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German Russian Proverb:

His head is still good,
for it hasn't been
used!

I am a little late with this newsletter, it should have been in April, but I had a few health problems. In the first part of January, I was a well woman! Then all hell

broke loose. I was having lots of pain in my back, finding out that I had an Aneurysm in my stomach - then in the hospital I found my heart wouldn't take an operation! Two slaps in the face. But I changed doctors, they put me on heart medication, then after several days they operated on my aneurysm, and now I am doing great! I was quite worried as my father died from an aneurysm that burst. Guess they can be in the genes! Did you know that? I wonder if this is a German Russian health heritage? I would research it, but there is a privacy law which might negate doing such a study. I would be interested in hearing from any of you out there having this type of health problem. Would you let me know?

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FEATURE STORY

My thanks go out to Allen Salzmann for allowing the publication of his story in my Newsletter. It will be published in several newsletters, as it is quite lengthy. I love this story – he is so lucky to have traveled to Russia, and we are lucky to be able to re-live the experiences he had while over there in our ancestors former country.

Some family reunions take a while. Sometimes you need a really good reason to see the other side of the world.

April 1st, 2004 This was not like other international trips. . . .time to make some history.

I stood in the line at Sheremetyevo - 2 in Moscow with immigration form in hand waiting to hand it over with my passport and visa to the uniformed woman in the glassed booth. The flight seemed shorter than it was. I had left DIA in Denver the previous day, landed at LaGuardia, New York and had to take a very fast cab to JFK, just barely making the flight direct from JFK to Moscow. New York traffic was just as I remembered it from when I lived in the area. Almost four hours to New York from Denver, then almost 9 hours to Moscow. The flight over comprised two groups, Russian nationals, and American couples adopting babies. Seems like everyone on that flight was on an

adventurous mission, me included. Getting on the flight was a tight squeeze in time, almost didn't make it. All that was behind me, "this party was on".

For a moment, I thought about that day when I was 16; my flight instructor Bill Teasar called Lincoln Control Tower for a "Stop and Go". We landed, I stopped the Piper 140 on the runway, he opened the door and over the noise of the prop wash he said "The plane will be lighter and perform better without me, do a few Touch and Go's and meet we at the office. When he was clear, I gave the Piper 140 the throttle and I was off, flying solo.

I was next in the immigration line at Sheremetyevo – 2 immigration line. I crossed the green line presented my papers, and completed my visit with the immigration agent. Then collected my baggage and was on my way up the stairs with the horde of others to the main concourse.

Standing there with "SALZMANN" printed on a sign was Hermann Salzman, one of my grandfather's brother's grandchildren. A man I had corresponded with in letters packages and e-mail for twelve years. In German I said to him "Mit zeit alle wilst kommen" "With time all will come". Hermann acknowledged and we were off to a small-dilapidated buss with other Russians. Hermann did not speak to me much on the buss. But wrote on unused computer punch cards, (hadn't seen those in twenty years). So we trundled off to the Metro stop and made our way a friend of Hermann's apartment in Kusminsky, southern suburb of Moscow.

Now to back-fill my story.

October 1988, the usual visit to Lincoln. While my wife, Carol, was resting, BEING pregnant with the second of our three children. Mom wanted me to go through her large cedar "Hope Chest". She had done the same with my older brother. "I want to divide this stuff up, so lets go through it". Almost to the bottom, I saw an envelop in English and Russian, addressed to my grandfather, Henry Salzman(n) from Kemerovo, Siberia. The letter had been translated from German to English. "I'm sure you father put this here" mom said.

