

Lieblinger Verein of Chicago Newsletter

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Our 80th Year, 1939-2019

Buwe, wass hun m'r heit?

That question, directed to the crowd of marchers, is met with a resounding, "Kerwei!" In just a couple short weeks, we will be hearing those exclamations, again. This time of year always brings back fond memories for me – and I'm sure for many of you, too. This year, however, is a special year. It is the 80th Anniversary of our club's founding. It also marks the 75th Anniversary of the painful exodus of our families from Liebling. In this month's newsletter, Katie Amundsen recounts the story for us, and I hope you all reflect after reading the article. What an arduous journey it was, but I can only imagine. Thankfully, through our parents and grandparents, we are able to learn about their experiences and come to appreciate the sacrifices they all made. But, while we remember, it will also be a time of celebration. Kirchweih has always held a special place in my life. It gives us all an opportunity to keep the Lieblinger traditions alive – and well! Marchers in genuine tracht. Dancing traditional waltzes and polkas – and the little ones dancing the authentic Lieblinger Stolz Tanz and also the Chicken dance. I hope you can all be there this year. As we have over the past couple years, we are soliciting Kirchweih sponsorships from among the members. These help defray the costs of putting together this fine event, and I hope will consider becoming a sponsor, at any level. There are 3 sponsorship levels: Platinum (\$100); Gold (\$50) and Silver (\$25). If you choose to, please send your contributions to me in advance. My address is: 1802 Howdy Lane, Darien, IL 60561 Thank you.

Rick Stumpf

Birthdays Celebrated in September



Nancy Holl and George Helwich

Wedding Anniversaries Celebrated in September



Rick & Vicky Stumpf; Nancy Holl



Michael Schaefer, Konrad Schmidt, and Heinrich Reichert

Meeting Summary/Highlights:

The 1,039th meeting of the Liebling Club was held on September 8, 2019. The luncheon and cake was sponsored by Rick and Vicky Stumpf in celebration of their 36th Wedding Anniversary and Mike and Nancy Holl in celebration of their 33rd Wedding Anniversary and Nancy's Birthday. The Annual Kirchweihfest was discussed and members were asked to pay their \$13 entrance fee before the day of the Kirchweih. Payment can be submitted to Elaine at the next meeting on October 6th, or payment can be mailed to Elaine Grossich, 2568 N. Haddow Avenue, Arlington Heights, IL. 60004. To become a Sponsor for the Kirchweih this year, members should mail their check to Heidi Atkinson, 7 N. 290 Fox Bend Drive, Campton Hills, IL. 60175, or can be given to Heidi at the next meeting. Checks should be made out to "Liebling Pleasure Club". The goulash and sausage will be prepared by members this year, rather than catered, and members are being asked to volunteer their time to help serve the food and dessert. Contact Katie Amundsen, at rkamundsen@att.net if you can help this year. For the Cultural part of the meeting, Konrad Schmidt reminded members of the upcoming 75th Anniversary of the day Liebling fell to the Russians and gave an oral account of Lieblings leaving their homes in horse drawn wagons and what they had to endure to find a safe haven.



Konrad Schmidt telling members about the fall of Liebling on September 22, 1944 to the Russians

Keeping the Story Alive.... By Katie Amundsen

September 22, 1944...

Since childhood we heard the story of the tragic fateful day when our families left Liebling, not knowing that their lives would change forever. We saw the sadness on our Grandparents' faces as we listened to their voices filled with loss, and we became heartbroken, too. On this the 75th Anniversary of this momentous day, it is fitting to remember the events of when our people lost their home and way of life.

In 1944, at the end of a beautiful summer, Liebling had a bumper crop in its fields, but life was hard. More Lieblings were reported killed at the front. Taxes were high, money was tight, and food more scarce. 600 men were serving in the German or Romanian army, leaving the women, old men, children and the school teachers to work Liebling's large fields. They were joined by 750 Russian refugees from Odessa who had fled and arrived in Liebling by train. All of Liebling worked 7 days a week, 16 hours a day, yet the work was far behind schedule. Combined with worry over the future and their loved ones in the war, the people were emotionally and physically exhausted.

On August 23, 1944, Romania switched its alliance, declared war on Germany, and formally sided with Russia and the Allies. For Germans in Romania this was a fateful event. Russian POWs were freed and arriving in Liebling were met with machine gun fire from a handful of German troops. Three Russians were killed on Main Street, Partisans shot at Liebling workers in the fields. The gendarmes confiscated bicycles and radios, telephone lines were cut, and newspapers no longer came from Temeschwar. With no outside communication, Liebling was cut off from the world. At midnight of September 17, a Liebling rode his horse to Schag, south of Temeschwar, to successfully persuade 40 German troops to return to Liebling. They did, and were able to defend attacks on Liebling for five days.

The night of September 21, was an eerily quiet night, but the next day shortly before noon, Romanian and Russian troops fired from the east into Liebling and were met with German machine gun fire. A loud battle ensued for 2 hours. When it stopped, the German military told the town to flee for three days and after that battle, they could return home. All needed to escape by 6 p.m. Many old people decided to stay to care for the animals, others stayed because they needed to work the fields. In panic and fear, wagons were packed and began leaving at 3 o'clock. Three hours later, the last wagons left. A caravan with 447 wagons and 898 horses carried 2,158 tearful Lieblings into the darkening night. The church bells chimed their farewell for three hours and when a light drizzle began, it was said that Liebling was shedding its tears.

Upcoming Events:

Liebling Meeting – October 6, 2019

Annual Kirchweihfest – October 12, 2019

Editor: Bettie Schaefer, Photographer: John Schaefer