin.

The following note was from Mary’s granddaughter Evelyn Stark:

"When Mary and her three children were about to come to Canada everyone was approved in

Czechoslovakia. However, when they got to the German border, the authorities decided that Josef Jr. was not eligible because of being an epileptic. Mary did not protest too vigorously as she was concerned that her daughter, Ludmila (Lucy), had poor eyesight and maybe she wouldn't be allowed to immigrate either. She left the two children, Ludmila (11) & Alois (6) at the immigration center, and took son Josef back to Rudimov to her brother, Lojaz Alois Pastyrik. Josef never left Czechoslovakia and Mary never saw him again. Josef Jr. never married and lived on a farm just outside of Rudimov with his Uncle Lojaz Alois Pastyrik. His last few years were very difficult and painful because of his epilepsy. He died at Rudimov approximately in 1960, as far as we know."



The photo on the previous page at left: Lojza Alois Pastyrik Family : Lojza Alois, and wife Ludmila Zakova and son Lojza Alois Pastyrik junior. Lojza Alois senior was the brother of Anna Pastyrikova Mikel.

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Our Family News Letter is published quarterly and is distributed without charge. My e-mail address is **HECK.BOB@gmail.com**

Please feel free to share this newsletter with your family members. If you have old photos and a story behind them that you would like to see in this newsletter, please contact Bob Heck.

### From the Photo Album



House 593 Poradi Street, Uhersky Brod, Moravia, Czech Republic. This is the house where Mary Ann Mikel Heck was born on 5 SEP 1912. The tree on the left is an Italian plum tree and the plums from it were used in plum dumplings and in plum “kuchen,” our family favorites.

The photo at upper right was taken in about 1911 right before Jon (known as John) Mikel, my grandfather, immigrated to Racine, Wisconsin. L-R: Jon Mikel, Bohumil Mikel, and Anna Mikel, nee Pastyrikova. Jon left Uhersky Brod, CZ in 1912 and Anna followed with their two children in 1914. Bohumil’s full name was



Bohumil Josef Gottlieb Mikel but was called Mike Mikel.

### **Our Family News Letter**

Our Family News Letters are now available to you on-line and for free. There are 113 issues of the newsletter covering the period from March 1993 (Issue 1) to June 2021 (Issue 113). The 113 issues are available now at the following web address:

<http://ourfamilynewsletter.com/>

Each issue of the newsletter is eight pages in length and is filled with the history of our family. The specific branches include but are not limited to: Heck, Henningfeld, McNulty, Stratmann, Schaefer, Burgess, Richter, Guthoff, Chase, Heitkemper, Heinrichs, plus many more.

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**“Wir Alendorfer  
Alendorfer Heimat und  
Familienchronik”  
By Johann Wolfgang Goethe 2013**

The following translation of the book *Wir Alendorfer* (We Alendorfers - Alendorfer home and family chronicle) was made using Google Translation. The book is written in German and Google did a very good job in translating it to English.

**American - Emigration**

“Life in the Eifel has always been tough, at least harder than in other parts of Germany. Barren, stony lands did not produce large harvests in autumn, and with mostly large numbers of children, it was often a struggle for survival. The desire to have a better life was certainly present but alien, but how and where? Good craftsmen could try their luck in the cities. Most of the Eifel residents, however, had been farmers for generations, and only knew the local places and ate more poorly than right.

So it was tempting to buy land cheaply in distant America, to clear it, to sow and to harvest like at home. The yields were many times better than in the old homeland, wrote those who had taken this step a few years earlier to those back home.

Political or religious grandees (Nobles), leaving their homeland hardly apply to the Alendorfer. Adventure is also unlikely. Some of the younger ones could have influenced the decision to avoid years of military service. The main reason for leaving was certainly to escape the poor conditions of the harsh Eifel. Whether day laborers, craftsmen or farmers, people of the old classes started the long and dangerous journey by ship to America. A certain amount of start-up capital had to be available for the crossing and if you had nothing to sell here, you could mostly forget

about it. But anyone who had money would do well not to let it show, because ratters and fraudsters lurked everywhere. For some, the journey had already ended in Hamburg, Bremen or Antwerp.

If the decision to emigrate had matured in a family, it would often be done in such a way that a son first dared the crossing alone. Once he had found work and accommodation over there, his main task was probably to organize the same for his relatives at home. These were then faced with the difficult task of selling everything they did have as profitably as possible in order to pay for the passage by ship. If possible, there should also be something left to buy land in the new home, whereupon the usual work could be carried out. What was sold did not always produce so much, and some stood empty-handed in their new world.