Dad died in September of '64'. I was barely 8 and Ron was 13. Mom was forced to sell "Modern Method Shoe Repair" which my grandfather, an immigrant at 13 from Balzar, Russia, had founded. Mom had worked as a Secretary since dad died. His death changed our lives changed forever. Mom did two very wise things though; she kept her boys in Church and in Scouts. How many women today would be so wise? Therefore, any knowledge of family left behind in Russia, went to the grave with dad. Except for this one long lost letter. Mom and my uncle Herb told us all they could about dad, and who we were. Mom said grandfather had spoken of some place on the Volga called "Balzar" and grandmother Anna was from the village "Frank". That was all. But that was enough, we had our own family circumstances to deal with

Looking at the letter, mom recounted how she helped my grandfather assemble Care Packages for the surviving family of another of my grandfather's brother, Fredrick

Gerhardt Salzmänn in Germany when they were bombed-out starving Berlin refugees. Carol and visited the Salzmänn's in Germany in May-June 2001. With tears in their eyes, they told of the Nazi tyranny, the Berlin bombings, the Russian occupation and the "Wunderbar" packages from their "Uncle Henry" in Lincoln, Nebraska. (Family in Europe are great, free lodging, and they'll take you everywhere). Fredrick Gerhardt Salzmänn had left the Volga for Germany in the 1920s'. He had been in the Czar's army in WWI, in WWII he was a member "Adwehr", and was a confidential interpreter during the Non-Aggression pack negotiations. He worked for Reich Marshall Alfred Rosenberg and Reinhardt Gehlen the "Master Spy". He was killed in an air raid in Berlin in October '43'. The Salzmänn's I met were children when WWII ended. They we called the flack-gun generation. I could write another whole other story about what they lived through, first by the Nazis', then the Communists.

Mom also spoke of the packages that went to grandfathers' youngest bother Alexander, somewhere in Russia

I had another trip to D.C. in the Fall of '88'. I was a corporate officer for an Australian based computer software development company, so I'd been doing a lot of business travel. Carol accompanied me to D.C. She toured the mall. I delivered a paper at the conference. Then, with a copy of the aforementioned letter in hand I went to the Soviet Embassy and Consulate. The rather robust nasty looking Russian woman at the Soviet Consulate said, "Go away, I know about your people, they are all dead! Stalin killed them all!" Statements like this I take more as a dare, than an answer. I replied, "That's for me to decide not you.

The [American Historical Society of Germans from Russia](#) gave me an address to a newspaper published in Russia for Germans still there titled "Neues Leben" "New life". The back page of this paper was people looking for people. So I wrote a short ad in German, and never expected a response. I would tell my children, "Well I tried, and that was it". "I did what I could". After all, Stalin's genocide was at least 35 million, with almost all being Christians. A fact lost on the American media, but well understood in Europe and Russia.

Many letters started to arrive.

Weekly, then daily they started to come. Only one that came the day before son Adam's first birthday was genuine. A woman named Lydia Bauer wrote from the Zaparogia, on the Black Sea. She knew we were shoemakers, and from Balzar. The address included phone numbers. I knew a Russian reporter at the ABC affiliate here in Denver, she translated the addresses and phone numbers. She wanted to make a story out of it. So we called Kemerovo, Siberia from the TV station. Galina Salzmänn answered the phone. It was as if three generations melted away in a heartbeat. In addition, KBCO in Boulder did a two-part piece on the story.

Throughout the 1990's, I sent packages to them through the mail or hand carried by associates of mine that were Russian geologists. In 1995, we sent one of my cousins, Hermann, to the London School of Economics in Moscow. Through all this, the family



in Russia had never asked for any money. We here, helped them all we could. Another cousin, in Saratov, Russia, Rimma Bauer, a physicist who, in German, I had been actively writing, but heard nothing in two years, resurfaced in Hengelo, Holland. She had married a Dutch physicist and was pregnant. (Or vice versa). In May of 1999, Rimma, now Rimma Otto, her two small sons, and Husband Cees stepped of a KLM flight at DIA, for four

days of family reunion at our home in Wheat Ridge, before starting a trip through the southwest and west coast. Rimma's was shocked the first time she stepped into a super market. "*Ist deiser galaria immer mit essen?*" Are the shelves always with food? Rimma stated. I replied, "*Ja Rimma, jede tag heir ist essen*". Yes Rimma, every day here is food. Cees spoke English. Rimma spoke no English, I spoke almost no Russian, and her children spoke Dutch and Russian. German was how Rimma and I communicated. So during that time, in our home you could hear German, Russian, Dutch and English with a heavy Dutch accent. Carol and I stayed at their new home in Helengo, Holland when we were in Europe in 2001. (again, free lodging for European travel) They now have a third child, a girl.

