

## REUNION PRESENTATION

*(accompanied by 161 slides, photos, and maps)*

Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen, Cousins and Descendants of Twelve determined Schafer brothers and sisters who left Russia and came to Canada as pioneer homesteaders one hundred years ago. They did not see themselves as pioneers. They came simply looking for a better life, to have the opportunity to what Germans have always been good at – drawing an independent livelihood from the fertility of the land. But they definitely were pioneers. Just imagine, our grandfathers were the first, the very first, to bite a ploughshare into the virgin prairie turf and turn over the rich dark brown prairie soil. They converted the land of the bison into the land of wheat. Western Canada was famous for its wheat long before oil and potash. In the span of one generation they totally transformed the prairie landscape into a patchwork quilt of fields and farms, villages and towns, railways and grain elevators. Their story fills me with awe and wonder and admiration, and leaves me asking myself, “Would I have been that strong?”

My name is Mervin Weiss. I grew up in the Fox Valley district, and I live in Saskatoon. This is who I am; this is my Gene Pool. I am the genetic result, or sum total, of these people. The only other people with a greater influence on my life would be my sweet wife Patti, and our daughters Erin and Melanie, and my brothers and sister –Ken, Loretta and Rem. I need to particularly thank Patti for her active support, and for her interest in my family research. Just two weeks ago we celebrated 40 years of marriage. This same weekend, Patti’s own family is also celebrating 100 years of pioneer settlement of three Wells siblings who settled in the Swift Current district. The Wells family came from England and Patti’s cousin still farms and lives on the original Wells homestead.

I have always been interested in the fact that my German grandparents came from Russia. However the information I absorbed as a young person was vague, and then forgotten over time. That interest in my family history was re-kindled while visiting my Aunt Betty Weiss about ten years ago, when she gave me a list of names of my Weiss Grandfather’s brothers and sisters, and the names of his parents. I had never seen or heard those names before, and it quickly became a passion of mine to learn more. My quest for family information naturally extended to my mother’s family, the Schafers. As I began to look for Schafer information, I soon found Kathryn and Eddie (or Adam) Schafer, and they quickly put me on the right track. I have enjoyed several visits with Kathryn and Eddie since then. The more I learned about our very interesting Schafer history, the more I knew that I wanted to share it with the larger Schafer family. And so here I am – with the help of the many cousins you have met today and who have planned this 100-year reunion celebration.

Today we are celebrating 100 years of Schafer history in Canada and the United States. Particularly we want to pay tribute to our Great Grandmother Rosina Schafer, and to her twelve children. They were all born in Crimea, a peninsula which juts out into the Black Sea, an area that is today part of the country of Ukraine. The Schafers said they came from Russia, because when they lived there, Crimea was indeed part of Russia. By comparison, my Weiss grandparents came from Odessa district. All four of my grandparents were born, and were married, in Russia

My interest in family history, I'm sure, has its roots in the concept of "family". The importance of family and relatives was something I grew up with. Visiting aunts and uncles and cousins was very important in our family, and these visits were always special occasions. We eagerly anticipated visits by relatives, none more so than Uncle Jack Schafer, or Andrew Schafer, from Vancouver. Our Mom was very close to her brother Jack and to her nephew Andrew, with whom she grew up. Mom was also very close to her only sister Katie and to her older brother Nick. We visited with them often. I remember my aunts and uncles saying that I looked like the Schafer side of the family, and I am still not sure if that was supposed to be a compliment! Family visits continue to be important in our family.

All four of my grandparents were Germans, a fact I share with many in this room. Ethnically that makes us as German as they were. But our language and our history have slowly been lost in North America. Ja, wer kann noch ein bisschen Deutsch verstehen? I hope this reunion, and my presentation this evening, will give us all a greater appreciation for our history and our culture. Even in a vague sense, I have always known and understood how fortunate I was to grow up in Canada. I understand now that this was a direct result of decisions made by my grandparents in Russia. The more I learned about the lives of those Germans who remained in Russia, the more I realized the profound ramifications of my grandparents' decisions to emigrate. The history of the Germans who remained behind in Russia, that is, the ones who did not emigrate prior to World War One, is absolutely tragic. The more I learned, the more I began to appreciate the sacrifices our grandparents made in their lifetime, so that you and I could enjoy this evening here together. This evening would not be happening had it not been for that momentous decision one hundred years ago, in 1911, when Great Grandmother Rosina Schafer and her children decided to leave beautiful Crimea for the unknowns of a new world.