For people who always had solid ground under their feet, a sea voyage of several weeks was a difficult undertaking anyway. It is no fun to be with several hundred people in a small space. At least temporarily everyone would have been seasick and have already regretted their decision. In a big storm, only praying really helped. But no later than the sight of the port of destination or the Statue of Liberty, eyes and thoughts were directed forward. After the medical checks and the usual reporting formalities, the onward journey to the west was usually easier to bear than on a fluctuating Atlantic ship. As far as is known, all 66 Alendorfers who verifiably left our village arrived safely in America, and none was shipwrecked on the way. It is also noteworthy that almost all of them emigrated without official permission.

Whether all the dreams of the well-traveled have come true and whether this is how they imagined their future may well be doubted. However, the

example of the Lenz / Molitor family from Alendorf shows that hard work and perseverance could make good progress in America back then. The descendants of the family recorded in a book that Johann Josef Lenz bought a farm in Brighton, Wisconsin with 80 acres on September 29, 1852. When he died in 1882 he owned 1,200 acres. (To be read in the book "Die Lenz Story" by Roger Huss, which can be borrowed from the Eifelmuseum in Blankenheim.)

Roger Huss himself was in the Eifel in 1985 when he visited Germany. His great-grandfather came from the Bitburg area and his wife from Wallersheim. A visit to Alendorf was of course also planned, whereby he realized that the names Lenz and Molitor no longer exist here. The descendants of the Heck family from House "Deckesch" and Vogelsberg from House "Drees", who emigrated in 1853, also visited Alendorf and were delighted that families of the same name were still living here.

The following 5 families saw no other way out than to sell their house, farm and land in order to start a better life there.

House 16: Johann and Maria Catharina Schafer \* Lux with 6 children. 1852

House 31: Johann Josef and Anna Barbara Lenz \* Molitor with 7 children. 1852 The sons Peter 1847 and Thomas 1851 had already driven ahead.

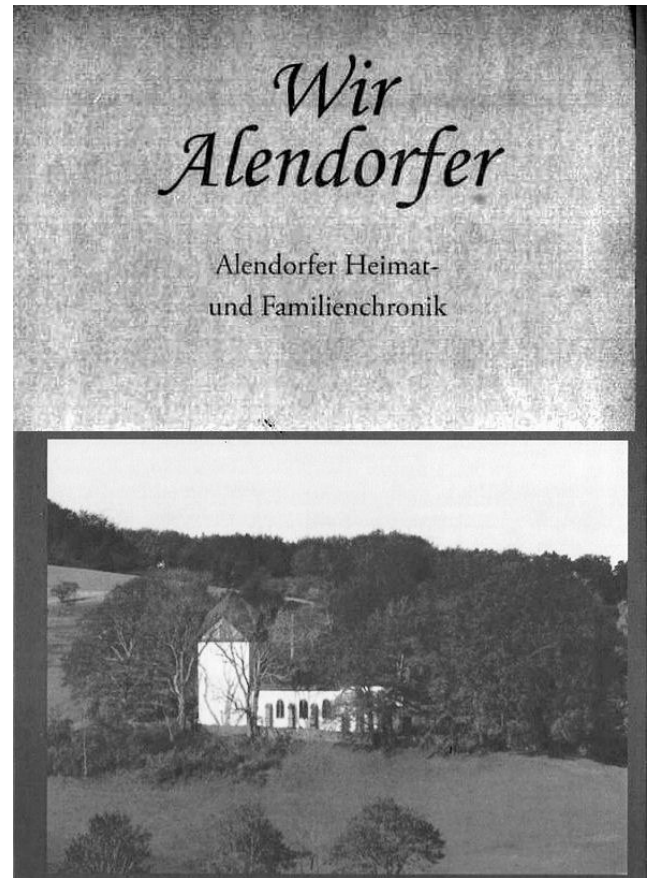
House 10: Johann and Anna Barbara Heck \* Schafer with 5 children. 1853

House 40: Valentin and Anna Magdalena Meyer \* Molitor with 4 children. 1854

House 117: Josef Johann Baptist and Barbara Reifferscheid with 5 children. 1893"

Editor's Note: The \* near the end of the translation indicates the maiden name of the female preceding it. In German genealogy it literally means "born as". The year shown after each family was their year of immigration.

Also note that the first family on the list of five, from House 16: Johann and Maria Catharina Schafer \* Lux with 6 children. 1852, were related to Anna Barbara Schaefer, wife of our Johann Heck. Johann Schaefer was her brother.