"Zum Russland" "To Russia".

This wasn't a trip I specifically planned for, indeed a trip accompanying a woman to adopt a baby from Tymen in Siberia had failed the previous Fall. However, I had started to get my immunization shots and mentally now I wanted to go. So I started checking airfares, and working with a travel agent specializing in Russian travel he found for a Delta flight, \$595.70, Denver, JFK, Moscow and back! I had to purchase the tickets though, before Viktor Salzmann, Hermann's father had received permission for me to visit, and before I received my tourist visa from the Russian Embassy. Didn't matter, no balls, no blue chips. . .buy the tickets.



The start of the trip two days in Moscow. . . .

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MoscowSubway

Hermann and I boarded the shabby little bus, stuffed with Muscovites



To exit Sheremetyevo-2, and headed for the Moscow Metro. We arrived in

Kusminsy, in southeast Moscow at the apartment of Irena, a friend of Hermans

From Kemerovo.

My God, what a place, a dilapidated building with a rough cut steel door, with

another door behind it. It had dirty dimly lit hallways. Outside, abandoned LADA's (a small Fiat designed Soviet era car I would later spend much time in), trash and stray barking dogs. I thought to myself, self, you're a long way from "Muni Pool" and "your gona'get a lot farther" We dropped out bags, and went to be *turitsas*'(tourists). We met another friend at the Komsomolskya station, and were off to see Moscow. The Moscow subways were *cheesty* (clean) and had beautiful architecture and mosaics. This is how almost everyone gets around. I couldn't believe where Hermann and Irene wanted to go for a meal. My first meal in Russia at McDonalds. . . .can you believe it! I've just flown in direct from JFK, and this is my first Russian culinary experience. I worked at the McDonalds on north 27th street when I was 15! Couldn't eat at one for years afterwards. But I could tell they wanted to go there, it's very expensive for them. although it was the usual price for me in USA. For a day and a half, we did the usual, but necessary tourist sites, Red Square, Gom Department Store, the Kremlin Museum, Novodevichi Convent, etc. Moscow traffic is madness, and more German cars than I'd seen even in Berlin. Russia's greatest trading partner is Germany. For example, I had not seen chocolate "Mozart Balls" which were exclusive to Salzburg. But here they were, in a supermarket a block from the Kremlin. The cars were owned by the "*Novy Rusky*", "New Russians" synonymous for Russian Mafia. I saw Moscow as a Muscovite sees, and lives it. And would do more of the same on the return trip. After watching newly weds have their photos taking at Leninsyie Gori a famous Moscow overlook, and while walking from there, to the Moscow University, Hermann and I realized we were two worlds coming together. The idea that two men like us could meet in such a place, discuss past and current history, after three generations and about 100 years of separation, geo-politics, wars and the communist genocide, defies description.

April 3rd, Moscow to Novosibirsk

We arrived at Paveletsky Train station from the Metro. Purchased tickets and boarded one of the newer trains to Domodedovo International Airport. Before the train started, a camo-uniformed Militsia (military type police) with AK-47 machineguns and German Shepards, sniffing for bombs and drugs. We arrived at Domodedovo, a very new airport that handles most domestic flights and boarded an Ilyushin Il-86 airliner, quite large. And departed for Novosibirsk. The service was wonderful, and the aircraft was quite new. We departed at 9:30 p.m. Moscow time. The food from the menu selection was wonderful, the uniformed stewardess' (no males) were very anxious to use their English. All beverages were free. There was ample legroom and the seat ahead of you folded down for a leg rest. This had U.S. domestic travel beat in every way. We landed around 4:00a.m. after having crossed three more time zones, at Novosibirsk airport, and were greeted by Hermann's uncle Genady, and his son. "Dyadya Gena" "Uncle Gena" could drive us to Kemerovo because he had a permit to travel from one Oblisk (province) to another. We four packed my bags and Hermann's into uncle Gena's old LADA, and traveled northeast through another time zone, to Kemerovo, this place I'd read on the envelope mom found in October of '88'. There was some confusion on just how to get out of Novosibirsk. Great, if they're lost. . . .I'm really lost. We found the right road