The decision to emigrate had to have been a huge personal anxiety. Try to imagine leaving your relatives and friends, and moving to another country about which you know very little; you do not speak the language; and you are fully aware that you will never again see your parents, siblings, cousins, friends, neighbors, or your familiar and comfortable surroundings? That's a huge personal decision. The family aspect for our Schafers was somewhat easier to handle because all twelve brothers and sisters emigrated with their mother. From my research, I can tell you that such a circumstance is rare. Even rarer is the fact they all came at the same time – all that is, except my Grandfather Philip, who had left Crimea with his family but was forced to return.

My Grandfather Weiss, in contrast, left his father and six brothers and sisters behind in Russia when he immigrated to Canada in 1913. He was the only one from his family to leave Russia for North America. But I have been able to locate and meet dozens of descendants of his brothers and sisters. They grew up in Russia, and lived there until they were able to immigrate to Germany after the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1989. Meeting these cousins and hearing their stories gives one an entirely new perspective about growing up in Fox Valley or in Schuler or wherever, on this side of the Atlantic. These cousins have profoundly affected the way I look at family history. Locating these relatives and actually meeting them in Germany, has been a very satisfying part of my genealogy research.

I hope that my presentation this evening will help all of us to understand how fortunate we are to have grown up in North America. I remember my Mom admonishing me with these words, “You better be good, or the Bolsheviks will come and get you!” We might chuckle at that phrasing today, but we should never forget the horrors and nightmares the Germans in Russia suffered at the hands of the Russian Revolutionary Bolsheviks. These cousins whom I have met in Germany would have understood my mother’s threat. They lived it. The Bolsheviks, and later the Communists, were a very real life-threatening force which subjugated the population through terror and fear. The stories I have heard about their lives behind the Iron Curtain could easily have been our Schafer story too.

The Schafers lived in Russia from 1809 to 1911, roughly one hundred years. Our family has now lived in North America for one hundred years. I will now give a brief overview of our family’s journey from Central Europe to Russia to Canada.

So were our Grandparents Russians or Germans? The answer: They were ethnic German people who lived in Russia; hence they were Russian citizens. The regions where my Weiss and my Schafer grandparents lived are found today in Ukraine. But during the years our ancestors lived there, there was no such geographical or political entity called Ukraine. The Black Sea areas around Odessa city and Crimea were part of Russia, often called South Russia.

So if they were ethnic Germans, does that mean that our ancestors originally came from Germany? Answer: yes, and no. There really was no such geographical or political entity known as Germany until 1871, when Bismarck united the many scattered Germanic regions of central Europe. Up until that point, central Europe consisted of hundreds of small independent states ruled by privileged families who survived mainly by remaining loyal to the King of Prussia. Our Schafer ancestor who went to Russia in 1809 came from one such state called the Grand Duchy of Baden, which today is part of Germany.

I have been able to trace our family history to the village of Dossenheim, just outside of the old city of Heidelberg, Germany. From church records, we can pick up our history with one Johannes Schafer, born about 1730. I don’t know where he was born, but he died in Dossenheim before 1789.

Johannes Schafer and Elisabeth Müller had five known children born in Dossenheim during the years 1759 to 1768. All Schafer descendants in this room can trace their genealogy to this couple, and specifically to their son **Karl Anton Schafer** who was born in Dossenheim in 1763. A copy of his baptism record written in Latin can be found in the Schafer family history book.

Studying the Dossenheim Catholic Church records is our only look at the life of Karl Anton Schafer before he left for South Russia in the summer of 1809. The church records reveal his marriage to Anna Margaretha Mildner, and the birth of nine children, three of whom died at young ages. Several of these birth records provide the occupation of the father Karl Anton. He was a tax collector for the village. Thus, Karl Anton was likely educated, and at this point, the Schafers were not farmers. But in the summer of 1809 Karl Anton Schafer joined a caravan heading east and then south to the Black Sea. This movement of Germans into South Russia in response to the Russian Czar's invitation is well documented.

In 1809, Karl Anton Schafer's first trip would have been to the city of Frankfurt to obtain his passport from the Russian German Consular office. How he qualified I don't know, as he was not a farmer, a vintner, or a skilled tradesman, as the Czar's conditions had indicated. Furthermore, he emigrated alone, leaving his wife and six children in Dossenheim. The Russian invitation clearly specified that married couples and families were preferred. But nevertheless he obtained a passport, and left Dossenheim probably about June or July in 1809. Karl Anton was already 46 years old.