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The image on the following page shows the Schaefer family in House Number 16 called "alt Schmitz Haus" (Old Schmitz House) from the "Wir Alendorfer" book.

The first couple on the page is Wilhelm Schaefer born 24 Feb 1726, married to Maria Agatha May Schmitz on 10 Feb 1762. They were

my 4<sup>th</sup> Great Grandparents (great-great-great-great Grandparents). They had five children. Thier son, Balthasar Schaefers, born 4 Jan 1763, married Anna Margaretha Genners from Bern-dorf on 8 May 1787. They were my 3<sup>rd</sup> Great-Grandparents. They had eight children.

<b>Wilhelm Schäfers</b> * 24.02.1726 Waldorf † 07.03.1774	10.02.1762	<b>Tochter</b> <b>Maria Agatha May/Schmitz</b> * 08.02.1733 Schmitz † 17.11.1774
Sie hatten 5 Kinder.		
<b>Sohn</b> <b>Balthasar Schäfers</b> * 04.01.1763 Schmitz † 03.04.1807	08.05.1787	<b>Anna Margaretha Genners</b> * Bemidorf † 23.03.1824
<b>Kinder in Alendorf:</b>		
• Agnes	* 23.07.1788	
• Balthasar	* 16.01.1790	
• Johannes	* 15.05.1792	1825 Maria Catharina Lux
• Peter	* 10.03.1794	1827 Mathias Stappen
• Anna Catharina	* 05.04.1796	1831 Peter Molitor
• Peter	* 05.04.1798	1833 Johann Heck
• Anna Luzia	* 09.04.1800	
• Anna Barbara	* 30.08.1801	
<b>Sohn</b> <b>Johann Schäfer</b> * 15.05.1792 Schmitz	23.01.1825	<b>Maria Catharina Lux</b> * 28.01.1802 Duppach
<b>Kinder in Alendorf:</b>		
• Johann Peter	* 05.08.1826	
• Angela	* 15.05.1828	
• Anna Luzia	* 22.02.1831	
• Anna Barbara	* 22.05.1834	† 1837
• Susanna	* 21.06.1838	
• Matthias	* 28.08.1841	
• Anna Barbara	* 07.06.1845	
Familie Johann und Maria Catharina Schäfer * Lux verkaufte 1852 Haus und Hof an Arnold Hansen. Senior und zog mit ihren 6 Kindern nach Amerika. Neue Bewohner lt. Katasterbuch 7749 Parzelle 156		

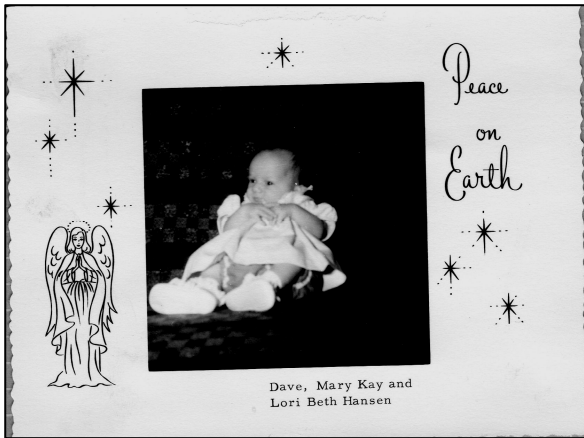
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Their last child, Anna Barbara Schaefer born 30 Aug 1801, married Johann Heck in 1833. They were my 2<sup>nd</sup> Great Grandparents. Note that the family dropped the S from the end of their name, Schaefers. The third child, Johann Schaefer, shown with a right pointing arrow, married Maria Catharina Lux on 23 Jan 1825, and immigrated to Brighton, Kenosha County, Wisconsin with their six surviving children in 1852. Johann Heck and Anna Barbara Schaefer Heck, shown with a left pointing arrow, followed in the 1853 with their five children. Anna Barbara Schaefer and Johann Schaefer were sister and brother.

## Items from the shoe box...

The following Christmas cards were found in the shoe box and should bring a smile to your face as we head into the holiday season.





We hope that all of you enjoyed this visit to the past from our shoe box.

Special Thanks to our contributors. Without you this newsletter would not be possible.

Ellen Steiner, Jeff & Susan Miller, Alvin & Carolyn Heck, Don & Sharon Heck, Cheryl Ann Heck.

Have a Happy Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas. Bob Heck, Your Editor.