and headed on our way. The sun was coming up, It was April 4th. The land reminded me of Alberta, Canada. Small farms and snow but the structures were dilapidated. We stopped at what you might call a roadside restaurant for some breakfast. I went to the "toilet house" across the street. Toilets were a hole in the floor, with two plates to place your feet. Yep, I was in the other side of the planet. I ate something, I don't know what, at this diner. We piled back into the little LADA and trundled on our way. We were stopped and had papers checked four times in only four hours. At one check- point, uncle Gena was pulled over for speeding, by a Militsa with a radar gun, yes even here. I'd never heard anyone try to beat a ticket in Russian. By every definition, this is adventure travel.

Domodedovo International Airport

Kemerovo. . . .

We arrived in Kemerovo, a city of half a million people by mid morning. I was now 13 time zones away from home, over half way around the world deep in the ex-Soviet Union. Kemerovo was a secret city. I in a city other Americans had only seen from SR-71 or intel. satellite images. The apartments were nothing I'd ever seen, that could be still inhabited. The freezing



and thawing of the Siberian climate and the poor quality concrete, combined with the age of these old apartment buildings really was a sight. Naturally I kept my opinions to myself. There standing at the entry to the apartment building was Viktor Salzmänn my father's first cousin, the father of Hermann and Sergie. Viktor was over 6 feet, taller than his sons. He greeted us joyfully and could not believe this was all happening. Hermann interpreted his father's disbelief. I went up the dimly lit stairs to the third floor, to their apartment flat. There I met wife Galina. A petite woman that was so full of joy.

(The picture above , right, is of the Salzmänn Reunion)

(there will be much more to this story of Allen's travel to Russia in the next newsletter, possibly in June.)

MEMORIES TUCKED AWAY:

Hello to all: I have a true story about my brothers that I like to tell.

We (a family of 7 children, 3 boys, 4 girls) were raised on a farm in western Kansas. On this one particular day, my parents were going to town, but before they left, Dad had given my brothers (Melvin, Hubert, and Robert) a chore to do while they were gone. They were sent out to the pasture to replace a corner post in the fence line. Most of you will probably know that a "corner post" has to be quite large. When the boys asked Dad how deep they should set the corner post, he told them, "as deep as Robert is tall", (Robert being the youngest). So they proceeded to dig the hole, and every so often they would lift Robert by the overall straps and lower him in the hole. Robert would always put his hands into his pants pockets. I'm thinking he was probably told to do this so as to slide him into the hole easier.

After several "measurements", finally they figured they had a pretty good fit, and went back home to get the team of horses to drag the corner post up to the hole. By that time, Dad was already back from town, but when he went checking on his sons, and noticing only two boys, he asked Melvin & Hubert where Robert was. They, all of a sudden,

remembered that they had left him in the post hole, or so the story goes. Of course, we all believed that!! Our Dad had such fun telling this story through the years I don't believe they got into trouble over this, as Dad was too tickled – after all it was his fault that they used Robert as a measuring stick.

Thelma Mills

WHISPER:

The samovar used to be a bride's trousseau used for friendly chats, tea parties, or family evening discussions after supper.

The Samovar has a small chimney in the center of the large circular boiler. The red-hot charcoal (or coal) can be placed in the chimney, and the boiler is filled with water. The system is the same as that in an old fashioned steam engine.

The body is filled with water and the boiling water is poured from the spout at the bottom into the small teapot that rests on the top. Then the tea, once made, brews in the steam from the simmering water below.

Once brewed, small narrow tea glasses are filled only half full, and then topped off with boiling water from the tap at the lower part of the samovar.