How do I know this? Well, now we must jump ahead to Russia and to Ukraine, and study the records found in the Archives there.

From 1804 to 1810 approximately 3000 families from the Rhineland district of central Europe undertook the grueling 2600 km trip across Central Europe to the Black Sea region. The majority made the trip in caravans organized by the Russian government, by horse and cart, and on foot. The trip lasted four to six months.

On 10 October 1809 Karl Anton Schafer reported to the Foreign Settlers Office in the city of Ekaterinoslav. Today it is called Dnipropetrovsk. It lies astride the mighty Dniiper River, southeast of Kiev, Ukraine. Karl Anton's file was found in the Ukrainian State Archives in Dnipropetrovsk. The records in this file indicate that Karl Anton had arrived from Dossenheim, Heidelberg, Baden. This is how I knew to look for Schafer records in Dossenheim. Karl Anton was sent to one of the nearby German villages in the Molotschna district as a teacher. In March 1810 however, he received permission to move to Crimea, and he shows up in the village of Rosental on the 1814 Crimea Colonies Superintendent's report. All of this information has been found in the Archive records. In Rosental, he is also listed as a teacher. He was not a landholder, and by the rules of colonization, he was not eligible for a land allocation because he was alone; in other words, land was only for families.

It is a curiosity that Karl Anton waited until 1816 to apply for permission for his wife and six children to join him in Rosental. Again this record comes from the Dnipropetrovsk Archives. His wife Anna Margaretha, son Andreas and five daughters joined him in Rosental, and I have not found a further trace of any of them except for Andreas. I do not know when or where Karl Anton Schafer died. I do not know what became of his wife and five daughters.

As the original German colonies filled up, the Russian government opened up new areas for development. Thus the colony of Blumental was established in 1822. This colony lay several hundred km north of Rosental on the mainland and I can only assume that the Schafer family moved there to obtain a land allocation. I do not know if Karl Anton made the move, or if it was only his son Andreas, who by now had married Barbara Kerner of Rosental. It is a good guess that some family connection enticed the Schafer family to make such a dramatic move. It is in Blumental that the Schafers acquired the title of "colonist". Here our Schafer family became farmers. I have five known children born to Andreas and Barbara Schafer.

But the Schafers did not stay in Blumental. By 1846 Matvei (Mathias) Schafer, the son of Andreas and Barbara, had married Katherina Buchmann in Zurichtal, and the rest of our Russian history plays out on the beautiful Crimean peninsula. Zurichtal was the most prosperous of the German colonies in Crimea, and the Buchmann family was one of the more prosperous and influential families in Zurichtal. You might say that Matvei Schafer married well. In 1847 their first child, our great-grandfather Anton Schafer, was born in a small village a few km outside of Zurichtal. I should mention that Zurichtal, Crimea was named after the city and region of Zurich in Switzerland, and our Buchmann ancestors were among the Swiss immigrants who arrived in Crimea in 1804.

Matvei Schafer continued to move his family about Crimea. Birth records from Rosental Catholic Parish show the family to be living in several different villages stretching north from Zurichtal towards Dzhankoi. They had eight children, or at least, that is how many birth records I found. Amazingly their last child, Josef, was born when Katharina was already 50 years old. Josef was 32 years younger than his older brother Anton.

Our Great Grandfather Anton Schafer married Rosina Hoerner in 1872 in the small village of Johannistal near Dzhankoi. They had 13 children born in Crimea, but I found birth / baptism records only for 7 of them. One child, Aloyz Jakob, previously unknown to us, was born between Michael and Fred, and presumably died young. Of the birth records found, Michael, Aloyz, Jakobina, and Anton were born in Alatai, while Fredrich, Philip and Alexander were born in Rosental. Alatai was approx. 60 km north of Rosental.

Of Anton and Rosina's family of twelve, seven married in Crimea before immigrating to Canada. The oldest, Michael, married Maria (or Marion) Ell. Michael and Maria's second son, John M. was born in 1901 in the small village of Blumental, near Grünental, Dzhankoi district. This is a different Blumental village than the one previously mentioned. Michael and Maria's sixth child,

Andrew was born in 1910 on Khutor Tasanai, a private estate in extreme north-east of Crimea on the great inland Siwash Bay of the Sea of Asov. According to Fred Schafer's Ship Record, his daughter Rosalia was born in Tasanai in 1906. So sometime between 1901 (birth of John M.) and 1906 the Schafer brothers moved onto their own estate. Presumably our Shafer family owned this estate, because they left Crimea in 1911 with a lot of cash.

Brother Anton Schafer and his wife Maria Pfeifer also lived at Tasanai because their son Anton Alexander Jr. was born in Tasanai in 1910. So presumably the other married brothers, Franz and Johann, lived at Tasanai as well, but I am not certain. Jakobina, the only daughter who married in Crimea, had married Johann Dorn. Johann's father, also named Johann Dorn, died in 1907 in the small village of Anakoj-Eli, north of Rosental, but I do not know where Jakobina and Johann were living when their children Gottlieb and Philipina were born. We will hear more about Anakoj-Eli later.

I visited the site of Tasanai in 2005. The mayor of the nearby village of Baklanova took us there and pointed out where 11 houses once stood in a row, where the barn was, the well, the cemetery etc.. After the Revolution, the khutor formed the nucleus for a large and successful collective farm, specializing in sheep and cattle. However all the buildings were razed about 1955 and a new collective was built a few kilometers away at Baklanova. We met the former Chair of this Collective, who told us that field cultivators still occasionally drag up a reminder that people once lived at Tasanai.

A study of immigration records in the early 1900's shows the average ship's passenger traveling with perhaps \$50.00 and very often less. Our Great Grandmother Rosina Schafer was traveling with \$2,000, and as a group, the Schafers were traveling with nearly \$6000 in total. The Schafers had obviously done well in Crimea. And that makes their mass immigration so much more fascinating. Why did they leave? Many thousands of Germans remained in Crimea, and in Russia, and continued to prosper on the land. Up until the start of World War I in 1914, these families enjoyed a much higher standard of living than did the pioneers living in sod hovels on the Great Plains of North America. But they would eventually lose it all to the Communist regime, and many lost their lives as well. Regardless of the physical hardships on the Canadian prairies during the early pioneer years, the Schafers obviously had made the right call in deciding to leave Crimea.

Our Great-Grandfather Anton Schafer did not live to emigrate with his family. Oral family history would have us believe that Great-Grandfather's health had been imperiled by his military service. His health permanently damaged, he died, presumably at Khutor Tasanai in February of 1908. I was not able to locate a death record. Has anyone here ever seen a photo of Great Grandfather Anton Schafer?

Anton and Rosina had already been talking about leaving Russia before he died. No doubt the Schafers knew other families who had already emigrated. So our Great Grandmother Rosina

continued with plans to leave Crimea. This is a very fascinating part of our Schafer family history in my view. Great Grandmother gathered all 12 of her children around her, six with spouses, several with grandchildren, and convinced them all that their best option for a future lay in North America. I have studied the immigration of the Germans from Russia to North America for several years, and it is rare that all members of a family emigrated. Much more common was the scenario of a few siblings leaving Russia, and several siblings remaining behind. It has been estimated that for every German who left Russia between 1885 and 1914, three of his/her direct relatives remained behind. Imagine then, the influence Rosina brought to bear on her daughters-in-law to leave their families behind. Other than Michael's wife Maria, I do not know if any of the others had family members in North America. Maria had three brothers in the USA. When the Schafers emigrated as a family group, the spouses left their families behind.

Rosina appears to me as a person of strong and determined character – a matriarch if you like that term. I believe it was Rosina's influence over her close-knit family that convinced all twelve children to join her, searching for a more secure future in North America. Looking through the Schafer names, I find 8 female descendants who share Rosina's name, and I know one of them at least, was equally strong-willed and determined – and that was my mother!

It will surprise many of you to learn that the Schafers appear to have been headed in 1911 for North Dakota, where Germans from Russia made up the largest single group of immigrant pioneers. Fred Schafer was the first to leave Crimea in July of 1911. He and his wife and four daughters arrived in Glen Ullin, North Dakota (west of Bismarck) in July of 1911. Fred and family sailed out of Hamburg, Germany for New York City.

But the main body of Schafers, 27 individuals, traveled to port at Libau in Latvia. From there a small steamer took them to England, where they boarded the SS Ausonia in Southampton for the transatlantic crossing. They landed in Quebec City 19 August 1911.

While Fred left in July, the rest of our Schafers left Crimea a month later. I believe Fred was sent ahead to North Dakota as a scout. The family obviously had a contact there. I believe Fred was able to get word to his family that by 1911, there was no longer any suitable land available for homesteading in North Dakota. So the main group of Schafers continued west until they de-trained at Irvine, AB.

Another influence could have been Gottlieb and Helen Schafer who had homesteaded a few miles southwest of Hatton in 1908. They too had immigrated first to North Dakota, where their first child was born in January 1907. Gottlieb was a first cousin to the 12 Schafers. He was the son of Great Grandfather's younger brother, Jakob Schafer, who was married to Christina Antoni.

While Fred and his family would remain that first fall and winter in Glen Ullin, ND, the rest of the Schafers took up temporary residence in Irvine in order to survey the countryside. I believe they would have arrived in Irvine about August 24, because they landed in Quebec City August

19. Michael, Johann, Alexander and Rosina applied for their homesteads in Medicine Hat a month later, on September 19. Anton, Franz and Johann Dorn applied in MH September 30. The land they homesteaded formed a tight block in Township 16, Range 29, W3 in the Province of Saskatchewan, a half mile east of the Alberta border. The Schafer brothers would become neighbors in the New World. I believe this was purposefully done in order to match as closely as possible the living and working arrangements they had at Khutor Tasanai. They were accustomed to working together and helping each other inside a close family unit. Canadian homestead law required each of them to live on a separate quarter of land, as opposed to Russia, where they lived in a village environment, and went out to their fields to work each day. In Canada each would have to live on his own land.

Johann's wife Karolina was taken to hospital as soon as the ship docked in Quebec City, as noted on the ship's manifest. I suspect she may not yet have completely recovered from the birth of their first child Lentina, recorded by Johann as having occurred on August 01. If this date is correct, I believe Johann was referring to the old Julian calendar being used in Russia. The date on the Western calendar would have been August 13, meaning Lentina was born on the ship during the Atlantic Crossing. That is why her name does not show on the ship's manifest. Imagine the strains of parenthood while travelling with excited young children and newborns still nursing, and others in diapers. Then try to imagine the hardships of giving birth at sea. The trip from Crimea to Irvine would have taken about 24 days, by my calculations, and that is especially long when you do not really know what you will find at your destination!

The Schafers would have stepped onto the Irvine CPR station platform about August 24, as already mentioned. Also as mentioned, six of Great Grandmother's children traveling with her were already married. But five single Schafers also accompanied her. The oldest single daughter, Katharina, already 25 years old, was married by 11 September! She married Balzer Koenig in Walsh only 18 days after arriving. They settled on Balzer's homestead south of Richmond, a few miles west of the Schafer homesteads. Philipina was next. She married George Zerr in October in Medicine Hat. They settled on the Zerr homestead very close to the Blumenfeld church south of Leader, SK. Yes, love and romance were often compromised for convenience and necessity during the era of pioneers and homesteaders. Balzer Koenig's family also came from Rosental, Crimea, so it is very likely Balzer and Katharina knew each other before they came to Canada. But it is very un-likely that Philipina and George Zerr knew each other before coming to Canada, because George Zerr grew up in Odessa district, far from Crimea. Zerr came to Canada alone in November 1909, headed for Regina where he no doubt had relatives. I can only guess that perhaps Philipina and George Zerr were introduced to each other by a "kubbelman" or match-maker. Arranged marriages were commonplace events during that era. By co-incidence another single man also traveling alone on the same ship as George Zerr was John Weisgerber who would marry another Schafer daughter, Helen, in 1913. In January of 1916 the last of Rosina's children would marry in a double ceremony in Medicine

Hat. Alexander married Mathilda Krassman, and Christina married Mathilda's older brother Alex Krassman.

So here we have the Schafer family living in a pretty tight cluster geographically close to the Alberta border, in what became known as the Schuler district, although the original Schafer homesteads were all in Saskatchewan. The Zerrs sold their land near Blumenfeld in 1916 and moved to the Schuler district as well. Fred and his family applied for a Saskatchewan homestead not far from Walsh, AB in 1913. After he obtained title in 1916 he sold this land and moved to the Surprise area, close to his mother and brothers. The Schafer family settled down on their homesteads; their families grew larger and older, and they became Canadian farmers.

But one Schafer was still missing. My Grandfather, Philip Schafer had left Crimea with the rest of his family in August 1911. But he was stopped at the Latvian border. Philip was physically escorted off the train by military police. Did he not have a legal passport to cross the border? Was he held back because he had not yet fulfilled his military duty? We do not know exactly what happened at the border crossing, but we do know that the rest of the family continued on their way, while Philip had to return to Crimea, where he would get married, and father six children, and serve six years in the Imperial Russian Army through World War I. All contact between Crimea and Canada was lost through the years of the Russian Revolution and the four-year Civil War which followed.

After the war, Philip lived in the small village of Anakojs-Eli. Only about 100 people in 1911, it was located across the small River Burul'cha from present-day Tsvitochne, formerly known as Boraskhan. Boraskhan is the village where Anton's mother, Katharina nee Buchmann died in 1899 at the age of 70. Anton's brother Jakob Schafer who had married Christina Antoni, also lived in Boraskhan with his family. Several of their nine children were born there. In 2005 when I visited Boraskhan and Anakojs-Eli, I was in the middle of Schafer territory! Anakojs-Eli is special to me because my mother was born there in 1923. My mother was the last member of our Schafer family to be born in Crimea.

About the time my mother was born, Philip was able to re-establish contact with his family in Canada, and the process to bring these last Schafers to Canada began. The Philip Schafer family arrived on Canadian soil at Saint John, New Brunswick in January 1925. They joined the Schafers in southwestern Saskatchewan and became Canadian farmers along with the rest of the Schafers. Philipina had already left for the USA, and Jakobina had moved to Kerrobert and then to Lancer. After the death of her husband Johann Dorn in 1927, Jakobina returned to Schuler to marry Michael Koble.

So here we have the 12 Schafers established in Canada. Each of these 12 families is represented here today. Each of you knows the rest of the story for your particular family. The book I have just written was never meant to be a history of each of the 12 families, but I hope it will serve as a starting point for anyone wishing to compile a history of his or her particular family. My

interest has always been more in our family's history before it came to North America. I have always been fascinated with our connection to old Russia. I believe the book is a good summary of the twelve families, with a good selection of family photos that will not be found anywhere else.

I think it is also interesting to point out that many local families definitely knew each other in Crimea: – Schafer, Bosch, Antoni, Grunewald, Koenig, Boser, Fauth, Haag, Hauk, Tumbach, Kuhn, Reinbold, Ries, Ruckhaber, Sailer, Sautner, Seiferling, Vollman, Walz, Feist, Dewald, Fritz. All these family names are found in Rosental Parish church records.

There is still more to learn about our Schafer family history. Where did the Schafers live before Dossenheim? I know that Schafers still live there, and I would like to make connections to them. Do you remember the cousin Gottlieb Schafer who had a homestead near Hatton? This family left for the USA about the same time as the Zerrs. I would like to make contact with one of these Schafer descendants. I would like to learn more about Great Grandmother's Hörner family. Are there civil records available dealing with the ownership of Khutor Tasanai? There are more chapters in the Schafer family history book waiting to be written.

None of us here will be around to celebrate the next hundredth anniversary of our family's history in Canada and United States. But I hope what we have done today will keep the Schafer history alive for another hundred years, and that it might motivate some future Schafer descendants to gather together some cousins in the year 2111 and celebrate the two-hundredth anniversary of the Twelve Original Schafer Siblings who came to Canada.

I am so pleased that we have been able to have this special day together. I have anticipated this day for a long time. Thank you to all of you who have made this day happen just by being here. It has been a pleasure to meet each one of you. It has also been a special pleasure to have worked with the organizing committee to bring this all together.

I want to thank all of the Reunion Committee members for all of their work, and particularly our Reunion Co-chairs Rosemarie Schafer Kowalawski and Mary Unreiner Clegg, our treasurer Dianna Bosch Frey, our "Gal Friday" Bernice Schafer Desrosiers, who took on many jobs, our MC Raymond Schafer, Gil Aberle, Verna and Louis Schafer, Kathryn and Adam Schafer, and well, just everyone involved today, for all of their work. I want to thank all of the cousins who sent me photos and stories and encouraging emails during the past year. And I would like to close now by taking a look at some of my favorite scenes from Crimea.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to share this evening, and this day, with you.

**Merv Weiss. Medicine Hat. 09 July 2011.**